

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

18 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillor L Burgess (Chair)
Councillor A Atkin (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: S Ayris, A Buckley, M Clements, T Damms,
P Haith, M Maroof, C Ransome, J Satur and Dr A Billings

CFO J Courtney, DCFO M Blunden, S Booth and AM S Helps
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

A Brown, N Copley, M McCarthy, M McCoolle, L Noble and
D Cutting (Barnsley MBC)

M Buttery (Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime
Commissioner)

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor C Hogarth, Councillor C Rosling-Josephs and
T/ACO M Mason

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

4 ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

None.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS IN RELATION TO ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA

Councillor Ayris declared a non-pecuniary interest, following his appointment at the Authority's AGM, as a Trustee to the HOPE Charity.

6 REPORTS BY MEMBERS

Councillor Haith referred to the South Yorkshire Dementia Alliance Closing Conference that she had attended, which had been well attended. Delegates had been informed of the Herbert Protocol, trips and falls, and the smoke alarm testers.

South Yorkshire Dementia Alliance had indicated that any residual funds would be utilised to purchase additional fire alarm testers, to be distributed within South Yorkshire.

Councillor Atkin referred to the SYFR Recruits Passing Out Parade on 1 September 2017 that he had attended with a number of other Members. He had visited the Watches at all Rotherham Fire Stations over recent weeks, where he had spent approximately 2 to 3 hours; the main area of concern had been in relation to firefighter pay. Councillor Atkin had attended the recent RMBC full Council Meeting, where a resolution had been passed to raise the pay cap; he had spoken on behalf of firefighters at that meeting, to state that firefighters deserved a pay increase.

Councillor Ransome commented that she had also attended the SYFR Recruits Passing Out Parade, which had been an excellent event; one of the recruits is a grandson of a retired firefighter.

Councillor Burgess supported the comments received from Members who attended the Passing Out Parade. She had welcomed the opportunity to talk to the new recruits and gave thanks to the organisers for the well conducted ceremony.

Councillor Burgess and CFO Courtney had met with the Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP, Policing and Fire Minister, and South Yorkshire MPs on 11 September 2017 to raise SYFR funding issues; a follow up meeting would be held with AMFRA Members in October 2017. On 15 September 2017 Councillor Burgess had attended a meeting with AMFRA Members, which CFO Courtney had attended on-line, in preparation for the meeting with the Minister in October, where a number of issues had been discussed in particular the forthcoming inspections of fire and rescue authorities.

Councillor Burgess had also attended the Barnsley Fire Station open day on 16 September 2017, which had been a fantastic event and it was wonderful to observe the firefighters and services from across South Yorkshire showcasing the brilliant work of the Authority, the engagement with families and the wide range of support offered to residents and communities of South Yorkshire. Councillor Burgess gave thanks to Barnsley Fire Station and the officers across South Yorkshire who had enabled the event to be held.

7 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

None.

8 TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC, OR COMMUNICATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE CHAIR OR THE CLERK AND TO PASS SUCH RESOLUTIONS THEREON AS THE STANDING ORDERS PERMIT AND AS MAY BE DEEMED EXPEDIENT

None.

9 'BE FIRE SAFE TOGETHER' - PRESENTATION

AM Helps provided Members with an update on a recent SYFR campaign, led by CFO Courtney which was specifically targeted to partners to increase the number of referrals made to SYFR to support the most vulnerable in South Yorkshire.

Members noted that the four main themes for fatal fires were social isolation, mental health issues, substance misuse and hoarding. The campaign specifically focused on health, social care and housing partners to enable them to become Safe and Well referral partners and link up with SYFR to enable interventions to be made.

AM Helps stated that all Members had been provided with the Safe and Well campaign leaflets; he encouraged Members to convey the information when attending surgeries or when engaging with partners at their local authorities.

Councillor Haith commented that the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership would show the 'Fire Safe Together' video as part of its agenda on 28 September, and she would also raise the other campaigns undertaken by SYFR.

Councillor Burgess stated that it was good to see the strong partnership arrangements in place at Doncaster.

Councillor Ayris queried whether the video was available on the SYFR website.

AM Helps stated that the video was available on the SYFR website, a link to the video would be sent to Members via email.

Councillor Ransome queried whether the presentation would be given to the next meeting of the Safe and Well Board in Doncaster.

AM Helps confirmed that the presentation would be given to the next Safe and Well Board meeting in Doncaster.

Councillor Burgess reminded Members that it was incumbent on all Members to encourage partnership working through the various Community Safety and other forums.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Received the presentation.
- ii) Be provided with a link to the 'Fire Safe Together' video.
- iii) Noted that the presentation would be given to the next Safe and Well Board meeting in Doncaster.

