



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority held
at 10:00 hours on Thursday 13 December 2018 at the
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Salisbury**

Members present: Cllr Spencer Flower (Chairman); Cllr Abdul Amin; Cllr Richard Biggs; Cllr Kevin Brookes; Cllr Malcolm Davies; Cllr Beverley Dunlop; Cllr Peter Hutton; Cllr Bob Jones; Cllr Brian Mattock; Cllr Christopher Newbury; Cllr Paul Oatway; Cllr Pip Ridout; Cllr Ann Stribley.

Officer attendance: Chief Fire Officer, Ben Ansell; Director of Finance and Treasurer; Mr Phil Chow; Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Mr Jonathan Mair; Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), Derek James; Director of Service Support, ACFO John Aldridge; Director of Service Support, Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer (T/ACFO) Byron Standen; Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead; Director of People Services, Ms Jenny Long; Head of Financial Services, Mr Ian Cotter; Head of Information and Communications, Mrs Vikki Shearing; Head of Prevention and Protection, Area Manager Seth Why; Senior Communications Officer, Ms Emily Cheeseman

Observer: Ms Julia Hijstek, Wiltshire Herald & Gazette

18/52 Welcome

18/52.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

18/53 Apologies

18/53.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Ernie Clark, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Garry Perkins, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Vikki Slade, ACFO Jim Mahoney, Mrs Jill McCrae.

18/54 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business

18/54.1 The Chairman asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. There were no disclosures from Members and a number of disclosures from Officers.

18/54.2 CFO Ben Ansell advised Members that the Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Mr Jonathan Mair, had advised that all members of the Firefighters Pension Schemes with an interest in item 18/61 should absent themselves from that part of the meeting.

18/54.3 CFO Ansell declared his interest in item 18/67 as a trustee of the SafeWise charity.

18/55 Minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 28 September 2018.

18/55.1 The Chairman asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.

18/55.2 The Chairman invited the Treasurer, Mr Phil Chow, to update the meeting on the fire precept in the Minutes at item 18/44.11. The Treasurer advised that there has been a delay in the fire finance settlement announcement due to Ministers dealing with Brexit matters. However, the finance settlement was expected to be announced shortly.

18/55.3 The Chairman advised Members that he had received some responses from MPs following his letter on behalf of the Authority.

18/55.4 **RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

18/56 Receive minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee on 20 September 2018 and a verbal update from 7 December 2018

18/56.1 The Chairman of the Finance & Governance Committee advised that he had nothing of note to add with exception item 18/34.2 which was a clean bill of health from the Auditors.

18/56.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted the draft minutes of the Finance & Governance meeting of the 28 September 2018 and the verbal update from 7 December 2018.**

Initials _____

18/57 Service Performance Review (six-month summary)

- 18/57.1 CFO Ansell reminded Members that the Authority carried out scrutiny of Service performance quarterly. Priorities 1, 2 and 3 were scrutinised by the four Local Performance and Scrutiny (LPS) Committees and priorities 4 and 5 were scrutinised by the Finance & Governance Committee.
- 18/57.2 CFO Ansell advised Members that Appendix A to this report provided a consolidated and comprehensive summary of performance at a priority level. It focused on progress against corporate targets and some key performance indicators. He added that the report does not duplicate the detail that was scrutinised by the other Committees mentioned above. CFO Ansell also confirmed that the report covered the first six months of the 2018-19 corporate planning year.
- 18/57.3 CFO Ansell advised that whilst not explicit in the narrative provided within the report, the focus of our performance management was driven by, and aligned to, our strategic risk register.
- 18/57.4 CFO Ansell took Members through the presentation to illustrate the performance of the Service by the priorities. CFO Ansell reported that in the first six months there had been no formally recorded fire deaths, and that there were two further incidents awaiting HM Coroner's judgement.
- 18/57.5 CFO Ansell confirmed to Members that the Service was progressing towards its target of 100% of safe & well checks being carried out on high risk vulnerable people by 2020; and that there had been an increase in demand for attendance at incidents within that same time period.
- 18/57.6 Members were pleased to hear of the improving figures for retention and recruitment of on-call firefighters and CFO Ansell added that there was, however, more work to do to build on this position.
- 18/57.7 On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked the Senior Health and Safety Advisor, Mr John Lincoln, and his team for their hard work in achieving BSI (British Standards Institution) 18001 accreditation. CFO Ansell added his thanks to all staff for their achievement and advised Members that the Service was one of three fire and rescue services which had achieved a 'Certificate of Compliance' across its entire Service.
- 18/57.8 CFO Ansell confirmed to Members that across the Service a number of areas were improving in line with expectations, including work to deliver a more diverse workforce. He also outlined that the Service was slightly above the Cleveland average for absence management; confirmed that operational apprentices within the Service had been offered full time posts; and that development pathways for both operational and corporate staff were now clearly defined.

