

Minutes of a meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 20 June 2018.

PRESENT

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC (in the Chair)

Cllr S. Barton	Mr. J. Kaufman CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC	Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC
Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC	Cllr. K. Master
Cllr. K. Bool	Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC
Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC	Mr T. Parton CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC	Mr J. Poland CC
Cllr. K. Singh Johal	Cllr. A. Thalukdar

In attendance

Andrew Brodie	Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Richard Hall	Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Lauren Haslam	Monitoring Officer
Alison Greenhill	Treasurer
Anna Poole	Democratic Services Officer
Adam Stretton	Area Manager Finance and ICT
Rick. Taylor	Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

1. Election of Chairman.

The Monitoring Officer invited nominations for the position of Chairman.

It was moved by Councillor Ken Bool and seconded by Councillor K Master that Mr N Rushton CC be elected Chairman of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA).

There being no other nominations, the Monitoring Officer declared Mr N Rushton CC elected as Chairman of the CFA.

Mr N Rushton CC – in the Chair

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

It was moved by Mr. N. R. Rushton CC and seconded by Councillor. A. Thalukdar that Councillor. K. Master be elected Vice Chairman of the CFA.

There being no other nominations, the Chairman declared Councillor K. Master elected as Vice Chairman of the CFA.

3. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Sir Peter Soulsby and Mrs. B. Newton CC.

4. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

5. To advise of any other items which the Chair has decided to take as urgent.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

6. Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman informed the Combined Fire Authority (CFA) of the following:

- i. That since the CFA last met as a full Committee, County Councillor David Slater had died on 29th April aged 70. He had been a member of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland CFA since May 2017 and had served on the County Council for many years representing the Syston Ridgeway Electoral Division. He held many appointments at the County Council and was active in his community, having served on Charnwood Borough Council for 17 years; seven of those as Leader. A silence as a mark of respect was held;
- ii. On 19 February, Zoe Billingham from Her Majesty Inspector (HMI) visited Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) to discuss the future inspectorate relationship. Two LFRS staff would be seconded on a short term basis to the HMI inspection team to support the fire service inspection programme;
- iii. On 23 February, the Chief Fire Officer hosted Mr Neil O'Brien MP at Market Harborough Fire and Rescue Station. He was supportive of the CFA's work and keen to assist if needed;
- iv. On 22 March, LFRS high rise procedures were launched internationally by the Institute of Fire Engineers and highlighted as best practice following the Grenfell Tower fire. Thanks were given to staff at Central Fire and Rescue Service, particularly Watch Manager Matt Walters, for leading this work;
- v. On 4 April Sir Thomas Winsor, Chief of Her Majesty's Inspector of Police and Fire and Rescue Services, visited LFRS following an invitation from the Chief Fire Officer. During the visit he attended Coalville FRS, was shown the Tactical Response Vehicle and the new Virtual Reality platform likely to be used for future police training. Cllr. Thalukdar had joined Sir Thomas on behalf of the CFA;
- vi. The Chief Fire Officer represented the CFA at the Lord Lieutenant's awards evening at County Hall on 26 April. The service continued to support the event by sponsoring an award. This was Lady Gretton's last awards evening pending her retirement;
- vii. On 3 May, the GB elite swimming team was hosted at Central Fire and Rescue Station, this included Olympic and Commonwealth medallists Adam Peaty, Sarah Vasey, James Wilby, and Molly Renshaw. The swimmers competed in a 'Fire

Fighter Challenge' type event. Extensive TV and social media coverage followed via BBC Look East;

- viii. On 30 May, the Chief Fire Officer and Mr. D. Harrison CC visited Her Majesty's Inspectorate in London for a briefing on inspections. The event was attended by all 45 Fire and Rescue Services in England. Work would be completed to ensure LFRS were prepared for inspection later this year. Mr. D. Harrison CC added that the briefing had showed the parameters of the inspection and the items that would be included;
- ix. On 4 June, the Chief Fire Officer on behalf of the CFA signed a Service Level Agreement with the NHS Blood and Transplant service to trial the use of some Fire stations as blood donor sites, so reducing the hire costs for blood donor services. (This one event saved around £1000 for the one day);
- x. On 13 June – Watch Manager Paul Speight won the international People's Choice Award at the Mission Critical Technologies, which recognised the work of LFRS in utilising virtual reality technology.
- xi. After this meeting, an induction session for new members to the CFA would be held, and would include a tour of the facilities at Birstall Fire Station.

