

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

11 APRIL 2022

PRESENT: Councillor C Hogarth (Chair)
Councillors: S Sansome, P Garbutt, T Smith, S Ball, J Paszek,
D Hutchinson, S Ayris, R Frost, C Ross and Dr A Billings

Councillor T Damms – In attendance remotely

CFO A Johnson, CFO C Kirby, DCFO T Carlin, S Locking and
A Strelczenie
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

M McCarthy, J Field, N Copley, M Bray and P Quinn
(Barnsley MBC)

L Noble
(Barnsley MBC) – In attendance remotely

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

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor B Johnson, M Potter, S Norman and S Slater

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members noted that today was the final FRA meeting for CFO Johnson, who would shortly retire from SYFR. CFO Johnson had commenced in the role of Assistant Chief Fire Officer at SYFR in December 2017. She had progressed onto the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer from March 2019 and she had been the Chief Fire Officer since January 2020.

Councillor Hogarth expressed his thanks to CFO Johnson for all her assistance and contributions provided to the Authority. On behalf of Members, he wished her a healthy and happy retirement.

The meeting also marked the final meeting for L Noble, who would shortly retire from BMBC. L Noble had commenced with BMBC in August 1979 and she had undertaken various roles during her 42 year career in Local Government.

Councillor Hogarth expressed his thanks for all the support that L Noble had provided to Members over the years. On behalf of Members, he wished her a healthy and happy retirement.

The meeting also marked the final meeting for M McCarthy, who would shortly take up the position of Director of Corporate Services at West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. M McCarthy had commenced with BMBC in March 1987 working for the South Yorkshire Joint Secretariat. He had been the Service Director covering Corporate Governance, Joint Authorities Governance, Mayoral and Civic, Business Support etc. since 2019.

Councillor Hogarth expressed his thanks for all the support that M McCarthy had provided to Members over the years. On behalf of Members, he wished him the very best for the future.

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

RESOLVED – That agenda item 23 entitled ‘Appointment of Independent Member – Audit and Governance Committee’ be considered in the absence of the public and press.

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

None.

6 REPORTS BY MEMBERS

On 15 March 2022, Councillor Frost had attended a Safe and Well Referral training session, which had been very informative. He wished to express his thanks to P Jones who had facilitated the session. He recommended other Members to attend future sessions.

On 8 April 2022, Dr Billings had attended a South Yorkshire Police training day that had been arranged with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and other partners. He had been pleased to observe the attendance of SYFR firefighters.

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 21 FEBRUARY 2022

In response to a number of queries raised by Councillor Ayris regarding the National Operational Guidance (NOG) Implementation and Delivery Plan, that was appended to the minutes of the last Authority meeting held on 21 February 2022, AM Strelczenie commented that the basic principle of the NOG was for the Service to either to adopt, adapt or reject it.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 21 February 2022 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 2021/22 ANNUAL PLAN UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted which provided an overview of the purpose of the Service's Annual Plan 2021/22, whilst Appendix A to the report provided an update against this progress.

At the Authority meeting held on 10 January 2022, Members had approved the Service's Annual Service Plan for 2022/23, which had effectively commenced from 1 April 2022. The Service's first Annual Plan 2021/22 had included specific strategic priorities for the organisation to focus upon, in and amongst its requirements to produce a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The Authority had been provided with six monthly updates on the Annual Plan, which had last been presented at the Authority meeting held in October 2021.

Councillor Sansome queried whether any Independent or Elected Members sat on the CRMP Board.

In response, DCFO Kirby confirmed that no Independent or Elected Members currently sat on the CRMP Board but consideration would be given to the suggestion. The CRMP had replaced the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) which Members had approved in 2021, and which was a 3 year forward looking plan. In order to provide Members with assurance in relation to the independent validation of the work undertaken within the Service, DCFO Kirby commented that, in the event of any significant proposed changes to service delivery or the way in which the services were delivered into the communities of South Yorkshire, an external validation would be undertaken on the proposals together with external consultation with members of the public.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the progress against the Annual Plan 2021/22.
- ii) Approved the closure of the Annual Plan 2021/22 in readiness for the approved Annual Plan 2022/23, due to go live in April 2022.

