

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

14 JANUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillor C Lamb (Chair)
Councillor A Atkin (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: R Taylor, C Ross, S Ayris, M Clements, P Haith,
C Ransome, J Satur, C Hogarth and Dr A Billings

CFO J Courtney, QFSM, ACFO A Johnson, AM T Carlin, S Booth
and AM S Helps
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

A Brown, M Potter, N Copley, A Frosdick, M McCarthy, L Noble,
D Cutting, R Bywater and M McCoole
(Barnsley MBC)

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Damms,
Councillor T Hussain, D Terris, S Nicholson and DCFO M Blunden

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

3 URGENT ITEMS

An item, Minute 12, was subsequently raised within the meeting in relation to the purchase of thermal imaging cameras.

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

Councillors Ayris and Atkin declared non-pecuniary interests in relation to Item 13 on the agenda entitled 'HOPE Trauma Support Group SSCR Business Case'. Councillor Ayris was the Chair of the HOPE Board of Trustees and he was an authorised signatory of the HOPE CIO bank account, and Councillor Atkin was a Trustee of the HOPE Board. ACO Johnson and D Cutting were also Trustees of the HOPE Board.

6 REPORTS BY MEMBERS

Members provided a summary of the following visits attended since the last Authority meeting held on 26 November 2018:- LGA Fire Leadership Essentials Course which included speeches from the HMICFRS and an update from the Deputy Mayor of London on the Grenfell Tower Fire, the joint SYFR and South Yorkshire Police (SYP) Carol Service held at Sheffield Cathedral, the Prince's Trust presentation in Rotherham and the 62nd Recruits Graduation Ceremony.

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 MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2018

Councillor Ross requested an update in relation to the succession planning following DCFO Blunden's appointment to the position of Chief Fire Officer of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

CFO Courtney stated that an advertisement had recently been placed for the position of Deputy Chief Fire Officer, with a closing date of 1 February 2019. SYFR was liaising with colleagues from BMBC on the appointment process. The final interviews were likely to be conducted by the Authority's Appointments Committee during the first week of March 2019. DCFO Blunden's appointment with SYFR would cease with effect from 20 January 2019. From 21 January 2019, ACO Johnson would become the temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer, AM Carlin would become the temporary Assistant Chief Officer, with appropriate backfilling.

Councillor Taylor queried whether SYFR's Procurement Team had visited the 11 fire and rescue services across the country who engaged with the same organisation as SYFR, to provide firefighting resilience arrangements during periods of industrial action, and he sought confirmation as to whether those arrangements were similar to that of SYFR.

CFO Courtney commented that Securitas had not disclosed the detailed arrangements of the other 11 fire and rescue services that it engaged with. He was unaware whether the arrangements in place with those fire and rescue services were akin to those of SYFR. SYFR has signed a contract with Securitas for a further 12 month period. SYFR's Procurement Team would liaise with those 11 fire and rescue services during the first part of the year, to determine whether there were other competitors within the market which provided the same services as Securitas.

Councillor Lamb highlighted that it had been determined that there were no other competitors within the market at the current time, and that he would like consideration to be given to the possibility of stimulating that market.

Councillor Ransome referred to a former SYFR employee who had contacted her again to indicate that he had still not received his national insurance contribution payments.

Councillor Lamb requested Councillor Ransome to provide S Booth with the individual's details, outside of the meeting.

The Director of Support Services commented that from the New Year, an agency worker had commenced at SYFR, over a 3 month period, to organise the national insurance contribution records for all members of SYFR staff. It was envisaged that all of the issues would be resolved in the near future.

Councillor Ayris queried when a final report in relation to the closure of SSUK would be presented to the Authority, and also a report relating to the detriment claim figures for SYFR staff for Close Proximity Crewing.

The Director of Support Services stated that SSUK had ceased trading on 25 August 2018. An external firm of accountants had prepared the accounts, which had shown a small profit for the year ended 25 August 2018. Work was underway to close down the company, with an anticipated completion date of April 2019.

CFO Courtney reported that the detriment claim issue relating to SYFR staff for Close Proximity Crewing had still not concluded. SYFR had been approached with a possible out of court settlement after the first week of the court hearings. Negotiations were underway and a report would be presented to the Authority to include legal and other associated fees in due course.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 COLLABORATION UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted providing Members with an update on the progress being made on the current areas of collaboration with South Yorkshire Police; a view on continuing Fire – Fire collaboration and the background information on the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

The SYFR Collaboration Programme Manager had commenced in post over Christmas 2018, with the remit to develop SYFR collaboration within the Yorkshire and Humber and East Midlands areas, including SYP and SYFR collaboration.

Collaboration continued with other fire and rescue services for the purchase of replacement Personal Protective Equipment through a regional approach and the next generation of appliance Mobile Data Terminals orders. SYFR was also in discussions with Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service in relation to the closer working around specialist roles.

Members noted the recent financial savings resulting from the collaboration between SYFR and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, for the purchase of new rescue equipment for use at road traffic collisions.

