

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 10 DECEMBER 2018 at
10.30am.

Present:

Councillor Curran in the Chair

Councillors Dodds, Duggan, Forbes, Flynn, Haley, Kilgour, Oliver, Perry, Pickard, Stephenson, Taylor and Woodwark.

Part I

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Burdis and Harrison together with Dame Vera Baird DBE QC.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

42. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Authority, Part I held on 5th November 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Item 9 - IRMP – Review of how we respond relative to risk to include ‘ Councillor Woodwark proposed that the consultation period be extended from 10 weeks to a twelve week period’

Announcements

The Chairman advised that Item 4 on the agenda related to an update on consultation on the IRMP. The report included with the agenda papers related to an error with an aspect of the information that was included in the original report

considered at the November meeting. The Chairman had also agreed to a supplementary report being circulated in respect of Item 4, in respect of the consultation period, on the grounds of urgency. Extensive representations had been received regarding the period allowed for consultation and as the consultation process was already underway, the Chairman considered it important that this was brought to the Authority's attention and members had the opportunity to consider the matter.

Update on Consultation on IRMP – Review of How we Respond Relative to Risk

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 to provide members with an update.

ACFO Robson advised the Authority it had come to officers' attention that the previous report contained a calculation error in *Figure 3*, which set out the average number of incidents by station and risk level over the last five years. Unfortunately, the figures given in the 'Grand Total' column were incorrect due to formula error in that column. All other data in the table was correct.

A revised Figure 3, with the corrected grand totals, was set out in the report and Members were reassured that the error highlighted had no material impact on the outcomes or proposals set out by the review that were the subject of the earlier report.

43. RESOLVED that:-

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

Item 4 Supplementary Report – IRMP Response Review Consultation Period

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 to draw the attention of Members to requests made by members of the public and FBU representatives to extend the duration of the IRMP response review consultation period by two weeks, until 28th January 2019.

ACFO Robson reminded Members that the IRMP Response Review consultation was launched with the approval of Fire Authority on 5th November 2018 for a period of ten weeks (until 14th January 2019). This period was considered to be proportionate to the change proposed, and consistent with the HM Government Code of Practice for consultation.

To date, there had been multiple requests from members of the public and FBU representatives to extend the consultation period to 12 weeks (until 28th January 2019).

ACFO Robson advised Members that if the consultation period were to be extended by two weeks to 28th January 2019, this may provide additional opportunities for employees, members of the public and stakeholders to share their views.

In view of the Christmas period, and concerns about the integrity of the data contained within the report (raised with Fire Authority and now rectified), Members may determine that such an extension would be advantageous.

However, it should be noted that the current consultation closing date of 14th January 2019 allowed sufficient time for robust analysis and interpretation of consultation feedback ahead of reporting to Fire Authority in February 2019.

A longer consultation period was highly likely to delay reporting to Fire Authority until March 2019, with the resulting delay to implementation of one month until May 2019.

Councillor Forbes commented that stakeholders should be encouraged to still submit responses as early as possible rather than waiting until the absolute deadline to ensure that all representations are considered in detail and that decisions were well informed and in accordance with the timetable previously agreed.

Councillor Pickard agreed and commented that meaningful suggestions were also very important for Members to consider together with any possible alternative ways to meet to £3.5m funding gap, that the Authority was faced with.

The Vice-Chairman commented that it had been hoped that the Finance Settlement would be have been received the previous week however this had not been the case and commented that lobbying needed to take place.

Councillor Forbes suggested that a joint letter be sent from the Leaders of the five constituent Council's regarding funding and how disproportionately unfair it was with Tyne and Wear being one of six, to bear a 50% cut in funding.

CFO Lowther advised that in addition to a letter from Leaders, himself and the Chairman would be meeting the Minister early in the new year.

Councillor Dodds commented that reserves should not be used to set a balanced budget and suggested that this also form part of the discussions and added that it needed to be made clear exactly what they were to be used for.

44. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted and endorsed;
- (ii) the consultation period be extended as requested, by two weeks, until 28th January 2019; and
- (iii) Further reports be received as appropriate.