10 MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2017

Councillor Ransome referred to the information in respect of the amount of income derived from Safety Solutions UK Limited, and queried how the information would be provided to the public.

L Noble stated that Members had been provided with the information requested via e-mail, and that it was also included on today's Member Briefing for completeness.

Councillor Haith queried whether the SYFR firefighter promotion process would be concluded by the end of September 2017.

DCFO Blunden confirmed that the SYFR firefighter promotion process would conclude by the end of September 2017 for crew and watch manager promotions.

Councillor Burgess stated that CFO Courtney and herself would meet in London with HMIC FRS who are leading on the development of inspections for the fire and rescue service, together with the Chairs and Chief Fire Officers from other fire and rescue authorities. It was understood that the national inspections would be undertaken every two years; Members would be provided with further details on the inspection as soon as these were available.

Councillor Ransome queried whether Members had been provided with the reasoning for the 25% overspend of the total transport expenses, at a total cost of £7,000.

L Noble confirmed that Members had been provided with the information via email on 28 July 2017.

Councillor Buckley referred to the Police and Fire Collaboration projects and, in particular the joint Fleet Management/Workshops Business Case. It had been intended to bring this issue to the Performance and Scrutiny Board in September, but this had not been possible for a variety of reasons. Councillor Buckley would meet with T/ACO Mason in order to discuss the Board's scrutiny work programme.

Councillor Burgess stated that there would be issues around SYP and SYFR collaboration that would be useful for the Performance and Scrutiny Board to consider. She thanked Councillor Buckley for his involvement in the matter.

Councillor Burgess suggested that the Performance and Scrutiny Board could consider the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Program (ESMCP).

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) The minutes of the Authority meeting held on 24 July 2017 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.
- ii) Members be informed of the details of the inspection programme as soon as further information was available.

- iii) Councillor Buckley to meet with T/ACO Mason, to discuss the Performance and Scrutiny Board's scrutiny work programme.
- iv) The Performance and Scrutiny Board to consider SYP and SYFR collaboration, and the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Program (ESMCP).

11 GRENFELL TOWER UPDATE

AM Helps stated that, following the Grenfell Tower fire, SYFR Business Fire Safety (BFS) had allocated a team of inspectors to carry out Risk Inspections of all local authority high rise buildings across South Yorkshire; a total of 43 local authority high rise buildings had all been inspected. The general issues highlighted from the inspections had all been unrelated to cladding, but had related to basic fire safety issues that had been resolved with local action plans:-

- Damaged doors.
- Issues with emergency lighting.
- Broken glazing in the means of escape.

Members noted that to date, SYFR had received 12 proformas from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) for cladding failures, which had been within the first tranche; the proformas had been returned following inspection and nothing further had been received since last reported to the Authority. BFS had commenced inspecting the 44 privately owned high rise buildings across South Yorkshire; three quarters of those buildings had been inspected and the remainder had been diarised for inspection with the responsible persons.

SYFR had been supporting the local authorities with reassurance messages through Tenants and Residents Associations (TARA) and arrangements with the publication of the direction of travel; BFS had attended 9 TARA meetings in Sheffield together with meetings held with DMBC and St Ledger Homes, to provide updates and advice regarding the ongoing work to their high rise buildings.

Members noted that since the Grenfell Tower fire, SYFR had attended two high rise building fires; both fires had been followed up by BFS and the necessary actions had been dealt with through an Action Plan with responsible persons. SYFR had received 15 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests in relation to fire safety arrangements in high rise buildings. As further information had started to be received from the NFCC, a review of Approved Document B would be undertaken. SYFR had started to receive the test results which were being shared with local authorities. SYFR was reviewing the cladding failures both nationally and locally which would be shared with partners.

SYFR had met with NHS colleagues and Fire Safety Advisors to make clear and to discuss SYFR priorities together with the request from the NHS, in order to prioritise and outline both expectations. All of the information obtained from the Fire Safety Managers would be linked with operational crews to ensure that it was plugged into the operational response.

Councillor Damms requested that Members be provided with a note of today's update.

AM Helps stated that he would provide M McCoolle with the notes, to enable a verbatim record to be included within the minutes, and for circulation to Members.

Councillor Atkin queried what was classed as a high rise building, and whether SYFR would inspect both high and low rise buildings.

AM Helps stated that a building over 6 floors was classed as a high rise building. Priority would be given to inspecting local authority high rise buildings, followed by private high rise buildings, with the intention to then inspect low rise buildings consisting of less than 6 floors, on a risk assessment basis across South Yorkshire. Most low rise buildings were brick built, and therefore only a small proportion had external cladding. The inspections of high rise buildings formed part of SYFR day to day business.