AM Helps, Head of Prevention and Protection, continued to oversee the Joint Community Safety Department (JCSD) and to promote the work undertaken. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service and the Police service had recently visited the JCSD to gain learning from the project.

The Joint Vehicle Fleet Management strategy and performance framework was now in place, and consideration was being given to various options to move the SYP bodyshop staff into the Eastwood workshop.

Councillor Ross sought assurance that the collaboration was progressing in a smooth manner; he considered it imperative that the collaboration agenda maintained its momentum.

The Director of Support Services reported on the current position in regard to Estates Management on the priorities for the Service. SYFR was on a journey in terms of Joint Estates and Facilities Management, and progress had been reported to Members each month. Further work would be undertaken on the soft FM, together with the appointment of outside contractors over next 6 months. SYFR would continue to operate singly, as had been accepted by both partners at the outset of the appointment of the Head of Joint Estates and Facilities Management. He was aware of the pressures to realise the potential business benefits of collaboration, which SYFR was keen to be explored at the appropriate time, and in accord with the timeline that had been discussed with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner prior to Christmas 2018.

Members noted the collaborative working within the JCSD and the improvements that were being made within the local communities.

CFO Courtney stated that from his perspective, SYFR was a very lean organisation by necessity, not least due to support staff having been subject to two service reviews over the last 2 years. He considered that it would be irresponsible to allow the collaboration programme to detract from the day to day working of SYFR, which at present had a £15m capital commitment.

Councillor Haith welcomed the national recognition received for the JCSD. She requested that future reports included a breakdown of the financial savings.

Dr Billings recognised the pressures faced by SYFR in terms of the capital programme, but he considered that further work was required to reach a solution.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report.

11 DRAFT POLICE AND FIRE COLLABORATION BOARD MINUTES OF
29 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Police and Fire Collaboration Board held on 29 November 2018.

12 BUDGET UPDATE 2018/19 QUARTER 3

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and Clerk and Treasurer was submitted as the third in a series of reports presented to Members. The report included an updated general reserves position statement and an update on the capital programme, alongside a narrative commentary on the key financial changes that were contributing to each of them.

Members noted a total of £50.112m for the 2018/19 operating budget, which included a £0.227m approved budget carry forward as at (25 June 2018). There was a projected net operating spend of £50.056m, based upon the income and expenditure to December 2018, which resulted in an overall operating underspend of £0.056m or 0.1% of the budget.

Councillor Clements expressed his frustration at the lack of progress being made, particularly around the building of the new Barnsley Fire Station. He suggested that quarterly reports should be submitted to the Authority to provide an indication of the schedule.

The Director of Support Services stated that a report would be submitted to the Authority meeting in February 2019, from the Joint Head of Estates and Facilities Management, regarding the new estates plan and a property update for Barnsley Fire Station, to include a revised programme and the planned activity for the refurbishment of the four fire stations at Edlington, Askern, Tankersley and Lowedges. The contractors had signed off a scope of works for each fire station. There was a number of other ongoing projects which included a heating and ventilation review at Fire Headquarters and Dearne Fire Station. The refurbishment of the gymnasiums at Doncaster and Adwick-le-Street had recently been completed. It was envisaged that significant progress would be made in respect of the capital programme over the next 12 month period.

Councillor Ayris queried whether any specific projects were earmarked from the general reserves. He also queried the BMBC service charge to SYFR, the impact of service delivery in light of the reduction of contingency firefighter numbers, and the matters in hand to address the continuing reduction in firefighters.

The Director of Support Services stated that the contribution to the general reserves was just over £1m, with a £316k deficit for the period 2019-20. The intention, in terms of the strategy, had been that it would go into the general reserves or would be utilised for capital investment purposes. He highlighted the need to reflect - in representing the £0.505m general reserves - the identification of Close Proximity Crewing legal costs and the detriment claims which had not been included; cognisance of this would be taken when reporting back to the Authority. In April 2018, Members had approved the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for BMBC to provide services to both the Authority and SYFR. He would provide L Noble/M McCoole with the exact costings for the services SYFR received from BMBC through the SLA, for circulation to Members.

Councillor Ross queried the £0.075m saving made on smoke alarms, based upon the activity levels during the current financial year, which had resulted from the heightened emergency response during the long dry summer period.

It was agreed that Members would be provided with a copy of the SLA with BMBC, the Authority and SYFR, and he would identify the pertinent sections within it.

Under an Urgent Item, the Director of Support Services sought Authority approval for the purchase of 35 thermal imaging cameras at a cost of £160,000 from the capital programme. It had been the intention to present a report on the matter to the Authority Meeting in February 2019, but this had now become a more urgent issue.

Councillor Lamb stated that, despite the best efforts being made by SYFR, a number of the thermal imaging cameras had begun to fail whilst in operation. This had the potential to hamper firefighting operations. The urgency of the matter had not provided sufficient time for a report to be submitted to the Authority.

Dr Billings suggested that it would have been helpful for Members to have been provided with a brief written submission on the recommendation.