Incident Response Standards

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 to provide Members with information regarding potential incident response standards and to illustrate examples of standards employed in other fire and rescue services. The report sought the approval to set initial incident response standards for Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.

ACFO Robson advised Members that almost all fire and rescue authorities set response standards that were claimed to provide a definable standard against which authorities could measure service performance. Additionally, a response standard was considered to allow communities to be consulted more directly regarding their expectations from fire and rescue services. As part of the consultation being undertaken regarding the IRMP review of how the service respond relative to risk the public, workforce and key stakeholders were being asked if they thought it was reasonable to set such standards.

Members were then advised that it was proposed to trial the use of these initial standards for one year, commencing April 2019 that would facilitate the development of final standards set for full adoption in 2020.

The proposed standards would be:

- to answer 96 per cent of 999 calls within 7 seconds
- to dispatch resources to emergency incidents within an average 1 minute of answering the call
- for the first fire engine to arrive within an average of 6 minutes from being dispatched to risk level 1 incidents
- for the second fire engine (if required) to arrive within an average of 8 minutes from being dispatched to risk level 1 incidents
- for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident in Tyne and Wear where there is significant risk to life and property within 8 minutes in more than 90 per cent of occasions.
- for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident in Tyne and Wear where there is significant risk to life and property within 10 minutes in more than 95 per cent of occasions

In addition to these standards the aspiration would remain to respond to emergency incidents as quickly as possible, prioritising the response to incidents where there was significant risk to life and property

Councillor Duggan referred to section 2.2 of the report which stated that the average time taken for the first fire engine to arrive at risk level 1 incidents was 5 minutes and 12 seconds and questioned why the proposed standards were 6 minutes.

ACFO Robson explained that 6 minutes was what the modelling had been based on and also on previous IRMP reviews.

45. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) the use of the initial incident response standards as set out in 4.6 for 2019/20 be approved to allow the monitoring the impact prior to formal adoption of this approach; and
- (iii) Further reports be received as necessary.

Bonfire Campaign 2018

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 to inform Members of the 2018 Bonfire Campaign.

ACFO Robson advised Members that the bonfire campaign aimed to influence young people by educating and raising awareness of the dangers and consequences of setting bonfires and misusing fireworks. The targeted age group this year was 13-17 years old in secondary schools. Prevention and Education (P and E) developed a risk based education programme targeting secondary and non-mainstream schools in Tyne and Wear.

Service district teams in collaboration with Northumbria Police adopted a data led approach to target and visit 21 secondary schools across Tyne & Wear. Bonfire and firework-safety education talks were delivered to 12,057 students.

For those young people outside of mainstream education, sessions were delivered to three Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and 14 Special Educational Needs Schools (SENs) by SafetyWorks! 410 young people from outside of mainstream education attended SafetyWorks! and received this targeted bonfire campaign education.

ACFO Robson then referred Members to the following incident statistics detailed in section 6 of the report:-

Bonfire period 1st – 6th November validated data and variance from 2017.

- 9.6% decrease in the number of fire calls received – 1192 to 1078
- 18.6% decrease in the number of incidents attended – 667 to 543
- 26.8% decrease in the number of deliberate secondary fires – 328 to 240
- 27.3% decrease in the number of attacks on our fire crews – 11 to 8

- 100% increase in the number of Firework related primary fires – 1 to 2

Members were asked to note that the total number of calls received and the total number of incidents attended had decreased this year. A number of factors appeared to have contributed to this decrease, namely:-

- Local authority bonfire and refuse uplift schemes prevented many more incidents and further reduced the risk to members of the community and fire fighters alike, by removing waste and combustibles.
- Targeted education of older youths in schools in problematic areas, non-mainstream schools and education centres ensured that P&E teams educated those youths most likely to be involved in deliberate fire setting and ASB.
- Increase in following and interactions on social media and the TWFRS website meant that our educational 'reach' significantly increased and affected/influenced more people. This increased awareness of the issues.