Councillor Clements queried whether SYFR intended to inspect office blocks.

AM Helps commented that the high rise accommodation for industry or office use formed part of SYFR's normal risk based annual inspection programme; such buildings were lower risk buildings by virtue that there was no-one sleeping in them.

Dr Billings referred to the new building developments in Sheffield, in particular around student accommodation. He queried whether SYFR advice had changed for new buildings following the Grenfell Tower fire.

AM Helps stated that SYFR would have been consulted when the planning applications had been submitted. SYFR advice had been consistent for many years around the need to install sprinklers into buildings, which was the greatest protection for buildings against fires. There was no legislation in many of the buildings to mandate sprinkler installation. It was the responsibility of the local authorities to monitor the building stage of premises, which SYFR would inspect upon completion.

Councillor Atkin referred to a question he had received in relation to the 'stay put' policy. He requested that AM Helps reiterated that SYFR had a 'stay put' policy.

AM Helps stated that the 'stay put' policy had been in place for 40/50 years nationally. The outcome of the Grenfell Tower fire enquiry would determine whether there would be a national change to this policy, but currently SYFR considered that the 'stay put' policy was fit for purpose.

Councillor Maroof appreciated the excellent response provided by SYFR to South Yorkshire tenants soon after the Grenfell Tower fire. Many questions had been received from landlords, who were not responsible landlords, and he queried whether complete co-operation had been received from those landlords, and if not whether SYFR would be willing to 'name and shame' them.

AM Helps commented that SYFR were currently working on the private residential high rise buildings. No problems had been encountered in accessing those buildings or working with the responsible persons.

Councillor Burgess requested AM Helps provide Members with information specifically broken down into the four local authority areas in relation to residential, NHS and private sector buildings, to enable Members to respond to any questions raised.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the update.
- ii) Be provided with information specifically broken down into the four local authority areas in relation to residential, NHS and private sector buildings.

12 2017/2018 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

A report of the Director of Support Services was presented which was the second in a series of reports that Members would receive during the financial year, to inform them as to the likely financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2018.

S Booth highlighted the significant changes which included the current forecast in the overall operating overspend for the financial year 2017/18 of £0.248m which was 0.5% of the budget, principally with regard to the fact that the offer of the 2% pay award had been factored into the report, and had subsequently been rejected at this stage and had also been built in as part of the move towards the Operational Resource Team (ORT) for the additional firefighters that would be required to ensure SYFR could maintain operational service delivery. There was a slight change in the capital programme overall of £97k, which included a number of significant changes with regard to Property Services with £0.5m slippage overall, which was principally around the fact that a report had been provided to the Authority in May 2017 that set out how the design and scope of works would be reviewed particularly around CPC stations; the work was now concluding and would be presented to the Service's Executive Team around the new scopes of works and designs. Advice was awaited from quantity surveyors who were evaluating the estimates put forward by the potential contractor. In relation to ICT, there had been an additional £0.5m which substantially related to the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP) that was wholly Government funded. In relation to reserves, taking into account the overall position that was forecast as of today, the expectation was to increase SYFR reserves by £1.241m.

Councillor Ayris expressed his disappointment that both the Authority and the Audit and Governance Committee reports presented today did not refer to the issues surrounding the Parkway Fire Station that DCFO Blunden had recently reported to Sheffield CC Members. He queried whether the figures, and the overspend reported, included the issues around the additional expenditure required at Parkway Fire Station.

S Booth stated that Parkway Fire Station had been built 2/3 years ago; SYFR had been informed of latent defects with regard to the building and proceedings had been initiated with BAM, the constructors, who had brought in both their construction director and sub-contractor on site over recent weeks. Discussions were underway to determine how these latent defects would be addressed, which would determine the extent to which BAM, or their sub-contractors, were responsible for correcting those defects. Until the conclusion of the discussions, and the extent to which this may lead to further legal proceedings was known, it was impossible to estimate the financial impact to the Authority.

Councillor Ayris queried whether a report would be presented to the Authority on completion of the discussions.

S Booth stated that either a report could be submitted to the Authority, or the detail could be included within the financial reporting process. It was the expectation for BAM to take on the responsibility for the majority, if not all, of the latent defects identified.

Councillor Ayris referred to the budgets that had been set on 13 February 2017, and he queried when the additional 15 wholetime firefighters had been recruited during the year.

DCFO Blunden stated that, whilst it was possible to predict when people would leave SYFR, it was impossible to guarantee that the individuals would leave at a particular point. It had been identified that an additional 15 wholetime firefighters were required, as part of the ongoing recruitment over the next 3 years, to ensure that crews consisting of 5 firefighters would be on each appliance from January 2018. Members noted the discussions held at the recent Corporate Advisory Group in respect of the budget and forecasting.