11 BENEFITS REALISATION UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented on the benefits realisation update. In June 2020, the Service had launched a Benefits Realisation Approach. Benefits Management was a key activity in project and programme management, which assisted the Service in understanding whether the changes made resulted in improvements in the service delivered. A dedicated Governance, Projects and Collaboration Team was now in place to support all of the Service's projects and large scale programmes. A vacancy remained for a Projects and Evaluation Officer within the team. Members were referred to the benefits realisation roadmap at Appendix A to the report. The HMICFRS Inspection undertaken in 2019 had identified that, whilst the Service delivered a great deal of good work, there was a need for better evaluation and understanding of the benefits of the work.

Councillor Garbutt referred to some of the vacancies which had yet to be filled to enable the programmes to be delivered. He queried whether the posts were dedicated solely to that Service area, or whether they were capable of being taken on in addition to other duties.

DCFO Kirby commented that the vacancy for a dedicated Projects and Evaluation Officer was a support role. The Service had encountered challenges in the recruitment of specific niche posts, which was due to the current labour market in terms of individuals seeking employment.

Dr Billings referred to the benefits that were sought to be realised, and he queried how these would be captured and reported.

In response, DCFO Kirby referred to the specific gateway reviews that were undertaken on projects. In the event that it was considered that there was an element of deviation, and the potential for more benefits to be realised by adding extra elements, or that it was unlikely to realise those benefits that had originally been envisaged, then a project review would be undertaken which would be prompted by the board responsible for the project or the Project Team. At which point, the original benefits would be reviewed to determine the progress made against those benefits.

Councillor Sansome sought assurance that the three amber projects/programmes would have progressed to a green status when the report was next presented to the Authority.

DCFO Kirby considered that the Barnsley Phase 2 Project and the Telematics Project were likely to progress to a green status. Further work would be undertaken with SYP to ensure that all three amber projects/programmes were progressed to a green status.

In reply to a query raised by Councillor Frost as to how the representative bodies were involved in the process, DCFO Kirby commented that a high proportion of the large scale projects, prior to becoming projects, would go out for consultation. This would be undertaken through the internal Joint Consultation Forum, at which all of the representative bodies across the organisation would be involved. Any

significant change to approach would be discussed within the Joint Negotiation Meetings which involved the Fire Brigades' Union, Fire Officers' Association and Corporate Support representative bodies.

A recent appointment had been made to a new Sustainability Officer post, and the postholder would draft the new Sustainability Green Plan. It was envisaged that this would also focus upon measures to reduce the CO² footprint of the Service.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the progress against the projects and programmes.
- ii) Noted the training and engagement delivered.
- iii) FRA to support the benefits realisation progress and tracker.

12 COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021 TO 2024

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted which presented the annual review of the Service's current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2021 to 2024. The revised title was Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which had arisen from the outcome of national work undertaken by the National Fire Chiefs' Council. There was a new fire standard surrounding how fire and rescue services delivered CRMP activity. Many fire and rescue services had now renamed their IRMPs to CRMPs.

The report presented was the first annual update of the 3 year plan, which would be reviewed annually. The first draft of the CRMP had been presented to the Authority meeting held on 10 January 2022, where a number of questions had been raised by Members. DCFO Kirby considered that those questions in relation to changes to the CRMP had now been addressed.

Councillor Ayris commented that the document had not been amended following his request made at the Authority Meeting held on 10 January 2022, under the Heritage Risk section, to amend Oakes Park at Heeley to Oakes Park at Norton, Sheffield.

DCFO Kirby commented that the amendment would be made to the CRMP which was a 'live' online document.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents and approved the revised CRMP 2021 to 2024.

13 GENDER PAY GAP 2021

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted which provided details on salaries and bonuses paid to male and female employees within South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) on the snapshot date of 31 March 2021. As a public sector employer with over 250 staff, SYFR was required by law to carry out Gender Pay Reporting under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities Regulations 2017). The Regulations came into force on 31 March 2017.

The mean (average) pay gap for full pay relevant employees was 13.53% and the median pay gap for full pay relevant employees was 7.34% across the SYFR workforce. Hourly rates of pay and any bonuses staff may receive by gender were compared as part of the gender pay reporting, to seek to expose any imbalance. The impending retirement of CFO Johnson had a negative impact on the average hourly rate for females this year, as she was unable to be counted as a Full Pay Relevant Employee due to not receiving the normal full salary in the period.

Councillor Paszek queried when looking at flexible and on call working for female members of staff, whether the flexibility should also be promoted to males to undertake those working options as a means to improve the way in which those roles were viewed throughout the Service.