ACFO Robson advised the Authority that unfortunately, there had been eight reported attacks on operational fire crews. Of the eight incidents, one was in Gateshead, four were in Newcastle and three were in Sunderland. North and South Tyneside experienced no attacks on fire crews this year. Although this was a decrease of 27%, any attack on a firefighter was incredibly disappointing to note.

Each incident would be investigated, and action taken against the perpetrators where evidence supported such action. Members commented that the target of attacks on Firefighters should be zero, and that no personnel should experience assault when carrying out a public duty and risk a threat or endanger their lives.

ACFO Robson agreed and commented that body cameras were worn where possible, and intelligence of offenders fed back to the police.

A detailed discussion ensued in relation to the sale of fireworks and Members agreed that tighter regulations needed to be place as the risk of assault continued to be too great. In addition, organised displays should be continued to be promoted as the sale of illegal fireworks was devastating.

46. RESOLVED that:-

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

Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESCMP) and Mobilising and Resource Management System Technical Refresh – Update

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 to update Members on the current progress of the national Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP).

ACFO Robson reminded Members that the Mobilising and Resource Management System contract was awarded to telent in 2012 as part of an initial 10-year contract with the option to extend this for a further 5 years. Contract prices were valid for 10 years of services subject to a technical refresh being carried out by both Authority Parties (TWFRS and Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service) in the fifth contract year i.e. 2018).

Technical refresh included replacement of a number of hardware components within the current Mobilising and Resource Management System e.g. PCs and monitors in the Control Room, hardware in the server room and Mobile Data Terminals & Tom Toms on fire appliances.

Approval through the delegation scheme had resulted in purchase order submission with an implementation plan now being developed with completion anticipated late Spring 2019.

Assessment of ESN upgrade activities and enabling works had been undertaken resulting in Home Office Section 31 Grant Funding provided as follows:-

- Initial Grant of £1.734m in March 2017
- Additional Grant of £0.656m in March 2018
- Local Transition Resource of £0.052m for 2016/17
- Local Transition Resource of £0.176m for 2017/18
- Local Transition Resource of £0.086m for 2018/19

Increased revenue expenditure due to ESN upgrade activities continued to be a concern as does the provision of future Local Transition Resource (LTR) funding. In respect of the Technical Refresh, budget provision of £0.350m was made. Through detailed analysis and discussions with suppliers the actual costs of the technical refresh were approximately £0.253m.

47. RESOLVED that:-

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

Excellence in Diversity Award Submission and Inclusive Top 50 UK Employer Award

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 to provide Members with an update regarding the 'Excellence in Diversity' and 'Inclusive Top 50 Employer Award'.

ACFO Baines proudly reported that that the Authority was successful in being awarded 10th place in the 'Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers' list. This was the 3rd consecutive year the Authority had placed in the Inclusive Top 50 Employer list.

The submission detailed the great work of the Services' Fire Cadets, the initiatives the Network Groups were involved in, such as Pride and also highlighted the 'Just Ask' event which ran in September 2017. This also included examples of how the Authority met cultural and religious needs through the alteration of uniform and the exceptional work of the Community Engagement team.

Members of the Authority welcomed this report and congratulated the service on this outstanding achievement.

48. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted and endorsed;
- (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 appropriate.

LGA Annual Conference

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 to advise Members that the Annual Fire Conference of the Local Government Association (LGA) was scheduled to be held in Brighton on 12 and 13 March 2019. The report proposed an Authority representation at the conference.

ACFO Baines advised the Authority that the conference theme would be designed to address the issues and key challenges facing the service in the coming months and years. The last year had seen widespread change in the sector. There was a new inspection regime in place, a new standards approach had been announced and there had been a number of changes in governance. The 2019 Fire Conference provided an opportunity to examine these changes, consider notable practice and examine how the Authority developed this activity further.

Members were advised that the cost to attend the conference for LGA member authorities, which covered the main conference and workshop sessions was £395 + VAT per person plus the additional travel and accommodation.

Under normal practice the Chairman and one other member of the Authority would be nominated to attend when the conference was not local.

49. RESOLVED that the Chairman plus one other Member of the Authority attend the LGA Fire Conference 2019.

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

50. 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.