S Booth added that the forecast for the 15 new wholetime firefighters was from December 2017 and was a part year effect.

Councillor Ayris referred to the projected underspend for indirect employee costs of £0.049m. He expressed concern in respect the injury pensions ceasing due to a change in circumstances.

CFO Courtney referred to the pensions guidance, which recommended that where an injury pension was payable, it should be periodically reviewed. The Authority had agreed several years ago, due to the financial situation, to review all individuals in receipt of ill health pension awards. The process had now concluded, and it had been determined that the conditions of a small number of people had improved to such an extent that they no longer qualified for an ill health pension.

Councillor Ayris referred to SYFR intending to work with a rating specialist to ensure that it only paid an appropriate rateable value for the premises it owned and occupied; he queried whether the cost had been built into the budget.

S Booth stated that SYFR had not yet contracted a rating specialist, and therefore the cost had not been included into the budget. SYFR had previously worked with GVA Grimley on the 2010 list. Rating specialists tended to work on a percentage

fee taken from any refund generated as a result of appealing the rateable value, therefore there was no requirement to build in a cost.

Councillor Ayris expressed concern that SYFR was installing fewer smoke alarms than previously.

AM Helps reported that SYFR completed approximately 20k Home Safety Checks (HSC) per year; there had been a significant underspend in the budget for smoke alarms for a number of years. The HSC policy would shortly be reviewed, with the aspiration to introduce heat alarms into areas where smoke alarms were inappropriate, at an additional expense. The figures did not reflect a reduction in activity in the area; the future aspiration was to install more increased safety equipment for the most vulnerable.

Councillor Ayris queried whether the delayed property schemes had genuinely resulted from a capacity issue, and whether there would have been an overspend in the budget if those schemes had taken place.

S Booth assured Members that he was attempting to tighten up and review all processes and procedures for the capital programme. He would need to be assured that accurate designs, detailed scope of works and accurate cost estimate for the works had clearly been identified before letting any contracts; it was important to undertake a diligent process but this had led to a delay in the capital programme delivery. He could not foresee whether there would have been an overspend if this had not been undertaken.

S Booth stated that it was appropriate to assure himself that a diligent process and procedure had been undertaken. He assured Members that the issues identified in the past through external and internal audit would hopefully not happen again in the future.

Councillor Burgess thanked S Booth for the response provided. She stated that it was important that Members asked such questions, and that, ultimately, the accountability and responsibility rested with the Authority. In doing so, it was also important that Members supported the Service to ensure that it provided the best possible efficient and effective service for the people of South Yorkshire.

Councillor Ransome highlighted that people did not tend to check that the batteries worked in their smoke alarms.

AM Helps stated that it had been recognised within the industry a number of years ago that smoke alarm batteries were the weakness in the system. The vast majority of smoke alarms were sealed units with the batteries encased, with a lifespan of 5 to 10 years depending on the type of detector. There had been a change in the message conveyed centrally from fitting and installing smoke alarms to testing and maintaining them; 92% of homes were believed to have had smoke alarms fitted.

Councillor Haith referred to the recent Stakeholder Planning Board, where the implications for the database for Safe and Well had been discussed; she queried whether this had been included in the ICT communications and whether there would be an extra cost implication.

AM Helps stated that a number of recommendations had been identified from the review that was currently underway. The implications for the database for Safe and Well was not contained within the paper at the present time.

Councillor Atkin queried whether officers would agree that any company or business predicting only a 0.5% overspend mid-year was doing a good job. He suggested that Members should be reassured of the budget moving forward; capital programmes always tended to slip. Following a recent visit to Aston Park Fire Station, which was a CPC station, the firefighters had indicated that they were looking forward to their new accommodation; firefighters based at Maltby Fire Station had now moved into the new fire station.

S Booth stated that a contribution of £1.2m would be made to reserves, and therefore there would be a £248k surplus.

Dr Billings queried whether the planned surplus had resulted from a specific figure of what the reserves should be, and if so, how close the figure was to reaching that point.

S Booth stated that when the budget had been set on 13 February 2017, there had been a planned surplus which would be a contribution to the reserve. Discussions had recently commenced through the Corporate Advisory Group, with a view to re-prioritising reserves, to request Members to reconsider the reserves strategy and potentially put in place various principles to be adopted. It was expected to conclude those discussions and have a clear and concise reserves strategy for Authority approval in February 2018, as part of the budget setting process.

Dr Billings requested that Members be provided with copies of the slide presentation made at the Corporate Advisory Group.

L Noble confirmed that Members had been provided with copies of the slide presentation, but would provide an additional copy via the OPCC's Chief Executive.

