

MINUTES OF FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2021

Present: Councillors R Berry, J Burnett, J Chatterley (Chairman), K Choudhry, P Duckett, D Franks, M Headley, D McVicar, I Shingler and Y Waheed (Vice-Chair)

Councillor C Atkins observed the meeting via Zoom

CFO A Hopkinson, Temporary DCFO D Norris, Temporary ACFO A Kibblewhite and Mr J Atkinson were also present.

A minute's silence was held in memory of the late Chief Fire Officer, Paul Fuller.

21-22/FRA/1 Membership

The Secretary and Monitoring Officer reported that there had been one change to the membership of the Authority from the previous year and that Councillor J Burnett had replaced Councillor S Khurshid as one of the Members representing Luton Borough Council.

21-22/FRA/2 Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Gambold.

It was noted that Assistant Chief Officer Chambers was unable to attend the meeting.

21-22/FRA/3 Election of Chair 2021/2022

In accordance with the Authority's Standing Orders, the Secretary and Monitoring Officer presided over the election of Chair.

Councillor Chatterley was nominated by Councillor McVicar and seconded by Councillor Duckett. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Chatterley be elected Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2021/22.

21-22/FRA/4 Election of Vice Chair 2021/2022

Councillor Waheed was nominated by Councillor Shingler and seconded by Councillor Burnett. There were no other nominations.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Waheed be elected Vice-Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2021/22.

21-22/FRA/5 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests.

21-22/FRA/6 Communications

The Chair advised that a number of communications had been circulated to Members of the Authority via email, including a Core Code of Ethics for the Fire and Rescue Service, a consultation document on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for high rise buildings and the notes of the Asian Fire Service Association's Winter Conference.

NJC Pay Awards

Members were advised that through the NJC process, a pay award of 1.5% had been offered. This had been accepted by both Grey and Gold Book staff and would be applied at the earliest possible opportunity.

The trade unions representing Green Book staff had not accepted their pay offer and the outcome of further negotiations was awaited.

Recruitment Update

The Chief Fire Officer provided an update on the recruitment process to senior posts within the Service. Appointments were being made to the two vacant Area Manager posts and Members would be advised of the outcome imminently.

The recruitment process for the posts of Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer was ongoing, with 8 individuals of 14 applicants to attend the Assessment Centre days on 28 and 30 June. One candidate had dropped out due to illness.

An extraordinary meeting of the Executive was being arranged for 9 July 2021 when final interviews will be held with a view to recommending that the appointment of the successful candidates be ratified at the next meeting of the Authority on 15 July 2021.

Further details of the recruitment process would be provided to the Members of the Executive at the end of this meeting.

21-22/FRA/7 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2021 be confirmed as a true record.

21-22/FRA/8 Public Participation

Members noted that no questions had been received in accordance with the public participation scheme approved at the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 5 April 2000 (Minute 99/fa/94 refers).

21-22/FRA/9 Executive Committee meeting 11 May 2021

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11 May 2021 for information.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11 May 2021 be received.

21-22/FRA/10 Authorisation of Members to Report to the Constituent Councils on Meetings of the Fire and Rescue Authority

The Secretary and Monitoring Officer introduced his report requesting the Authority to make arrangements for reporting to the Constituent Councils.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Chatterley, Headley and Waheed be authorised to report to their respective Constituent Councils on the meetings of the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2021/22.

21-22/FRA/11 Representation on Local Government Association (LGA) Matters

The Secretary and Monitoring Officer introduced his report on the appointment of representatives to serve on Local Government Association (LGA) groups and to consider representation at the LGA Annual Fire Conference in 2022.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Chair, Vice Chair, Councillors Atkins and McVicar be appointed to serve on the LGA General Assembly.
2. That the Chair be appointed as the Fire and Rescue Authority's representative on the LGA Fire Services Commission.

3. That the Chair, Vice Chair and Chief Fire Officer attend the LGA Annual Fire Conference on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Authority in 2022.

21-22/FRA/12 Appointment of Committees

The Secretary and Monitoring Officer introduced his report which asked the Authority to make appointments to the Fire and Rescue Authority's Executive and Audit and Standards Committees for 2021/22 and to confirm the changes to the committee structure agreed in June 2019. The Authority was also asked to consider and approve the changes to the portfolio responsibilities allocated to individual members of the Executive Committee. These had been amended so that they were more closely aligned to the Service's strategic priorities.

Councillor Franks stated that, as a result of his other commitments, he was standing down from the Executive but would continue to take part in the recruitment process of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer.

The place on the Executive allocated to Luton Borough Council was contested as both Councillor Choudhury and Councillor Burnett self-nominated and were seconded by Councillor Headley and Councillor Waheed respectively. A secret ballot was held and Councillor Choudhury was nominated to the Executive to replace Councillor Franks.

RESOLVED:

1. That the committee structure agreed on a temporary basis in June 2019 as set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report be confirmed.
2. That Councillors Atkins, Berry, Burnett, Duckett, Franks, Gambold and Shingler be appointed to the Audit and Standards Committee for 2021/22.
3. That Councillors Chatterley, Choudhury, Headley, McVicar and Waheed be appointed to the Executive Committee for 2021/22.
4. That Councillor Atkins be appointed as Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee in 2021/22.
5. That the proposed changes to the portfolio responsibilities allocated to individual members of the Executive Committee as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report be approved.

21-22/FRA/13 Member Development

The Chief Fire Officer presented his report on the arrangements for Member development, including station visits, in 2021/22. He reminded Members that they were able to request items for discussion at the Member Development Days and advised that he had arranged for additional Member Development Days to be added to the calendar as there were a number of issues which required Member engagement. In this respect, he reported that the Member Development Day on 6 July 2021 would involve Members and stakeholders as the session would be a horizon scanning exercise.

It was noted that consideration would also need to be given to attendance at the annual full Combined Fire Authorities' conference, if this was being held.

RESOLVED:

1. That the arrangements for Member development in 2021/22 be confirmed.
2. That Councillor McVicar be nominated to attend the LGA Fire Leadership Essentials Programme.
3. That nominations to represent the Authority at the full Combined Fire Authorities' conference be considered once the arrangements for a conference are confirmed.

21-22/FRA/14 Work Programme - FRA and FRA Executive Committee

Members received the proposed work programme for 2021/22, noting that a work programme for the Executive Committee had now been developed.

The Chair advised that any suggested items for inclusion in the work programme should be forwarded to himself or the Chief Fire Officer.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme for 2021/22 be received and the 'cyclical' Agenda Items for each meeting in 2021/22 be noted.

The meeting ended at 10.56 am