Initials _____

18/57.9 CFO Ansell summarised the year by reminding Members that there had been a number of significant events, including two major incidents linked to the nerve agent attack and two severe weather events which were all outlined within the report.

18/57.10 **RESOLVED: Members noted the Service Performance Review (six month summary).**

18/58 Local Performance & Scrutiny verbal feedback

18/58.1 The Chairman introduced this item and invited the Chairs of the four Local Performance & Scrutiny Committees (LPS) to comment.

18/58.2 Cllr Paul Oatway, gave a summary of the last Wiltshire LPS Committee meeting and actions from the priorities which were ongoing business matters.

18/58.3 Cllr Ann Stribley gave a summary of the Bournemouth and Poole LPS Committee meeting and voiced a plea that Members ensure they attend meetings and understand their responsibilities, and that any lack of attendance should be addressed by group leaders.

18/58.4 Cllr Kevin Brookes provided a summary of the Dorset LPS Committee meeting confirming that he was pleased and satisfied with information provided by officers to the meetings. Members had discussed recruitment and the on-call pay model and requested a timescale for implementation.

18/58.5 CFO Ansell updated Members on the position of on-call pay, advising that the Finance & Governance Committee were overseeing this. CFO Ansell added that it was anticipated that an agreement on the matter would be reached by March 2019.

18/58.6 In Cllr Perkins absence, Cllr Brian Mattock summarised the Swindon LPS November meeting adding that the press had been present, resulting in positive press highlighting a good news story.

18/59 Revised Capital Programme

18/59.1 The Head of Financial Services, Mr Ian Cotter, introduced the report advising Members that the capital programme was regularly monitored and reviewed during the year by the Finance & Governance Committee. He added that the paper set out how the programme would be amended to take account of project progress in year, as well as savings being delivered.

18/59.2 Mr Cotter confirmed to Members that overall the 2018-19 Capital Programme would reduce to a forecast level of £8.306m. This would be financed through a mix of internal funding from grants and reserves, supplemented by an estimated new borrowing requirement of £3.893m.

Initials _____

18/59.3 Mr Cotter added that the paper also sought Members' approval to agree revised Prudential Indicators for 2018-19 in line with the revised capital programme.

Members were content with the report.

18/59.4 **RESOLVED: Members noted the changes required and reported in Section 2 of the report and approved the Revised Capital Programme 2018-19 at £8.306m.**

18/59.5 **RESOLVED: Members approved the revised prudential indicators 2018-19.**

18/60 Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2018-19

18/60.1 The Head of Financial Services, Mr Ian Cotter, reminded Members that at the meeting of the Authority on 9 February 2018, they received and approved the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Prudential Indicators for 2018-19. Mr Cotter advised this report updated Members on the Treasury Management performance for the six months to 30 September 2018.

18/60.2 Mr Cotter confirmed to Members that there were no instances of non-compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices. He further confirmed that no new borrowing had been undertaken in 2018-19, and that the cash flow position was being closely monitored.

18/60.3 Mr Cotter confirmed to Members that this Authority had not undertaken any new borrowings since Combination; and confirmed the position in relation to private finance initiative and grant allocation.

18/60.4 **RESOLVED: Members noted the treasury management position as at 30 September 2018.**

18/61 Firefighters' Pension Scheme – Voluntary Scheme Pays

18/61.1 Uniformed Members of the Firefighters Pension Schemes left the room as recommended by the Clerk & Monitoring Officer.

18/61.2 The Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Mr Jonathan Mair, took Members through the report which set out a recommendation to introduce a Voluntary Scheme Pays arrangement for the Firefighter Pension Schemes in order to supplement or sit alongside the existing Mandatory Scheme.

18/61.3 Mr Mair outlined the approach taken to the taxation of the growth in the value of a pension scheme member's pension pot and the availability and operation of the "Scheme Pays" option. He explained that there were instances where the tax charge arising from an increase in the value of an individual's pension pot would be beyond their ability to pay.