7. Public Participation/ CFA Rules of Procedure Rule 9 - Member Questions.

It was reported that no questions had been received under Procedure Rule 9.

8. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 11 May 2018 as a correct record.

**RESOLVED:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2018 were taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to a change to the following paragraph:

*4 ii) The Chief Fire and Rescue Officer had attended the Cathedral on behalf of the CFA for the funerals of the Ragobeer family (Mary, Shaun and Shane) who were victims of the Hinckley Road explosion. The funerals were covered by the national news and were attended by more than 500 guests.*

9. Membership, Nominations and Appointments.

The CFA considered a report of the Monitoring Officer concerning the Schedule of Nominations and Appointments for the Municipal Year 2018/19 for the Combined Fire Authority. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 9", is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that additional nominations had been received from Leicester City Council for the Corporate Governance Committee and the Employment Committee.

It was moved by Mr. N. R. Rushton CC, seconded by Councillor A. Thalukdar and carried

“That the membership of the Corporate Governance Committee, the Employment Committee and the Local Pension Board; and the appointment of the Equality Champion, as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.”

**RESOLVED:**

The CFA agreed the following nominations and appointments for 2018/19:

Corporate Governance Committee

4 Conservative, 4 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat

Cllr K Bool, Ms B Newton CC, Mr. I. Bentley CC, Mr D Harrison CC, Mr J Poland CC, Cllr A Thalukdar, Cllr K Master, Cllr K Singh Johal, Mr J Kaufman CC

Employment Committee

4 Conservative, 4 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat

Mr B Liquorish CC, Mr. I. Bentley CC, Mr. T. Parton CC, Ms B Newton CC, Mr M Charlesworth CC, Cllr K Bool, Cllr A Thalukdar, Cllr K Master, Cllr S Barton

Local Pension Board

Mr P Bedford CC, Cllr A Thalukdar

Equality Champion

Ms B Newton CC

10. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2017/18.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer concerning the final revenue and capital outturn figures for 2017/18. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 10”, is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i) The final outturn indicated that the CFA had achieved savings as planned. There had been some slippage of £2,509,000 on the updated capital programme; as was usual and expected with such schemes. Some requests for carry forward of expenditure related to revenue schemes (of £248,000) had been received as the procurement of goods and the subsequent delivery and payment had spanned financial years;
- ii) The Chairman thanked the Treasurer and Leicester City Council colleagues for their work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the:

- a) Revenue and capital provisional outturn position for 2017/18 be noted;

- b) Revenue (£248,000) and capital (£2,509,000) carry forward proposals be agreed; and
- c) Current balances and identified use for general and earmarked reserves be noted.

11. Draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2017/18.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer concerning the Draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2017/18. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 11", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i) Changes to the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) required that the draft accounts for the financial year 2017/18 be signed-off by the Treasurer by 31 May each year; previously this was 30 June and that the CFA was required to approve the audited accounts by 31 July; this was previously 30 September;
- ii) The current Constitution provided for the CFA to formally agree the accounts and Annual Governance Statement. However, the regulatory changes to the accounts approval timeline meant that this would not be practically possible for the 2017/18 accounts unless the CFA agreed to convene a special meeting. An alternative was to give delegated authority for approval of the accounts to the Corporate Governance Committee that met in July each year; for this year only. Future meetings of the CFA would be arranged to enable the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) to be met;
- iii) Members were informed that old vehicles and hydraulic equipment that were no longer required were disposed of once the new equipment had been received. The finance generated was shown in the accounts, where it amounted to over £10,000; amounts under £10,000 were not detailed in the accounts;
- iv) Regarding the costs related to malicious and hoax calls, Members were informed that this could not be quantified specifically as staff were employed to handle all calls received; the LFRS Policy on handling fire alarms was constantly reviewed.