The Authority agreed to the purchase of the 35 thermal imaging cameras. Members noted that six thermal imaging cameras would be based at SYFR's training school for training purposes.

The Director of Support Services referred to the asset tracking project which enabled SYFR to obtain more refined data on all equipment, with the intention to utilise this data to replace equipment before it began to fail.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted and considered the latest estimated revenue performance which was showing an operating underspend of £0.056m for the financial year ended 31 March 2019.
- ii) Noted the latest estimated increase in General Reserves of £0.505m for the financial year ended 31 March 2019 which was broadly in line with expectations when the budget was set by Members in February 2018.
- iii) Noted the likely net impact of known financial risks that were as yet not able to be fully quantified at this stage in the financial year.
- iv) Noted the current capital programme position.
- v) Under consideration as an Urgent Item, approved the purchase of 35 thermal imaging cameras at a cost of £160,000 from the capital programme.

13 HOPE TRAUMA SUPPORT GROUP SSCR BUSINESS CASE

The Deputy Clerk presented a report which outlined the business case for using available funds from the Stronger Safer Communities Reserve (SSCR) to provide transition funding to enable HOPE to move towards becoming an independent organisation and to facilitate a change in the business relationship between SYFR and the charity.

Members queried whether the arrangements had been finalised for Age UK Sheffield to become the host employer for HOPE.

R Bywater stated that discussions were still ongoing, and that the arrangements for a host employer had not yet been finalised.

Dr Billings queried whether those Members that had declared a non-pecuniary interest on the matter should remain in the meeting room whilst the discussion ensued.

The Monitoring Officer commented that local authorities worked under the general principle that an individual who had declared an interest should be permitted to remain in the meeting room whilst the matter was discussed; it would be unusual for an individual to be asked to leave the meeting room for an item of this nature.

Members queried the reason why the annual grant of £5,000 from the SYFR Community Safety budget, which the Authority had approved in 2015, should continue until March 2020, when the SYFR host employer support with HOPE had ceased in December 2018.

CFO Courtney suggested that the arrangement for the £5,000 annual grant was on a financial year basis, hence the reference to March, but could not explain why the recommendation extended to 2020.

Councillor Lamb suggested that the Authority withheld from making a decision on the removal of the £5,000 annual payment to HOPE from the SYFR Community Safety budget, until further clarification had been sought. He requested that a further report be presented to the Authority meeting on 11 February 2019.

Councillor Ransome sought clarification on the state aid threshold. The Monitoring Officer would provide Members with written clarification.

The Authority's HR Advisor made an observation in regard to the person specifications for the Business Development Manager and the Partnerships and Fundraising Manager posts, which was noted.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- a) Noted the contents of the report.
- b) Approved the £57,376 funding to enable a period of transition for HOPE to continue its work in preventative community action and also the provision of support for people who had suffered bereavement through a fire, road traffic

collision (and other fire and emergency service related incidents) or through witnessing a related traumatic fatal incident.

- c) Agreed to withhold giving approval for the removal of the £5,000 annual payment to HOPE from the SYFR Community Safety budget with effect from March 2020, until further clarification had been sought.

14 EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME (ESMCP)
PROJECT UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented to provide an update to Members on the recent progress made by the programme nationally and the local implications for SYFR. The Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) was a Government project to replace the Emergency Services (Airwave) Radio System.

A change of direction to the ESMCP Project had been agreed by the responsible Government Minister, following a number of delays that had been experienced nationally and a full project review that had been undertaken in 2018. It was anticipated that SYFR would receive a full business case within the next 6 weeks, which would enable an understanding of the timelines.

Members noted that the Systel system continued to fulfil the remit that it had been designed for. The ESMCP network would work with all mobilising systems, and Systel was aware of the need for changes to be made to the system in order to function as part of the emergency services network going forwards. Members would be kept informed of the position.

AM Helps commented that the ESMCP project was Government funded. A great deal of background work with IT support would be required in order to transfer to the ESMCP network, and the move would identify grant funding. The regional transition was undertaken on an incremental basis, with funding available to provide support in 2020.

Councillor Clements queried the level of coverage assurance that should be accepted as a minimum, in respect of the rural areas across Barnsley and the surrounding rural areas of South Yorkshire.

AM Helps referred to the new ESM platforms provided by 4G. SYFR was mindful that the coverage assurance would go hand in hand with SYP's coverage assurance, for a coordinated approach. SYFR had been assured that the coverage assurance programme was in the best possible position.

Councillor Ross queried whether the current Airwave network connection, which had been certified to 2022, had the ability to continue to be fully operational until 2022 or beyond.

CFO Courtney reported that the Airwave network connection was owned by Motorola, who was the main contractor for the new system, and they had given a commitment to continue to invest in the system.

RESOLVED – That Members noted and endorsed the information in the report.

15 KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2018

Members were presented with a key issues paper arising from the Performance and Scrutiny Board held on 29 November 2018.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the key issues paper of the Performance and Scrutiny Board held on 29 November 2018.

16 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 26 November 2018.

CHAIR