Councillor Ransome requested an explanation in relation to the transport insurance that had reduced by £71k, the increased cost on services of £90k and other miscellaneous of £27k.

S Booth highlighted that the Authority contributed to approximately £150k as part of recognising the claims against insurance; there would also be some claims yet to be made, to which there was a budget provision of £150k. He had been working with the BMBC insurance officers who had re-let a contract for SYFR insurance services. As part of the risk assessment process, claims history and outstanding claims, he believed that the amount could be reduced this year. The increase of services of £90k related to the Joint Head of Estates and the additional procurement undertaken around the internal reviews that were largely in respect of procurement. A General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Review had been

undertaken by the NCC Group that had reported back on a series of actions to ensure SYFR was compliant with the regulations by May 2018. Members noted that the provision of £27k had been included within the projections for expenditure on repairs and improvements to the Lifewise Centre.

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) Members noted and considered the projected revenue overspend of £0.248m for the financial year ended 31 March 2018.
- ii) Following the conclusion of discussions with BAM on the later defects identified at Parkway Fire Station, that either a report be submitted to the Authority or the detail be included within the financial reporting process.

13 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted to present the SYFR Equality and Inclusion Report 2017, to inform Members of the progress within the 2016/17 year and to celebrate some of the positive work that the organisation was taking forward in relation to equality in a way that was accessible to the public of South Yorkshire.

DCFO Blunden highlighted the equality objectives for 2016/17:-

Objective 1 – Improving Diversity at SYFR

The SYFR Recruits Passing Out Parade had been held on 1 September 2017. The minority groups within the new recruits totalled 41.66%, which although this did not compare to the 100% challenge set by CFO Courtney, the figure had significantly improved on the 25% achieved during the recruitment campaign in 2016. SYFR continue to aspire to 100% and will make every effort to achieve this.

Objective 2 – Improving Engagement with Diverse Staff

SYFR had won a number of awards for the work undertaken with diverse staff during the last 12 months.

Objective 3 – Promoting Staff Wellbeing and Fair Treatment

A variety of information and promotional activity continued to be undertaken by SYFR Occupational Health in relation to stress and mental health awareness. Fitness testing continued to be undertaken as part of good mental and physical health, and the recruitment of the Fitness Advisor has had a positive impact on SYFR. All staff now undertook a statutory fitness test every 6 months; only 4 operational staff fell within the 'not fit' category, and the Fitness Advisor was working with them in terms of a remedial plan to involve diet and general lifestyle.

Objective 4 – Knowing Our Communities

Over the last 12 months SYFR had ensured that the Authority was well sighted on the issues that the prevention and protection area of the business was undertaking

in relation to working with communities to identify those at the highest risk of fire; a significant amount of work had been undertaken to address the issue.

Objective 5 – Improve Targeting and Engagement with High Risk and Excluded Groups

A Fire Deaths and Serious Injury (FDSI) database had been developed and designed to capture and analyse all information regarding fire deaths and serious injuries within South Yorkshire, which had become a national project.

Objective 6 – Removing Barriers and Improving Access to Services

Members noted the significant progress made and that SYFR had won a range of awards during 2016/17:-

- Pakistan Muslim Centre (PMC) awarded SYFR an ‘Outstanding Community Recognition’ Award.
- The inaugural South Yorkshire LGBT+ Awards had named SYFR ‘employer of the year’.
- The South Yorkshire, Dementia Fire & Home Safety Project had been awarded the organisation category at the Doncaster local Dementia awards ceremony.

The SYFR Stronger Safer Communities Reserve (SSCR) fund had supported a range of projects which aimed to improve access to services for a range of groups including ‘Breaking Beats’, Crisis Skylight, Pitsmoor Adventure Playground and The Real Junk Food Project.

Members noted the work undertaken in relation to Objective 7 – Actively Consider and Promote Equality and Inclusion within all Procurement Activity, Objective 8 – Embed Equality and Inclusion within Strategy and Engagement Worksteams and Objective 9 Improving Diversity and Opportunity in Recruitment and Promotion within Emergency Response.

Councillor Ayris queried the engagement of the unions on the Annual Report.

DCFO Blunden stated that the FBU, Unison and FOA had been consulted on all documents in relation to equality and inclusion, which formed part of his regular meetings with the unions. However the unions had not been specifically consulted on the report presented today.

Councillor Haith queried how the ‘have a go days’ were advertised.

DCFO Blunden referred to the wide ranging methods of reaching individuals which included social media, minority groups, advertisements placed in gymnasiums and through the local press. He had commissioned SYFR to undertake a piece of work to identify the reason why some of female candidates that had attended the ‘have a go days’ had not progressed through the recruitment process to interview, to enable improvements to be made.

