

Minutes of the Meeting of  
the TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND  
RESCUE AUTHORITY held in the  
Fire and Rescue Service  
Headquarters, Barmston Mere on  
MONDAY 16 JULY 2018 at  
10.30am.

**Present:**

Councillor Curran in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Flynn, Forbes, Haley, Perry, Pickard, Stephenson, Taylor, and  
Woodwark.

**Part I**

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Burdis,  
Dodds, Duggan, Harrison, Kilgour, Oliver and also Dame Vera Baird DBE QC.

**Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Minutes**

15. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Authority, Part I held on 18 June 2018  
be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**Dying to Work Charter**

Trade Union Representatives were in attendance for this item of business.

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (Clerk to the Authority) and the Personnel  
Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report to provide Members with an update  
regarding the 'Dying to Work' Campaign and to progress the signing of the 'Dying to  
Work Charter'.

Members were advised that the Dying to Work Campaign had been developed to see  
terminal illness recognised as a protected characteristic so that an employee with a

terminal illness would have a projected period where they could not be dismissed as a result of their condition. This would encourage employees to choose how to spend their final years with knowing that their job was protected and the future financial security for their family guaranteed.

The charter stated:

- Terminally ill workers would be secure in the knowledge that the Service would support them following their diagnosis and recognise that safe and reasonable work could help maintain dignity, offer a valuable distraction and could be therapeutic in itself.
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service would provide employees with the security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families which helped them through the challenging period with dignity and without undue financial loss.
- The Service would support employees battling with a terminal illness to ensure they had adequate employment protection and had their death in service benefits protected for the loved ones they leave behind.

To date, over 70 employers had signed the charter, enabling the protection for approximately 577,000 employees. Signing the charter would strengthen the Authority's commitment to the health and wellbeing of its employees and demonstrate its commitment to supporting throughout the most difficult of circumstances.

Councillors commented that that this was excellent proposal and that they were highly supportive of. Not only did this drive the Authority to continuously improve equality and diversity it also supported officers and their families during an incredibly difficult time.

Beth Farhat (Regional TUC Secretary) commented that that the Charter was very important in recognition of investing in staff health and wellbeing especially to those who still wished to work despite being terminally ill and also enable their family to receive a death in service benefit.

The Regional TUC Secretary also outlined the importance of as many employers as possible signing up to the Charter and explained that a movement towards a legislative change would be made in due course.

All Trade Union Representatives were invited to sign the Charter together with the Chairman.

16. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted;
- (ii) The drive to continuously improve equality, diversity and inclusion within the Service and the community of Tyne and Wear be supported; and
- (iii) Further reports be received as required.

## **Member Links with Community Fire Stations**

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (the Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Manager and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report setting out for consideration of Members, a revised list of links between Members and the Community Fire Stations and departments within Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. It also proposed to assign Members a key point of contact within the Executive Leadership Team of the Service to build relationships and aid communication.

Members were reminded that there were many benefits to be realised from Authority Members having direct contact with employees through visiting Community Fire Stations and departments on a regular basis to meet local staff, discuss current issues and to be appraised on progress with regard to the delivery of the Strategic Community Safety Plan.

Members were advised that this year, for the first time, Members would be allocated a key point of contact with the Executive Leadership Team. It was hoped that this would give Members access to any information that they may need. The three Principal Officers would continue to liaise with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Fire Authority and also the Police and Crime Commissioner. Members of each Local Authority area had been assigned an Area Manager as their key point of contact. This would facilitate the development of Area Managers in the local political arena but would also give Members a more efficient route to gain access to areas of the Service that they may need at short notice.

Members were then referred to Appendix A which set out for consideration the proposed links between each fire station and service departments and Fire Authority Members. Once approved, a programme of visits would be scheduled for Link Stations and Members were invited to encourage their ward colleagues to attend.

17. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The report and the proposed link arrangements set out in Appendix A be noted and endorsed; and
- (ii) The links between Members and stations/departments be endorsed.

## **Update on Collaboration**

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (the Clerk to the Authority), the Strategic Finance Officer and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report to provide Members with an update on progress of collaborative activities between Tyne and Wear and Rescue Services (TWFRS) and partner organisations including Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS), County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria (OPCC), Northumbria Police (NP) and more recently, the North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS).

ACFO Baines referred Members to section 3 of the report which highlighted the governance arrangements in place to support the collaboration and explained that all partners had supported a statement of intent and that plans were in place to update the signatories to formalise the inclusion of NEAS, together with a further Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) collaboration statement.

