

Minutes of a meeting of the CFA - Corporate Governance Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 12 September 2018.

PRESENT

Cllr. K. Bool (in the Chair)

Mr. I. E. G. Bentley CC
Cllr. K. Bool
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mr. J. Kaufman CC

Cllr. K. Master
Mr J. Poland CC
Cllr. A. Thalukdar

In attendance

Andrew Brodie, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Matt Davis, Internal Audit Leicestershire County Council
Alison Greenhill, Treasurer
Richard Hall, Assistant Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Lauren Haslam, Monitoring Officer
Anna Poole, Democratic Services Leicestershire County Council
Rick Taylor, Chief Fire and Rescue Officer

19. Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Ms. Betty Newton CC.

20. 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.

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

There were no urgent items for consideration.

22. Chairman's Announcements.

The Chairman informed the Corporate Governance Committee of the following:

- i. The recent case, and judgement, against the South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding their Close Proximity Crewing system had potential implications for LFRS and the duty system used - Day Crewing Plus.

In Leicestershire, this covered 6 whole time Fire stations affecting up to 72 staff. The Judgement was technical in nature and the CFO had received an initial legal position that stated that there were some similarities with Day Crewing Plus which would need to be considered.

The CFO had met with the Fire Brigades Union, who did not have an unequivocal position on the possibility of a challenge being made locally. Officers would be

working on options and had sought specialist legal advice. It was likely that a report would be presented to Corporate Governance Committee and the Combined Fire Authority towards the end of this year due to the potential impact on statutory duties and the Integrated Risk Management Plan;

- ii. As the service moved into broader use of Social Media to communicate community safety and fire safety messages, the Committee was shown two such videos, produced by Leicestershire Fire Fighters that had attracted over 1 million views. The Committee was informed that, by creating such a large following on Social media, it was hoped that this would be a platform for promoting key fire safety messages to local communities; and
- iii. There was a need for LFRS to consider the impact of a no-deal Brexit on delivery of the service and the wider Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area. The Committee was informed that it would be helpful if Members could assist Officers in identifying the areas for priority focus. Additionally, LFRS, as a member of the Local Resilience Forum, had been asked to identify potential issues for the Forum to address. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to hold a special meeting towards the end of the calendar year for the CFA to consider the implications of Brexit.

RESOLVED:

That the Chairman would agree with the Chairman of the CFA an approach to addressing the issues created by Brexit.

23. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee held on 25 July 2018.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2018 were taken as read, confirmed and signed subject to the following amendment:

Election of Vice Chairman

It was moved by Councillor A. Thalukdar and seconded by Councillor. K. Singh Johal that Mrs. Betty Newton CC be elected Vice Chairman of the CGC.

There being no other nominations, the Chairman declared Mrs. Betty Newton CC elected as Vice Chairman of the CGC.

24. Financial Monitoring to the end of July 2018.

The Committee considered a report of the Treasurer which presented the revenue and capital budget position as at the end of July 2018 (Financial Period 4), and the Forge Health Limited Directors' report and financial statements 2017-18. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 6", is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that Officers did not anticipate any particular pressures in achieving spending targets; it was expected that the budget would be delivered as it had been presented to the CFA. Additionally, there were some 'planned unknowns' within the report; for example the resolution related to the pay award was still awaited.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the revenue and capital budget position as at the end of July 2018 (Financial Period 4), and the Forge Health Limited Directors' report and financial statements 2017-18 be noted.

25. Performance Monitoring April - July 2018.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer which presented an update on performance for the period April – July 2018. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 7", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The number of emergency responder incidents handled by LFRS had declined. This performance followed the decision by East Midlands Ambulance Service to end the trial of emergency first responding;
- ii. The availability of On-Call fire engines had dropped below 50%; a number of projects were in place to recruit more fire fighters to improve availability. Recently, 34 new recruits had joined the Service and were completing their initial training. However, it would be some time before the results of measures put in place were seen. Members were informed that the situation experienced in Leicestershire followed the national trend. Members highlighted and discussed a range of issues which encouraged or discouraged people to join the Fire Service as an on-call fire fighter. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to receive a report at a future CGC meeting which gave more detail on the actions taken and progress made to recruit fire fighters;
- iii. Key Corporate Indicators related to secondary and primary fires showed an increase in the numbers attended; Members were informed that this followed a long hot summer, combined with the school holiday period. As the weather had cooled, and schools had re-opened, it was hoped that performance against those indicators would now improve.

In response to questions, Members were informed that the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), which was to be carried out in October and December 2018, would consider areas of concern related to performance. The inspectors would seek written action plans which set out the intended actions to address issues of concern.

RESOLVED:

That

- a) the performance for the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service for the period April 2018 – July 2018 be noted;
- b) a report concerning Fire Fighter recruitment, the action taken to address recruitment issues and an update on progress so far, be discussed at the next meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee on 21 November 2018.

26. Service Development Programme and 'Our Plan 2018-21' - Actions Update.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer regarding progress made since July 2018 in delivering projects within the Service Development Programme and the tasks included in Appendix A of Our Plan 2018-21. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 8", is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer informed Members that the 19 projects within the Service Development Programme were currently in various stages of development or implementation. He highlighted the recent success in delivering the 'Have a Go Days', which provided individuals with an opportunity to try some of the physical elements of the recruitment process. Such days were repeated frequently to recruit new fire fighters; 146 people had attended the 'Have a Go Days' held so far this year.

128 staff had been trained as Mental Health First Aiders, an accredited award scheme, to enable issues to be addressed as they emerged so that staff were properly supported.

The replacement of vehicles detailed in the report, showed that all of the 34 replacement vehicles had been delivered and the majority were in use; additional kit, for example the blue flashing lights, was being fitted to those vehicles not yet in use.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made in delivering the projects within the Service Development Programme and the tasks included in Appendix A of Our Plan 2018-21 since July 2018 be noted.

27. Progress against the Internal Audit Plan 2018 - 19.

The Committee considered a report of the Treasurer which informed of progress made against the Internal Audit Plan 2018-19. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 9", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Good progress was being made in delivering the plan for 2018-19;
- ii. The follow up of the High Importance recommendations in respect of key ICT Controls coverage would be completed within the current work plan. Work had also been completed to address the High Importance Recommendations related to Declarations Interests/Gifts and Hospitality and Fire-fighter pensions, and these could now be signed off;

RESOLVED:

That the progress made against the Internal Audit Plan 2018-19 be noted.

28. Organisational Risk Register.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer concerning the progress made in the management of organisational risk through the ongoing development of the Organisational Risk Register and in respect of the wider management of risk within the Service. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that the Organisational Risk Register was a rolling document, updated throughout the year. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to complete a Risk Assessment Template for issues identified as a result of Brexit.

RESOLVED:

That the

- a) content of the Organisational Risk Register, the improvements made in the process of organisational risk management and the detail regarding Risk Assessment 18/02 – "Cyber Attack" be noted; and
- b) Risk Assessment Template for issues identified related to Brexit be completed.

29. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee will be held on Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 2pm at Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Birstall.

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.

2.00 - 3.10 pm
12 September 2018

CHAIRMAN