Councillor Haith highlighted a typographical error on page 45 of the report. She requested that a glossary of acronyms be included onto the SYFR internet.

DCFO Blunden stated that he would provide L Noble with a glossary of acronyms to be included onto the SYFR internet.

Dr Billings referred to the outcomes from the recruitment table within the report. He queried whether some of the individuals had featured within more than one category, and whether some of the totals had been double counted.

DCFO Blunden confirmed that none of the totals had been double counted. The categories had been separated out into the 3 distinct categories of female, BME and LGBT to ensure that the success rate for each category was made clear; no female individuals had formed part of the BME and LGBT categories.

Dr Billings requested sight of the Diversity in the Community Handbook.

DCFO Blunden stated that he would provide Dr Billings with a copy of the Diversity in the Community Handbook.

Councillor Clements referred to the conversations that he had had with some of the trainers involved in the recruitment exercise at the SYFR Recruits Passing Out Parade on 1 September 2017, who had indicated that females had dropped out of the recruitment process after failing to reach the fitness standard. He queried that if SYFR could recruit a high proportion of males from the standard distribution graph for men, how SYFR could fail to recruit an equally significant proportion of females from the standard distribution graph for women.

DCFO Blunden commented that he had commissioned SYFR's HR to undertake a piece of work to ascertain the location of potential female candidates in order that they could be targeted with the correct message about the role of a firefighter. Members noted that two female candidates who had passed the fitness test on the last recruitment course, had decided not to progress further as they did not want to partake in firefighting which only equated to 4.5% of the firefighter role. The next SYFR recruitment campaign would have a distinctively different approach. SYFR would draw on the information provided from other fire and rescue services, to ascertain their successes in respect of female recruitment. DCFO Blunden would brief Members once the information was available.

Councillor Haith queried how SYFR would address the continuing absence of women in senior operational management in South Yorkshire.

DCFO Blunden stated that there were only two ways to address talent within SYFR - either through external recruitment or to ensure that talent was developed internally. Members noted that the current Assistant Chief Fire Officer advertisement would provide an opportunity for the Authority, should the appropriate candidate apply. It was necessary to ensure internally that where talent had been identified from firefighter level, that appropriate opportunities were provided for individuals to be exposed to the next role up and to ensure that they were mentored and developed throughout the Service; a number of female operational staff were currently being developed in this way.

Councillor Burgess gave thanks for the work undertaken and she added that Members were assured that the issue was being taken seriously. She suggested that the Performance and Scrutiny Board should undertake a more detailed review into equality and inclusion, which was a fundamental issue for the organisation.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Considered the Equality and Inclusion Report 2017.
- ii) Proposed or raised any required amendments, additions or issues.
- iii) Approved the Equality and Inclusion Report 2017.
- iv) Agreed that the Equality and Inclusion Report 2017 be made public on the SYFR internet.
- v) Noted that a glossary of acronyms be included onto the SYFR/FRA internet.
- vi) Noted that Dr Billings would be provided with a copy of the Diversity in the Community Handbook.
- vii) Would be briefed on the information provided from other fire and rescue services to ascertain their successes on female recruitment.
- viii) Agreed that the Performance and Scrutiny Board should undertake a more detailed review into equality and inclusion.

14 AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was presented to enable Members to consider the Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report 2016/17.

Members noted that, in support of good governance, the Audit and Governance Committee produced an Annual Report for the Authority which outlined the role of the Audit and Governance Committee, the responsibilities undertaken by its Members and the programme of work.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Considered the Annual Report of its Audit and Governance Committee.
- ii) Agreed to publish the Annual Report onto the Authority's website.

15 PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPROVEMENTS TO THE PROCUREMENT AND PROPERTY FUNCTIONS

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented to provide Members with an update on progress to improve in this area against a background

of adverse Internal Audit reports and External Auditor qualified Value for Money (VFM) Conclusions that were outlined in a paper to the Authority meeting in June 2017.

Councillor Ayris queried the length of appointment for the interim Head of Procurement and Supply Chains, whether it was a permanent position and the cost implications.

S Booth stated that Michael Wood had been appointed as the interim Head of Procurement and Supply Chains initially for a 6 month period, and this will be subject to review; Mr Wood comes with an extremely credible employment history in this area. His remit and scope of works included the review of resources available within procurement, the structure, grades and skill set etc. moving forward.

Councillor Ayris queried what Rider Levitt Bucknall, the delivery partner, had delivered together with the costs involved and whether those costs had been built into the capital and revenue programmes.