The principles of collaboration for all partners was to seek to maximise value for money, e.g. reducing costs through joint procurement, removal of duplication and to optimise utilisation of resources, including co-location; with any cross partner recharge being on a full cost recovery basis and in line with CIPFA Best Value principles.

Members were reminded that the Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Fire Conference had taken place on 13-14 March 2018 and provided an opportunity to promote shared learning and knowledge.

Representatives from the TWFRS Trauma Support Team (TST) along with Commissioner Dany Cotton, London Fire Brigade and Chief Fire Officer Ian Hayton, Cleveland Fire and Rescue Service conducted a keynote session titled 'Grenfell Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Fire Sector' which outlined the evolution of the TST's approach and gave an insight into shared experiences and outlined the processes which had been adopted.

With regards to estate and asset integration, a feasibility study had commenced for the proposed site for the relocation of Hebburn Fire Station, utilising the One Public Estate (OPE) grant funding to conduct this study.

The Great North Air Ambulance (GNAAS) ground response unit had co-located to Washington Community Fire Station, Northumbria Blood Bike Vessels had co-located to West Denton Community Fire Station and The Princes Trust had co-located to Newcastle Community Fire Station.

ACFO Baines then went on to say that TWFRS joined with other public service organisations to support OPCC in the partnership panels for the recent Chief and Deputy Chief Constable appointments. In addition, TWFRS in conjunction with CDDFRS conducted a joint Assistant Chief Fire Officer recruitment process, with both services' appointment candidates.

Members were advised that since the previous report, significant areas for collaboration had been explored with several areas of clear and effective progress and collaborative activity had already improved outcomes for people and communities, Inter-operability, staff welfare and value for money.

The Vice-Chairman commented that it was a comprehensive report and welcomed the progress which had been made on collaboration. Councillor Forbes went on to say that the partners had achieved a balance in relation to procurement, value for money and supporting the local economy. In addition, it strengthened the collaborative approach with the Police and Crime Commissioner that a sustained approach was in place and that further governance changes were not required. In addition, more publicity should be made of this approach and the benefits it had realised.

Councillor Woodwark agreed and commented that it was an excellent report and welcomed the total one-off saving from the disposal of assets in excess of £1.2m and on-going revenue savings in excess of £1.5m.

A discussion then ensued in relation to communication, particularly with Government and ACFO Baines explained that a wide range of reports were shared through the Strategic Board and then escalated higher.

Councillor Haley then questioned whether other organisations were in a position to calculate revenue savings and was advised that many of them were, especially the police due to co-location which in turn, realised savings for the fire service due to income generation.

18. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the progress on collaboration be welcomed, noted and promoted; and
- (ii) the continuation of collaboration between TWFRS, CDDFRS, NFRS, OCPP, NP and NEAS be supported.

### **The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) (Custodial Premises) Subordinate Provisions Order 2018**

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (the Clerk to the Authority) and the Personnel Advisor to the Authority submitted a joint report providing Members with an overview of the changes brought into force by the 2018 order and highlighted the impact on the Authorities statutory responsibilities.

Members were reminded that the Crown Premises Fire Inspection Group (CPFIG), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Home Office had reviewed who was the correct enforcing authority for the purpose of Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) in custodial premises.

This review had led to the creation of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) (Custodial Premises) Subordinate Provisions Order 2018 ("the 2018 order") which amended the FSO.

ACFO Robson advised Members that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) (Custodial Premises) Subordinate Provisions Order 2018 came into force on Friday 30th March 2018. This Order modified article 25 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (S.I.2005/1541) to provide that certain types of custodial premises now fall within sub-paragraph (e) of article 25(1) irrespective of whether they are owned or occupied by the Crown. The effect was that a fire inspector, or any person authorised by the Secretary of State for the purposes of the Order, was the enforcing authority in relation to those premises in accordance with article 25(1)(e).

This ended the arrangement under which CPFIG inspectors were appointed as inspectors of Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Authority to inspect custodial premises. The two identified premises reverted to the enforcing control of CPFIG.

19. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted; and
- (ii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

**Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

20. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to any individual or which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual or information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) or information relating to consultations/negotiations in connection with any labour matter arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

(Signed) B. Curran  
Chairman

**Note:**

The above minutes comprise those relating to items of business during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.