



TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Item No 5

MEETING: FIRE AUTHORITY 22 JANUARY 2023

SUBJECT: MERITORIOUS CONDUCT AWARD

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE (THE CLERK
TO THE AUTHORITY)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the commencement of today's meeting, the Chief Fire Officer, Peter Heath and Chair of the Fire Authority, Councillor Phil Tye, will present a Fire Authority Commendation for brave and meritorious conduct to Firefighter (FF) David Bell. This is in recognition of his actions rescuing an individual out of the water and to safety after they fell from a bridge.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Meritorious Conduct Awards Scheme provides for Members of Fire Authority to recognise individuals who perform commendable acts of bravery, gallantry or community actions.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is for Members of the Fire Authority to recognise the meritorious and brave actions taken by FF Bell whilst of duty at an incident. This involved rescuing an individual across a muddy bank, out of water and to safety after they fell from a bridge, and remained with the person until the arrival of the ambulance service.

3 INCIDENT DETAILS

- 3.1 On 31 October 2023 the Service received a nomination from a Station Manager which details the incident and act of bravery of FF Bell.



- 3.2 FF Bell was driving through the incident area whilst off duty when he was flagged down by a distressed individual who had seen someone fall from a bridge. FF Bell took action and began a search for the victim in the river below. He located the person who had fallen and with little consideration for himself and at great personal risk to himself, crossed the muddy bank created by the low tide and entered the water. On his own he managed to pull the individual from the water and to a place of safety.
- 3.3 The nature of the individuals injuries were quite severe and included rib and wrist fractures, a broken C spine, a liver laceration and sternal fractures along with other sustained injuries.
- 3.4 FF Bell immediately started emergency care to the individual's significant injuries. He had no first aid equipment so improvised with his own clothing to apply pressure to numerous wounds. FF Bell delivered continuous casualty care to the individual until the North East Ambulance Service and Helicopter Emergency Medical Service arrived on scene.
- 3.5 Due to FF Bell's actions, the individual will be able to recover. FF Bell at great personal risk and disregard for his own safety demonstrated the highest standards of bravery and humanitarian commitment to help save a life. In this respect he demonstrated the best traditions of the Fire and Rescue Service.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk implications associated with this report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications in respect of this report.

6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no equality and fairness implications in respect of this report.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS



7.1 There are no health and safety implications in respect of this report.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Endorse the Fire Authority Commendation for Meritorious Conduct
- b) Congratulate and thank FF Bell for his actions in saving a life.