In response, DCFO Kirby commented that the flexible working options were made available for all members of staff within the operational and corporate support roles across the Service. However, this was more challenging in terms of operational staff, who would need to be within the workplace to respond to an emergency, maintain operational competence and training.

Councillor Ayris welcomed the detail provided within the report which was very informative and useful. In relation to the additional positive action initiatives that were being considered by the Service, he queried how the progress on the development of those additional initiatives would be reported to Members.

Members noted the work undertaken by the Service to attract unrepresented groups to join the organisation, which was termed broadly as positive action. Work continued to educate the workforce around the meaning of positive action. Statistics and updates in relation to HR metrics were provided within the reports that were presented to the Authority.

ACO Carlin referred to a detailed presentation which had been provided at a recent Performance and Scrutiny Board meeting. The Service currently had more female managers in post, which were developing at each level, in comparison to previously. The recent recruits course had highlighted the quality of the diverse individuals coming into the Service.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Garbutt regarding whether the Service retained female firefighters and other posts, DCFO Kirby commented that the Service's retention of females in the operational roles was usually very good. Development and career progression opportunities were made available to all individuals. At present, there were a number of female temporary rank holders in senior and middle manager posts, which act as role models for the female firefighters who aspired to progress through the organisation.

Dr Billings referred to the gender pay gap which was due to a gender employment gap, and the work undertaken by the Service to resolve the issue. He queried whether Members could be provided with a report on the progress made at a future Authority meeting.

DCFO Kirby commented that the information would be included within the workforce profile reports which were provided to the Authority.

Councillor Garbutt queried whether the pay gaps for other under-represented groups could also be reported on in the future.

RESOLVED – That Members noted and approved the content of the report prior to publication.

14 HMICFRS INSPECTION TIMETABLE - PRESENTATION/VERBAL REPORT

Members were provided with the latest HMICFRS Inspection Timetable.

AM Strelczenie commented that the HMICFRS Inspection within the Service would be protracted and take place over the duration of 6 – 8 weeks, due to the Easter holiday period and the Queen's Jubilee. It was anticipated that the HMICFRS Inspection Team would arrive at the Service on 11 April 2022, with a view to commencing on 12 April 2022. No subsequent changes were envisaged to the Inspection Timetable.

A number of briefing sessions had been arranged for the Members. AM Strelczenie requested Members to contact him via email if they required an update on the progress of the inspection.

Councillor Hogarth requested that Members be provided with regular updates via email on the developments of the inspection.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

15 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - PHASE 3

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive was presented to provide Members with information on the latest phase of the Digital and ICT Development Programme 2022 – 2023, as a key enabler to modernising and facilitating improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of SYFR functions and services.

The Service had developed its first Digital and ICT Development Plan and Programme in 2019, following which, an annual update and incremental development plan had been put in place and delivered.

Councillor Ayris referred to Appendix A to the report. He queried whether all of the project sponsors and leads had been identified in relation to Phase 3.

In response, S Locking commented that the table at Appendix A to the report had would be updated accordingly as matters progressed.

RESOLVED – That Members endorsed the latest phase of the Digital and ICT Development Programme 2022 – 2023 as a key enabler to modernising and facilitating improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of SYFR functions and services.

16 FIRE MEMBER ALLOWANCES - INDEXATION REVIEW

A report of the Clerk to the Authority was submitted to inform Members of the findings of the Fire Member Allowances indexation review, that had been undertaken by Dr Declan Hall Ph.D. Members had received a report at the Authority meeting held on 21 February 2022 in respect of the FRA Members Allowances. The last full review had been undertaken in 2018, and the recommendation was that the reviews were conducted every four years. Members had agreed not to engage Dr Hall to conduct a full Member Allowances review, but a 'light touch' review of the Indexation element. If approved, Indexation would commence (formally) from the Annual Meeting in June.

Dr Billings wished to place on record that he did not claim any Fire Authority Member allowances.

RESOLVED – That Members noted and approved the report.

17 LGA FIRE CONFERENCE UPDATE - PRESENTATION

AM Strelczenie provided Members with a presentation on the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition which had been held on 15 to 16 March 2022 at the Hilton Hotel, Newcastle Gateshead.

Councillors Damms, Hogarth, Sansome, Ball and Smith had attended the event.

