

SOUTH WALES FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2022 AT 1030 HRS IN MEETING ROOM 8 OR REMOTELY VIA STARLEAF

35. PRESENT:

| Councillor | Left | Authority |
|--------------------------------|------|--------------------|
| D T Davies (Unable to connect) | | Caerphilly |
| S Bradwick (Chair) | | Rhondda Cynon Taff |
| L Brown | | Monmouthshire |
| M Colbran | | Merthyr Tydfil |
| D De'ath | | Cardiff |
| P Drake | | Vale of Glamorgan |
| S Evans | | Torfaen |
| W Hodgins | | Blaenau Gwent |
| G Holmes | | Rhondda Cynon Taff |
| A Hussey | | Caerphilly |
| H Jarvie | | Vale of Glamorgan |
| A Lister | | Torfaen |
| S Malson | | Cardiff |
| S Morgans | | Rhondda Cynon Taff |
| D Naughton | | Cardiff |
| A Roberts | | Rhondda Cynon Taff |
| R Shaw | | Bridgend |
| V Smith | | Monmouthshire |
| M Spencer | | Newport |
| H Thomas | | Newport |
| J Williams | | Cardiff |

APOLOGIES:

| | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| C Elsbury | Caerphilly |
| D White | Bridgend |
| S Chapman | Monitoring Officer |
| G Thomas | T/ACO Corporate Services |

ABSENT:

| | |
|-------|---------|
| D Ali | Cardiff |
|-------|---------|

OFFICERS PRESENT:- CFO H Jakeway, Temporary DCFO R Prendergast – Director of Technical Services, ACFO D Rose – Director of Service Delivery, ACO A Reed – Director of People Services, Mr C Barton – Treasurer, Mrs S Watkins – Deputy Monitoring Officer & Head of Corporate Support

As the Chair was unable to connect remotely, the Deputy Chair agreed to chair the meeting on his behalf.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Each Member declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in each agenda item which affected their Authority.

Councillors Evans and Malson declared a personal interest in Action No. 20/21-32 which related to New Inn Fire Station.

37. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **QUEEN'S NEW YEAR HONOURS**

The Deputy Chair was pleased to inform Members that the Queen's New Year Honours list had recognised the commitment of recently retired Group Manager Jennie Griffiths, who had been awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal for distinguished services to Fire & Rescue Services and their communities. Jennie Griffiths had led the Service's Joint Fire Control, and had been instrumental in delivering the collaborative project, as well as dealing with many critical and major incidents over the years.

The Deputy Chair was also pleased to announce that Councillor Maureen Powell of Monmouthshire County Borough Council, and previously a Fire Authority Member, had received the British Empire Medal for outstanding political service, with an impressive record for attendance at Council meetings and supporting her community.

On behalf of the Fire & Rescue Authority, the Deputy Chair wished to congratulate both recipients on receiving their prestigious awards.

- **MEETING WITH AUDIT WALES OFFICERS**

The Deputy Chair reminded Members of the Audit Wales – Corporate Resilience Report which was recently presented to the Fire & Rescue Authority.

Following concerns raised by Members, the Deputy Chair, Steve Bradwick, and ACO Geraint Thomas, Director of Corporate Services, held a meeting with Mr Nick Selwyn, Audit Wales officer, to discuss the Corporate Resilience Report, and to express their disappointment at the manner in which it was presented at the Fire Authority meeting in September 2021.

Members were advised that the meeting was productive, and the Auditors recognised the normal standards of presentation and engagement had not been achieved, and gave reassurances that in future presenting officers would meet the high standards set by Audit Wales.

The Deputy Chair informed Members that he had been assured that improved early engagement and feedback prior to reports being finalised by Audit Wales was already evident, and an offer was extended to provide Members with an overview of the role and work of Audit Wales at a future Fire & Rescue Authority meeting.

- **WHOLETIME FIREFIGHTERS RECRUITS COURSE**

The Deputy Chair was pleased to inform Members that on Monday, 10 January, 2022, a Wholetime Firefighters Recruits course of 24 trainees had joined the Service to commence their initial training at Cardiff Gate Training & Development Centre. The Deputy Chair hoped that the pass-out parade could be celebrated with friends, family and Members all attending in person.

On behalf of the Fire & Rescue Authority, the Deputy Chair wished all trainees the very best of luck throughout their initial training.

38. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The following minutes were received and accepted as a true record of proceedings:-

- Fire & Rescue Authority meeting held on 20 December 2021
- Finance, Audit & Performance Management Scrutiny Group meeting held on 6 December 2021
- Local Pension Board Committee held on 18 October, 2021

38.1 MOTION RAISED

The Chair of the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Committee took the opportunity to raise a verbal motion on the appointment of Members Champions, and recommended that they should be offered to all Fire Authority Members at their formal Annual General Meeting each year.

RESOLVED THAT

Following lengthy debate, Members unanimously agreed that the appointment of a Members Champion would be offered to all Members every year at the Fire & Rescue Authority Annual General Meeting, with Member Champion activity reports being fed back to the Finance, Asset & Performance Management Scrutiny Group.

39. UPDATE ON ACTIONS

The Chief Fire Officer provided a brief overview and update on the following outstanding action:- Minute Number 20/21-32.

40. REPORTS FOR DECISION

40.1. REVENUE BUDGET 2022/2023

The Treasurer informed Members that the presented report included the recommended Revenue Budget for 2022/2023, together with the responses to the consultation exercise undertaken.

Members were asked to approve the budget, including a proposed Revenue Budget of £79,304,057 which represented a 2.29% increase over that set for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED THAT

Following a question and answer session, Members unanimously agreed to approve the proposed Revenue and Capital Budgets.

