

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

ORDINARY MEETING

20 JUNE 2022

PRESENT: Councillor T Damms (Chair)
Councillor C Hogarth (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: S Sansome, T Smith, S Ball, D Hutchinson,
S Ayris, A Khayum, P Turpin and A Cherryholme

CFO C Kirby, DCFO T Carlin, S Slater and S Kelsey
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

J Field, N Copley, S Loach, M Potter, M Bray and N Ellis-Hall
(Barnsley MBC)

M Buttery – In attendance remotely
(Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner)

P Hewitson (Deloitte)

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor B Johnson, Councillor S Alston, Dr A Billings,
S Norman and ACO Strelczenie

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

J Field commented that a series of questions for the Service would be provided by Dr Billings outside of the meeting.

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

RESOLVED – That agenda item 21 entitled 'SYFR Control System Update' 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

In relation to the Ukraine appeal, Councillor Ball expressed his thanks to the Service for the support provided to the collection team in the transportation of goods.

Councillors Ball and Hogarth had attended the recent LGA Fire Commission Meeting in London. Councillor Ball suggested that the future meetings should be held virtually.

On 17 June 2022, Councillor Ball had attended the 69th Recruits Graduation Ceremony. He encouraged the other Members to attend future passing out parades.

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 11 APRIL 2022

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 11 April 2022 be signed by the chair as a correct record.

10 FIRE REFORM WHITE PAPER - PRESENTATION

DCFO Carlin provided Members with an overview of the Fire Reform White Paper. The consultation had opened on 18 May 2022, and would close on 26 July 2022. Members were referred to the website links which were provided within the presentation slides.

The consultation paper consisted of three overarching themes of People, Professionalism and Governance.

In response to a number of queries raised by Members regarding coordinating a response from a wider cohort of people and to bring the information together, Members noted that the matter would be discussed further at the Joint Liaison Forum Meeting held on 20 June 2022. On 27 June 2022, a Corporate Advisory Group Workshop would be held for Members and SYFR staff at the SYFR Training and Development Centre, Handsworth, Sheffield. This would enable a response to be formulated, which would be signed off by the Chair of the Authority.

11 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and Clerk and Treasurer was presented which informed Members as to the final revenue and capital outturn position for the financial year ended 31 March 2022. The report also included an updated total reserves position alongside a narrative commentary to help explain the key financial changes that had led to the year-end position, when compared to the approved revenue and capital budgets.

It was acknowledged that there had been constant financial challenges over the last few years due to Brexit, Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine which had all created significant financial implications. All of which would be taken into consideration in moving forwards. However, despite this, the Service had continued to recruit firefighters and had continued to explore business and community safety.

In relation to reserves, timing had been a factor and the allocation of funding had bolstered the financial resilience.

Members were referred to budgeting within each of the categories, overspends and underspends, pay awards, premises and indirect employee costs. In relation to transport, there had been a slight underspend which had been attributable to the pandemic, due to an increase the number of meetings attended virtually. The Service had secured savings on its insurance renewal.

There was an overachievement in income due to the National Emergency Services Network (ESN) project and late grants, relating to pension costs and a variance in capital financing.

In response to a number of questions raised by Members, S Slater commented that the overspends on ICT had been offset by agile working. A large amount of ICT work was underway. The budget had been managed by the underspends which had covered the inflation and the 2% pay award; a Fire Cadet budget was in place. A number of delays had been encountered in schemes, which had reduced the budget and had caused a slight borrowing gap. There had been a small spend on the replacement vehicles, and a delivery date had been provided for the Rescue Pumps which had been on back order. ICT work continued as part of the digital transformation.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Sansome in relation to whether the contracts were paid on an annual basis, and whether they were based on inflation or fluid based against the interest rates, N Copley stated that that the contracts were all different, some of which would be linked to annual inflation. This was attributable to the emerging risk reserve.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Approved the revenue and capital operating outturn position of £0.189m underspend when compared to the budget, funding and movement on reserves.

- ii) Agreed the capital expenditure outturn of £4.139m.
- iii) Approved the transfer of the in-year underspend (£0.189m) and other planned contributions (£1.451m) from the General Reserve to the Emerging Risk Reserve.
- iv) Agreed the summary Statement of Reserves (section C) which showed total useable reserves of £16.461m, split Earmarked Reserves £11.461m and General Reserves of £5.0m for the year ended 31 March 2022.
- v) Approved the budget carry forward requests as set out in section D of £0.155m into 2022/23 and the re-alignment of un-used carry forward budget of £0.248m to the Service Improvement Reserve.

12 UPDATE ON EXTERNAL AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021 - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21

N Copley gave an update on the External Audit for the year ended 31 March 2021. Members were referred to a discrepancy in relation to the service area, and the lengthy process undertaken by the finance team. There were no significant implications to the Authority.

P Hewitson commented that there was not an outstanding action for the Authority. The audit had coincided with a busy period for the external auditors. However, he estimated a total of two weeks of focused time remained to conclude the work.

Members were reassured by the update, but they requested to be kept updated in the event of any problems or delays.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

13 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT BOARD UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted which provided an update on progress against the actions on the Service Improvement Plan, which included actions relating to SYFR's Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Report, Grenfell Tower Inquiry, State of Fire and Rescue Reports and published Professional Fire Standards. The improvements generated through local and national learning from emergency incidents were also included within the plan, which included learning through the pandemic. The plan was monitored by the Service Improvement Board.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Sansome regarding the 45% schedule of completion in liaising with the owner and manager of every residential building containing separate dwellings, Members were assured that despite encountering difficulties with engagement, the Service now had a dedicated technician in post, and a Business Fire Safety Officer was in place at each local authority.

In relation to the Service's workforce representation, S Kelsey commented that the data was analysed at the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The information would be presented to Members through the Joint Liaison Forum.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report and provided further scrutiny and support to enable continual service improvement.

14 PEOPLE BOARD UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented which provided a summary of the items raised and discussed at the People Board during Quarter 4 2021/22. The People Board provided a strategic and critical role as a guardian of the SYFR People Strategy, which met on a quarterly basis to monitor the progress of the People Strategy and to scrutinise information from the four SYFR committees that report to the People Board. Work had now commenced on the next People Strategy for the period 2023 to 2026.

RESOLVED – That Members: -

- i) Noted the contents of the report and provided further scrutiny and support to enable continuing effective management of people issues.
- ii) Approved the Workforce Development Strategy for 2022-2025.

15 MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT - REVIEW AND THE YEAR AHEAD

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was submitted which provided Members with a review of the learning and development undertaken in 2021/22, together with a forward look to learning and development in 2022/23.

A Fire Authority Member induction session would be held for the new Members onto the Authority on Friday 1 July 2022.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the skills, learning and development acquired in 2021/22.
- ii) Agreed to a process of informal Development Discussions between July 2022 and early September 2022 for all new and existing Members which would inform an appropriate and targeted Learning and Development Schedule for 2022/23.
- iii) Noted the wider Learning and Development 'Offer' at Appendix A to the report.

16 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON
27 MAY 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 27 May 2022.

17 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 MAY 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 25 May 2022.

18 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LOCAL PENSION BOARD HELD ON 14 APRIL 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Local Pension Board held on 14 April 2022.

19 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION HELD ON 5 APRIL 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association held on 5 April 2022.

20 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.

21 SYFR CONTROL SYSTEM UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive was submitted which provided Members with an overview of the current position in relation to the SYFR control system.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the recommendations as highlighted within the report.

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>