

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES
FIRE AUTHORITY HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2018 AT 11.00 AM

Present: Councillors Carroll, Clare (part), Exon, Geary, Glover (part), Hopkins, Lambert (part), Marland, Reed (Chairman), Roberts and Watson

Officers: J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), D Norris (Head of Service Delivery), S Gowanlock (Corporate Planning Manager), A Chart (Health and Safety Manager), D Whitelock (Station Commander POD Projects), D Melia (Station Commander High Wycombe and Gerrards Cross) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Cranmer, Irwin, McDonald, Teesdale and Wilson

FA27 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 17 October 2018, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

FA28 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman's Announcements had been circulated in advance.

Members of the Authority asked that their thanks be passed onto all involved in winning the 'Fire and Emergency Resilience' Award at the Excellence in Fire and Emergency Awards 2018 held on Friday 7 December 2018.

The Chairman welcomed Mr Mike Clayton, Chairman of FRIC Ltd and Mr Paul Kay, Service Liaison Lead, HMICFRS to the meeting.

FA29 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES: OVERVIEW AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2018

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services

The Head of Service Development advised Members that an earlier version of this paper was considered by the Overview and Audit Committee at its meeting on 14 November 2018 and it was agreed that it would be shared with the Authority, together with any updates. There were two highlight reports, the first was what was reported to the Overview and Audit Committee in November and the second was an updated version with key changes shown in red.

The Head of Service Development advised Members that the Tranche 1 inspections were now complete, the fourteen individual reports plus a national summary were scheduled to be published

on Friday 14 December 2018. A report on the outcomes would be presented at the Fire Authority meeting on 13 February 2019.

The Head of Service Development advised Members that Tranche 2 inspections were now underway. Members would note that this tranche included the Authority's Thames Valley neighbours. Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service had completed their inspection and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service were currently in discovery week, with formal inspection due to take place at the end of January. It was currently anticipated that Tranche 2 reports would be published in May 2019.

The Head of Service Development advised Members that as they were aware, this Authority was in Tranche 3. A detailed service level timetable had yet to be published, however, as Members would see from Zoe Billingham's letter at Appendix 3, there were timescales for the overall phasing of the various elements of the inspection process.

A Member asked what the financial implications were for the Authority and how was the inspection process funded and was advised that as far as the Authority was aware, it was being funded by the Home Office and it was not known if individual fire and rescue services would have to contribute.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Overview and Audit committee continue to receive progress reports on preparations for the HMICFRS inspection;
2. a summary of the overall findings from each inspection tranche be received by the Authority when available;
3. the HMICFRS' full inspection report relating to Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service be received by the Authority following publication;
4. following publication of the HMICFRS inspection report, the Overview and Audit Committee monitor progress with plans to address any recommendations made by HMICFRS.

FA30

INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS FROM 2019/20

(Councillor Peter Marland declared an interest as he was on the Board of The Local Government Mutual)

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that this report presented a proposal to join the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company Ltd (FRIC) from 1 April 2019. FRIC was a private company limited by guarantee formed by other Fire and Rescue Authorities to act as a pool for insurance purposes. This model helped to spread the cost of risk, as well as helping to reduce the number of claims and the cost of those claims, therefore reducing the cost of insurance to the Authority.

The Chairman of FRIC gave Members an overview of the company.

A Member asked for more information on the claims and settlement history, so that when claims occur, they were managed in a timely fashion and was advised that FRIC had a good record of settling claims and through their managed services contract had dedicated claim handlers.

A Member asked how long the protection period was and was advised that there was a minimum period of three years from joining.

A Member also asked should FRIC Ltd be wound up in the future, would the Authority have a share of the surplus and was advised that it would be entitled to any surplus accrued from the date it joined.

A Member asked if there were any tax implications for the Authority and was advised that there was not.