40.2. REPORT ON THE STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS 2022/2023

The ACFO Service Delivery presented a report for Members to consider the Strategic Performance Indicator Targets for 2020/2021.

RESOLVED THAT

40.2.1 Following discussion on the positive report, Members unanimously agreed to note the Performance Indicator Targets proposed for 2022/2023.

40.2.2 Members unanimously agreed to approve delegation to the ACFO to review Quarter 4 2021/2022 data, planned reduction strategies, and to refine targets as necessary.

40.2.3 Members unanimously agreed to approve publication of the Strategic Performance Indicator Targets 2022/2023 onto the Service's internet site.

40.3 ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/2023

The ACO People Services reminded Members that South Wales Fire & Rescue Service was required to publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year, which provided information for the following financial year.

The Fire & Rescue Authority at their meeting held on 6 February, 2012, adopted and published its first Pay Policy Statement. The Fire & Rescue Authority also determined that the HR & Equalities Committee should review the Pay Policy Statement and report to the full Committee. In 2014 the Welsh Government issued new guidelines with further amendments which determined the contents of the Pay Policy. The 2022/2023 Pay Policy Statement had been drafted for approval prior to being published on the Service's

website. The statement was approved by the HR & Equalities Committee at its meeting on 24 January, 2022.

RESOLVED THAT

40.3.1 Following a question and answer session, Members unanimously agreed to review South Wales Fire & Rescue Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2022/2023.

40.3.2 Members unanimously agreed to approve the 2022/2023 Pay Policy Statement to be published by 31 March, 2022.

41. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

41.1 GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY THEMATIC REVIEW PROGRESS REPORT

The Temporary DCFO, Director of Technical Services, informed Members that the presented report was an update on the progress made against required actions of the Thematic Review into the extent to which the Welsh Fire & Rescue Services had taken action to address the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations.

RESOLVED THAT

41.1.1 Members agreed to note the progress made against the outcomes of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Thematic Review.

41.1.2 Following a question and answer session on Site Specific Risk Information visits, Officers agreed to provide Members with further data on the progress across Wales of replacing cladding on high-rise buildings.

41.1.3 With reference to the installation of sprinklers and fire doors in Housing Association buildings within the Gwent area, Officers agreed to provide up to date information in due course.

41.2 FIREFIGHTER PENSIONS – REMEDYING AGE DISCRIMINATION

The ACO People Services informed Members that the Fire & Rescue Authority, as Scheme Manager, agreed in July 2021 to provide pension benefit options for those individuals who were considered to be in scope for Immediate Detriment (ID). In December 2021 Members were provided with further information received since reaching their decision in July 2021. The presented report reaffirmed the previously agreed position which was to continue to progress ID cases, and to continue work to fully adopt the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigades Union.

RESOLVED THAT

- 41.2.1 Members agreed to note that work was continuing on Immediate Detriment cases as previously agreed, and that work would continue to fully adopt the MoU between the Local Government Association and the Fire Brigades Union.
- 41.2.2 Members also agreed to note that a further report would be brought to the Fire Authority only if any further legal and / or significant taxation or funding issues were identified prior to settling the Immediate Detriment cases.

41.3. REPORT ON RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2022/2023

The Head of Corporate Support informed Members that the Service had recently consulted with the public on the Strategic Themes and Objectives developed for 2022/2023. Members were to consider the responses received during the consultation that ran from 1 November, 2021 to 24 January, 2022.

RESOLVED THAT

- 41.3.1 Members agreed to review the consultation evaluation in Appendix A attached to the report.

- 41.3.2 Members agreed to approve the Strategic Themes and Objectives detailed in Appendix A attached to the report, which were collectively considered as the Service's 'Improvement Objectives'.
- 41.3.3 Members noted that the analysis of comments received, and further analysis of the demographics who responded to the survey, was provided in full to the Finance, Audit & Performance Management Scrutiny Group on 7 February, 2022.
- 41.3.4 Following discussion on the consultation strategy, Officers agreed to include 'Community Councils' in their engagement, and to consider targeting younger people in future surveys.
- 41.3.5 With reference to responses received within the survey on 'Being Valued', Officers agreed to provide Members with the percentage figures relating to members of staff.

41.4 BROADENING THE ROLE OF FIREFIGHTERS IN WALES – FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CAPACITY – THEMATIC REVIEW

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the presented report was an overview of Welsh Government's Chief Fire & Rescue Advisor, Mr Dan Stephens, Thematic Review of the Fire & Rescue Service's capacity and capability to assume a broader role for firefighters in Wales.

RESOLVED THAT

- 41.4.1 Following a lengthy question and answer session on a number of concerns raised by Members, e.g. the possible changes in shift patterns, affecting the operational demand and the Service's capability of attending major incidents, and the possibility of receiving further funding, Members agreed to acknowledge the thematic report of the Chief Fire & Rescue Advisor into the Welsh Fire & Rescue Services

capacity to carry out work arising from broadening the role of firefighters in Wales.

41.4.2 Members agreed to note that the report would be considered by the Service's Operational Co-ordination Group.

41.4.3 Members agreed to note that a further update report would be provided to the Fire & Rescue Authority in due course.

41.5 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2021/2022

The Deputy Monitoring Officer provided a brief overview of the Forward Work Programme for 2021/2022, and subsequent amendments.

RESOLVED THAT

Members agreed to note the Forward Work Programme for 2021/2022, and subsequent amendments.

42. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT (PART 1 OR 2)

There were no items of business that the Chair deemed urgent.