Initials ____

- 18/61.4 Mr Mair advised that the “Scheme Pays” option enabled the tax charge to be paid by the pension Scheme Administrator on a Scheme member’s behalf. The tax charge would then be recovered over time by the Scheme Administrator through a reduction in the pension paid to the scheme member. Changes to the Firefighters Pension Schemes meant that there were instances where scheme members could not access the mandatory Scheme Pays option. A voluntary Scheme Pays option would remedy this.
- 18/61.5 Mr Mair confirmed to Members that the LGA had sought external legal advice for fire and rescue authorities generally and the recommendation to introduce voluntary scheme pays arrangements was advised to be lawful. He further confirmed that this was also thought to be in line with future changes likely to be made to the legislative framework relating to firefighters’ pay and pensions.
- 18/61.6 The Chairman reminded Members that the Service was not being asked to do anything out of line with many authorities and that there was no cost to the Authority.
- 18/61.7 **RESOLVED: Members agreed a voluntary Scheme Pays arrangement be introduced for the payment of pension Annual Allowance tax liabilities but applicable only in one (or both) of the circumstances set out in paragraph three (3.6) of the report.**
- 18/61.8 **RESOLVED: Members agreed that this policy be applied retrospectively to any individual affected by the tax liabilities change (2015–16 onwards).**
- 18/62 Integrated Risk Management Plan strategic principles**
- 18/62.1 The Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead, reminded Members that at the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on the 19 May 2016, former Members approved the integrated risk management programme. This included agreeing the principles that would underpin and shape the work being undertaken through the Communities Programme.
- 18/62.2 ACFO Stead advised Members that the revised principles would allow Officers to look at more innovative solutions to risk management and a wider scope for potential Service changes to deliver savings against financial projections contained within the Medium-Term Finance Plan.
- 18/62.3 ACFO Stead assured Members that any significant proposals to change Service delivery that would affect the public would be brought back to them for consideration before any wider stakeholder engagement was undertaken. Members agreed the programme would make the best use of opportunities available to them.

Initials _____

- 18/62.4 Members discussed the request sought by CFO Ansell on Members' opinion to minor changes which would help deliver partnership approaches without the need to be constrained unnecessarily under IRMP principle 1. He advised that this did not relate to a statutory requirement to respond, would be cost neutral and would support the need to respond more swiftly to partnership requests under the proposed memorandum of understanding (MOU). He added that all costs being discussed would be covered by financial regulations and not be detrimental to the Service.
- 18/62.5 The Chairman summarised the concerns raised and asked Members to agree to defer the matter, pending Audit opinion, until the next meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee in March 2019.
- 18/62.6 **RESOLVED: Members deferred the revised principles, that would shape workstreams within the Communities Programme to the next meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee.**
- 18/62.7 **ACTION: The Director of Service Improvement to submit a revised paper to the next meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee.**

18/63 Member Development

- 18/63.1 The Chairman introduced DCFO Derek James acting on behalf of the Head of Strategic Planning and Corporate Assurance, Mrs Jill McCrae. DCFO James took Members through the report which outlined the current Member development arrangements agreed during the meeting on 6 June 2018.
- 18/63.2 DCFO James advised Members that the report provided an update on those arrangements and confirmation of the ongoing and strengthened access to development opportunities. DCFO James highlighted the Principles of Good Governance included at Appendix A to the report.
- 18/63.3 The Chairman acknowledged the importance of Member development since the Authority had reduced in numbers. Members discussed the paper and consequences on the Authority, as a whole, if attendance was not forthcoming. Members agreed a report to group leaders would be provided and attendance discussed if necessary, as with non-attendance at meetings.
- 18/63.4 The Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Mr Jonathan Mair, agreed that using a structured approach would strengthen the Authority and that the reduced numbers meant that a strong structured approach to attendance at Committees and development opportunities is important. It was agreed that a report to group leaders should be compiled in April.
- 18/63.5 **RESOLVED: Members reviewed and noted the current and future Member development arrangements and opportunities.**

Initials _____

- 18/63.6 **ACTION: A report be provided by the Head of Strategic Planning & Corporate Assurance to group leaders about take-up of Member development opportunities.**
- 18/64 Members Podcast**
- 18/64.1 CFO Ansell introduced the Member podcast which was well received.
- 18/65 To consider passing the following resolution:**
- 18/65.1 In accordance with Section 100A (3) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public for the business specified below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.
- 18/65.2 **RESOLVED: Members closed the meeting to the press and public.**
- 18/66 Date of Next Meeting**
- 18/66.1 The Chairman confirmed the date of the next Authority meeting as Tuesday 12 February 2019 at Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre, Hulse Road, Salisbury SP1 3NR, from 10am.
- 18/67 Skills for Life Centre update**
- 18/67.1 Members considered the declaration of interest made by CFO Ansell at 18/54.3 above, taking advice from the Clerk & Monitoring Officer. Members were satisfied that CFO Ansell should remain present for the paper.
- 18/67.2 With the Chairman's permission CFO Ansell invited the Director of Service Support, ACFO John Aldridge; Skills for Life Centre Project Lead, GM Bryan Morris; and Road Safety Manager, Mr Ian Hopkins to join the table.
- 18/67.3 Cllr Peter Hutton (Members' Skills for Life Working Group Chairman) introduced the paper, its appendix and the addendum tabled, and outlined the options within the addendum. Cllr Hutton advised Members that Partners were every positive about the Skills for Life Centre.
- 18/67.4 Members discussed the options before them and agreed a number of actions be by CFO Ansell.

Initials _____

18/67.5 **RESOLVED: Members agreed all three recommendations on the addendum.**

Meeting closed at: 12:20hrs

Signed: _____