At the conference, Lord Greenhalgh had stated that the publication of the Fire Reform White Paper had been delayed due to the events in the Ukraine.

Councillor Smith expressed his thanks to the Authority for the opportunity to attend the conference and exhibition, which he considered had been very well attended and organised.

In relation to the Fire Reform White Paper from the Government, DCFO Kirby referred to a recent National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) telephone call, where the Chair of the NFCC had alluded to the Home Office's 'Fire Day' on 12 May 2022. It was anticipated that on 12 May 2022, the Fire Reform White Paper would be published together with the Fire Safety Act, the regulations around Grenfell and a consultation response from Government in relation to Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans. Indications had been given that a Ministerial launch and event would be held on 12 May 2022 for Chief Fire Officers and Chairs of fire and rescue authorities. DCFO Kirby would liaise with the Chair on the arrangements.

Councillor Hogarth commented that the conference had highlighted that SYFR utilised the best possible equipment.

Councillor Garbutt queried whether it was anticipated that any of the changes to be introduced, through the publication of the Fire Reform White Paper, would badly/seriously affect the current arrangements within SYFR.

DCFO Kirby commented that it would be necessary to read and digest the Fire Reform White Paper upon publication. Members would be informed of the contents as soon as possible after receipt. There had been no indication of the changes to be made, other than in relation to the three elements of the Reform - governance, professionalism and people. The paper would likely allude to the fact that many fire and rescue services were not representative of communities. Whilst SYFR was not representative of communities, it was undertaking measures to make incremental improvements.

Members were provided with the presentation slides.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

18 KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY BOARD HELD ON 24 MARCH 2022

Councillor Hogarth suggested that a Service annual sickness absence report should be provided to the Authority.

In response, Councillor Ross commented that Members had access to the sickness absence data through Power-Bi, which was a 'live' system that could be monitored by Members on a regular basis, rather than waiting for reports to be presented to the Authority. The Performance and Scrutiny Board had previously noted the sickness absences levels within the Service, and had requested an in-depth report which had been provided to the last Board meeting held on 24 March 2022. The report had indicated that the change in sickness absence levels had been impacted by the Omicron variant of COVID-19. The Performance and Scrutiny Board would continue to monitor the position.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the key issues arising from the Performance and Scrutiny Board Meeting held on 24 March 2022.

19 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 MARCH 2022

On behalf of the Authority, Councillor Hogarth congratulated ACO Carlin on his appointment to the position of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 30 March 2022.

20 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2022

Dr Billings referred to an action arising on the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 14 March 2022, which stated that M McCarthy would ascertain with the Treasurer whether there would be any implications for the Authority, as a result of missing the deadline date of 11 March 2022, to formally opt into the sector led procurement scheme for External Audit services.

In response, N Copley confirmed that the deadline date of 11 March 2022 had not been missed. The issue had been resolved via an extra-ordinary meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee, where the Chair of the Committee had approved to formally opt into the sector led procurement scheme of External Audit services.

M McCarthy added that approval had also been sought from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Authority.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 14 March 2022.

21 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE POLICE AND FIRE COLLABORATION BOARD HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Police and Fire Collaboration Board held on 27 January 2022.

22 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and the public interest not to disclose information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

23 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER - AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

A report of the Service Director, Legal and Governance was presented to request that Members endorse the recommendation of the Evaluation Panel to appoint an individual to the vacant role of Independent Member, Audit and Governance Committee, with effect from 11 April 2022.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the action to date to recruit an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- ii) Agreed the recommendation of the Evaluation Panel to appoint an individual to the vacant role of Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee subject to satisfactory references.
- iii) Agreed to an appraisal process after the first four year term of appointment (April 2026).

Actions Table

No.	Action	Timescale	Officer(s)	Status/Update
1	To amend the CRMP document, within the Heritage Risk section, to indicate Oakes Park at Norton, Sheffield.	ASAP	DCFO Kirby	The CRMP document has been amended. ACTION DISCHARGED
2	To provide Members with regular updates via email on the developments of the HMICFRS Inspection	Ongoing	AM Strelczenie	<u>Update 26.05.22</u> Update provided to Members. ACTION DISCHARGED

CHAIR

Please follow the link below for further information on the updates of the actions arising from the Fire and Rescue Authority meetings:-

<https://meetings.southyorks.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD1250&ID=1250&RPID=402996&sch=doc&cat=13039&path=13039&zTS=D>