S Booth reported that SYFR worked with Rider Levitt Bucknall, to act as cost consultants on a number of schemes, and prior to his appointment that had been procured through a framework agreement. A Programme Board had been established, and chaired by the interim Head of Procurement, to hold the third parties to account to ensure that they delivered in accordance with the contract in place. Currently, Rider Levitt Bucknall was contracted in relation to the capital programme to provide the cost consultancy reviews in relation to each scheme in place; Rider Levitt Bucknall's costs had been factored into the capital programme figures.

Councillor Ayris requested an update in relation to CIPFA Property.

S Booth stated that he had instigated a review with CIPFA Property, who were expected to be on site on 19 September, to ensure that SYFR Property Services were fit for purpose. CIPFA Property would be on site 3 days this week to carry out the initial health check review, at a cost of £3k.

Councillor Ransome queried the qualifications of the interim Head of Procurement.

S Booth stated that M Wood was a fully qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement Specialists.

Councillor Ransome queried whether CIPFA, Rider Levitt Bucknall and M Wood had been in post previously when the issues had come to light in respect of procurement compliance.

S Booth commented that the M Wood had been appointed on a 6 month contract as the interim Head of Procurement and Supply Chains, Rider Levitt Bucknall had been contracted for individual projects within the capital programme and had worked on the Maltby Fire Station scheme as cost consultants/quantity surveyors. SYFR intended to manage its capital programme as a programme, rather than

8 individual projects to enable one set up, one client management, economies of scale and the transfer of knowledge to enable the supply chain to be managed more efficiently than previously which was hoped to achieve a better value for money. SYFR had now contracted Rider Levitt Bucknall for a number of schemes within the capital programme.

Councillor Ransome expressed her concern with regard to the SYFR procurement training with BMBC. She queried why BMBC officers had been deemed the most appropriate to deliver this.

S Booth commented that he had built a professional relationship with Chris Arnold at BMBC, who was a very experienced public and private sector procurement specialist, with a proven track record across various sectors. He considered therefore that the decision for C Arnold to undertake a peer review was sensible, appropriate and would be free of charge. C Arnold was building a professional relationship with M Wood, the interim Head of Procurement and Supply Chains. Following the Best Practice Review Day held recently in BMBC, M Wood had identified that BMBC had developed their intranet extremely well, which afforded the ability for any officers within BMBC to undertake a procurement exercise in a compliant way with full information and advice in a very user friendly format, which SYFR sought to replicate. SYFR hoped to implement this in a shorter timescale with the expertise provided by C Arnold and M Wood.

Councillor Ransome queried whether C Arnold had been in post at BMBC two years ago.

N Copley stated that C Arnold had been appointed at BMBC on an interim basis 9 months ago, and had taken up the role on a full time basis very recently.

Councillor Burgess referred to the work of the Collaboration Board with SYP and the appointment of the Joint Head of Estates. She requested that Members be provided with the job description of the Head of Estates.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the contents of the report.
- ii) Continued to monitor the approach being taken by SYFR to strengthen the governance and control framework, to improve the service offer and value provided by the in-house Property Services and Procurement functions.
- iii) Noted that they would be presented with updated Contract Standing Orders at the next Authority meeting, for consideration and approval.
- iv) Noted that they would be presented with a draft Procurement Strategy for approval to commence consultant.
- v) Be provided with the job description of the Joint Head of Estates.

16 HOPE CHARITY CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented to recommend an amendment to the HOPE Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Constitution, which currently nominated the Chair of the Authority as an 'ex officio' Trustee to include, in the alternative, the Vice Chair.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the report and the suggested amendments to the HOPE Constitution.
- ii) Approved the amendment of the HOPE Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Constitution to add the Authority's Vice Chair as an additional ex officio Trustee.

17 SPRINKLER FUND PROJECT APPROVAL

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented to seek approval for the release of funds in support of the following two match funded projects:-

- Autism Plus.
- Berneslai Homes.

Councillor Ransome queried whether Berneslai Homes was an 'arms length' organisation of BMBC. She considered that the funding request received from Berneslai Homes was a large amount for just one group, and that smaller groups may encounter problems in finding match funding.

AM Helps referred to the event held to promote the Sprinkler Fund Project, which had been very much geared towards local authority housing, charities and partners. It was intended to achieve the best value for South Yorkshire and to use the initiative to ensure that this became business as usual for the major housing providers that could afford it possibly more than others. The benefit from providing funding to Berneslai Homes would be that 141 dwellings and attached storage spaces would have the sprinkler system installed. Conversations were ongoing with SCC and DMBC, who were considering similar bids moving forward.

Councillor Ransome stated that she appreciated that more people would be reached through the housing associations, but that the housing associations were very well provided for by the local authorities. She suggested that many private properties within the county, that were in very poor states of repair, could benefit from the funding.