Members were in agreement that regular update reports should be presented to future Overview and Audit Committee meetings.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Authority's participation in the pooling arrangement and that the Authority becomes a member of the Company (providing a guarantee of £100) be approved;
2. that the Authority's participation in the pooling arrangement for its corporate property, liability, motor and other miscellaneous insurance requirements for a minimum period of three years through FRIC with effect from 1 April 2019 be approved;
3. participation in a financial guarantee for supplementary premiums should claims against the pool exceed the funding available be approved;
4. the Director of Finance and Assets be appointed as the Authority's representative to:
 - a) receive statutory and other notices and documents from the FRIC,
 - b) communicate with and give instruction to the FRIC on the Authority's behalf, and
 - c) provide a receipt for payments which may be made by the FRIC to the Authority;
5. the Director of Finance and Assets be appointed as the Authority's voting representative at FRIC general meetings or otherwise and to exercise the Authority's right to attend and be heard at any FRIC general meeting; and

6. an exemption from Standing Order 8 of Standing Orders Relating to Contracts (Competitive Tendering Process) be granted.

FA31

ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING REPORT 2017/18

The Lead Member for Health and Safety and Corporate Risk introduced the report and advised Members that that focus of the Health and Safety Department this year had been primarily on the promotion of safer working practices throughout the service and on the development of the Well-being Strategy. The Well-being Strategy was the framework to enable the improvement in the physical and mental well-being of the Authority's staff through education, mental health first aiders and champions on station. Also, the Authority's performance nationally in terms of injury to firefighters had been excellent and there had been a significant decrease in the total number of persons injured.

The Health and Safety Manager advised Members that it had been an excellent year in terms of the Authority's performance statistics internally and nationally. Internally, for all staff groups, there had been a reduction in 4 of the 7 performance indicators, with a significant decrease in the number of safety events and injuries compared to last year. Nationally, the safety event statistics for injuries to operational personnel had reduced which was excellent news.

The Health and Safety department had been actively monitoring vehicle safety events since the installation of CCTV in fire appliances back in 2016. The decreasing number of vehicle safety events indicated that CCTV was having a positive impact especially as the investigating officer would view the footage as part of their investigation. The reasons for this decrease could be attributed to drivers being aware that CCTV was recording their actions; third parties who may have been inclined to initiate spurious claims against the Authority, for damage to their vehicle, were discouraged by the presence of CCTV; and lastly the difference in height in some of the new appliances has meant drivers have had to be aware of this when manoeuvring.

The Health and Safety Manager advised Members that the first mental health first aid course had been run and there were now 11 people across all areas of the Service trained to carry out this role. Health, safety and well-being noticeboards were being installed on all Authority sites which would display specific information regarding mental health awareness and the support mechanisms available as well as health and safety information. Early next year a mental health champions course would take place for 14 candidates across all areas of the Service who would act as the 'eyes and ears' on the ground and signpost people identified as suffering signs of mental ill health to the mental health first aiders and/or the other support mechanisms in place.

A Member asked why it was 'disappointing' that there had been a reduction in the number of near miss reports this year and was advised that a near miss report was something that could have caused either injury or loss, but an event had not actually taken place. Over the past three years staff had been encouraged to report these, which enables the Health and Safety Department to carry out an investigation into the circumstances of that near miss which would then put in recommended actions to prevent a safety event from occurring.

A Member asked if how we support our staff, as well as being part of the people strategy could also be added to this report and was advised that regular updates were reported at the Health, Safety and Well-being Committee, but it could also be added to this report in future.

RESOLVED –

That the performance of the Service in terms of Health, Safety and Well-being be noted.

FA32

HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY 2019-2022

The Lead Member for Health and Safety and Corporate Risk advised Members that this strategy sets out the strategic health and safety objectives for the next three years that seek to improve health and safety across the Service. It sits alongside the Well-being Strategy, dovetails into the People Strategy and aligns with the Public Safety Plan.