**RESOLVED:**

That the:-

- a) Draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 be noted;
- b) Corporate Governance Committee be given delegated authority to formally agree the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement for 2017/18 and that the meeting planned for 18 July 2018 be moved to 25 July 2018;
- c) Future meetings of the Combined Fire Authority would be arranged to enable the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) to be met; and

- d) Treasurer would provide further details to Members of income and related costs generated from the sale of old vehicles and hydraulic equipment that were no longer required.

12. East Midlands Joint Pension Board.

The CFA considered a report of the Treasurer concerning the proposed East Midlands Joint Pension Board. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 12", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i) It was a statutory requirement of the Combined Fire Authority to have a Local Pension Board; this was not a decision making body, it had an advisory and governance role. Membership consisted of two CFA representatives, two employee representatives, the Pensions Scheme Manager and the Pensions Administrator;
- ii) The Leicestershire Pension Scheme shared the same administrator as the Schemes for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. Forming an East Midlands Pension Board would enable good practice to be shared and would generate operating efficiencies;
- iii) Members were informed that the East Midlands was the first pensions group to consider joint working;
- iv) The meeting held on 14 June 2018 to consider the formation of the East Midlands Joint Pension Board was attended by the Local Government Association Pensions Adviser and a representative of the Home Office who was supportive of the approach. Members were informed that it was expected that this would be well received by the Secretary of State;
- v) Members were informed that the membership of the East Midlands Joint Pension Board would initially involve the merger of the three Local Pension Boards as they were currently formed; the Joint Pension Board would have a rotating Chairman.

The recommendation was moved by Mr. N. R. Rushton and agreed by all.

**RESOLVED:**

That:-

- a) The creation of an East Midlands Joint Pension Board which will replace the Leicestershire Pension Board be approved; and
- b) The submission of a joint request to the Secretary of State seeking approval for the creation of an East Midlands Joint Pension Board be approved.

13. Review of CFA Constitution.

The CFA received a verbal update from the Monitoring Officer concerning the changes to the CFA Constitution.

Members were informed that the following changes had been made:

- i) Part 6 – Members’ Allowances – had been updated to reflect the revised allowance payment with effect from 1 April 2018;
- ii) Part 7 – Management Structure – had been revised with effect from 11 May 2018 following the appointment of Rick Taylor as Chief Fire Officer.

All other sections of the Constitution remain unchanged. A revised version of the Constitution would be available on the CFA website.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the revisions to the CFA Constitution be noted.

14. Operational Update.

The CFA considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which provided an update on LFRS operational matters. A copy of the report, marked “Agenda Item 14”, is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i) As a result of staff retirements and leavers, staffing levels had returned to the establishment level of 348; this consisted of 262 Full Time Equivalents and 93 established support staff;
- ii) Members were informed that the retention rate for firefighters was good; the level of people leaving before retirement age was consistent with other Fire and Rescue Services;
- iii) Measures were in place to recruit more retained firefighters – especially in rural areas where it was more challenging to recruit them. It was highlighted that diversity had been improved, although recognised that the gender balance needed addressing as current levels were not reflective of the population. Officers were considering the drivers and motivational factors that encouraged people to join the FRS in order to address recruitment issues and the gender balance;
- iv) Members were assured that all firefighters were encouraged to maintain their skills and competence in case of emergencies, for example pandemic flu or industrial action. In such cases, LFRS aimed to have a minimum of six appliances crewed and available for service. In addition, the use of alternative appliances, for example the Tactical Response Vehicle, which required only two crew members, and was beneficial at a retained fire station due to the type of callouts received.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Operational Update be noted.

15. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority will be held on Thursday 27 September 2018 at 10.00am at Leicester City Council, City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester LE1 1FZ.

10.00am – 10.55am  
20 June 2018

CHAIRMAN