Councillor Burgess highlighted that local authorities did not provide funding to their respective housing organisations and that funding was generated from council house rental fees. She stated that Members were correct to ask the questions, to ensure that the funding was allocated appropriately. Members noted that a large proportion of public sector organisations had been represented at the Sprinkler Fund Project event.

Councillor Ayris queried whether BMBC would make a financial contribution to Berneslai Homes.

N Copley stated that he was not aware that BMBC would make a financial contribution to Berneslai Homes.

Councillor Maroof queried whether the Government would make any contributions to the Sprinkler Fund Project during this time of austerity. He suggested that the Government should intervene at a time when the local authorities and members of the public required the implementation of such safety measures. He suggested that the Government were failing those people most at risk, and that the local authorities should raise such points directly with Government.

CFO Courtney stated that all deliberations had taken place prior to the Grenfell Tower fire. Since 2007, when SYFR had first become involved in the Callow Mount Sheffield Project, the Service had campaigned for sprinklers in high rise buildings and in any premises used to house vulnerable people. Members noted that, during the first years of the Authority's Stronger, Safer Communities Reserve (SSCR) Fund, it had been important to demonstrate that the investment had delivered against SYFR's commitment to make the people of South Yorkshire safer. At the point it had been determined to increase the fund and go through further rounds of bidding, consideration had been given as to how SYFR could establish a process to demonstrate that there was benefit to the people of South Yorkshire from a fire safety point of view. Members had been consulted on the allocation of a significant proportion of funding to sprinkler projects; the criteria required for anyone submitting an application included the ability to clearly demonstrate that it would benefit the most vulnerable people in society. SYFR was fitting fewer smoke detectors, due to fewer people being available to install them. SYFR was working with other organisations to ensure that the smaller number of detectors installed produced greater benefit by ensuring that they were installed into the homes of vulnerable people. He envisaged that the NFCC representatives at every fire and rescue service within the country would be having the exact same conversation with Government around issues post-Grenfell, with a view to changing the legislation of sprinkler systems, to potentially provide additional funding to support the installation of sprinklers as part of the outcome of the Grenfell review. CFO Courtney added that both Autism Plus and Berneslai Homes, who housed genuinely vulnerable people had submitted their applications, and that by contributing to the cost of those sprinklers collectively would deliver on the original aspiration to make the people of South Yorkshire safer. He stated that he was sure that other organisations within South Yorkshire would also be successful in securing match funding towards the cost of making vulnerable people safer in the places that they lived.

Councillor Damms stated that the funding provided to Berneslai Homes would specifically target vulnerable people, and that he supported the proposal.

Councillor Atkin referred to Councillor T Fox, a former Member of the Authority, who had been the sprinkler advocate for the LGA. Members noted that the Authority had first provided retrospective funding following the incident at Callow Mount Sheffield, and had been the first in the country to do so. He hoped that the

Government would take note of the recommendations from the Grenfell Tower fire and conclude that tower buildings should be retrospectively fitted with sprinklers.

Councillor Burgess stated, that following consultation with M McCarthy, she did not need to declare an interest as a BMBC Member, as Berneslai Homes was an 'arms length' organisation to BMBC.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed to fund the following Fire Sprinkler Projects from the Stronger Safer Communities Reserve Fund.

18 ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2016/17 ON REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted in order to satisfy the statutory guidance relating to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) that required the Authority to receive an update on the use by the Authority of surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS), and also provided Members with an update on RIPA activity over the past year.

DCFO Blunden stated that he was the designated senior responsible person to ensure that RIPA was used responsibly; RIPA had not been used over the last 18 months.

Members noted that Corporate Performance reports were utilised to record up to date information on the use of RIPA within the Authority and details of any RIPA activity. An annual report would continue to be submitted to the Authority.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report.

19 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JULY 2017

Councillor Ayris queried the reason why the minutes presented were listed as 'draft'.

M McCarthy stated that a number of the Fire Authority's Committees and Boards had delegated authority and that, in order to ensure completeness, good governance and transparency, the minutes were presented to the Authority to ensure that all Members were made aware of the issues raised at those meetings.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 26 July 2017.

20 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JULY 2017

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 24 July 2017.

21 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD HELD ON 20 JUNE 2017

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Local Pension Board held on 20 June 2017.

22 MINUTES OF THE YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION HELD ON 13 JULY 2017

Councillor Haith highlighted that items 6 to 9 had been omitted from the minutes.

Councillor Burgess requested that the minutes be re-circulated to Members for information. She thanked everyone for their attendance at today's meeting together with the questions raised.

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) Members noted the minutes of the Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association held on 13 July 2017.
- ii) The minutes be re-circulated to Members for information.

CHAIR