The Health and Safety Manager advised that this strategy sets out the objectives for the next three years. There were five strategic objectives: working together, drive continuous improvement in health, safety and well-being; build an even better health and safety culture; effectively manage risk and engaging together. This strategy was already working and was evidenced through the Authority's excellent health and safety performance statistics, the achievement of the RoSPA Gold Award and the case studies detailed within this strategy. Despite the challenges faced in terms of continuing financial pressures and the requirement for fire and rescue services nationally to do 'more with less' the Authority had a health and safety record to be proud of. The implementation of this strategy would result in a greater and wider ownership and resolution of health and safety issues and improve productivity through a strong health and safety culture.

RESOLVED –

That the Health and Safety Strategy 2019-22 be approved.

FA33

2020-2025 PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN: "LISTENING & ENGAGEMENT" RESEARCH

The Head of Service Development advised Members that work was now underway on preparing for the Authority's next Public Safety Plan which would take effect from April 2020 following the expiry of the existing 2015-2020 Plan.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised Members that this report preceded a more detailed report that would be presented to the Authority at its February 2019 meeting, on the outcomes of some of the engagement work that would have been completed with the public as part of the overall build process for the next Public Safety Plan. A wide range of input was needed to develop a plan that conformed to the National Framework and, indeed, the Authority's own requirements. As Members could see from the report the approach to consultation with the public and other stakeholders comprised of two key phases. A similar exercise was undertaken five years ago as the current Public Safety Plan was developed. It would be interesting to see whether there had been any significant changes in public attitudes and expectations since then.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised Members that Opinion Research Services (ORS) had been commissioned to undertake the public facing elements of the consultation work, via a number of focus groups held across the county. Phase 1 had already taken place and phase 2 would take place during the summer of next year. An attempt to re-recruit as many of the people who participated in Phase 1, so that they can see what the Authority proposed to do and how their views had been taken into account, would be undertaken.

A Member asked if, with the changes taking place within Buckinghamshire, Parish and Town Councils would be consulted and was advised that they would as part of the formal consultation.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

FA34

EMERGENCY SERVICES COLLABORATION IN THE THAMES VALLEY

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that whilst the Authority had been collaborating with its Thames Valley partners for a significant number of years, this report pulled together all the key projects that were currently being worked on, and set out ideas for future collaboration. When the Thames Valley Fire Control Service was established, it gave significant opportunity for further operational alignment and there was a large project being undertaken at present, where all three services were looking to align operational policy based on the national operational guidance. There were also areas such as work force reform that focussed on operational recruitment, which included apprenticeships and on call etc. Some of the projects were very fire service related, but there were a significant number of other projects and some included the

Authority's other emergency services partners, South Central Ambulance Service and Thames Valley Police. One of the key elements of this report, the Thames Valley Steering Group Terms of Reference, sets out the governance arrangements around the Thames Valley Collaboration.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

FA35 APPRENTICE RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN 2019

The Station Commander POD Projects gave Members a presentation on the apprentice recruitment campaign for 2019.

The Station Commander POD Projects invited Members to come and watch any of the new apprentice training sessions.

A Member asked if the wording relating to the 'BA facefit' could be amended or clarified and was advised that it would be looked at again.

A Member asked if the charging model used by Global could be clarified and was advised that it would.

Members asked if an update of the recruitment campaign could be presented at a future Fire Authority meeting.

The Station Commander POD Projects was thanked for the presentation.

(Councillor Lambert left the meeting)

FA36 HS2 FORWARD LOOK AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR BMKFA

The Station Commander High Wycombe and Gerrards Cross gave Members a presentation on HS2 a forward look of the significant impact on the area during and after the construction phase and the resource considerations for BMKFA. The Station Commander High Wycombe and Gerrards Cross advised that he would shortly be leaving the Authority and was thanked for the presentation.

(Councillors Glover and Clare left the meeting)

FA37 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Authority noted that the next meeting of the Fire Authority was to be held on Wednesday 13 February 2019 at 11am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 13:12 PM