

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority
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REPORT AUTHOR: MONITORING OFFICER

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

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Background Papers: None

PURPOSE:

To consider appointments to the Fire and Rescue Authority's Executive and Audit and Standards Committees for 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Authority:

- 1 Makes appointments to the Executive Committee and the Audit and Standards Committee and appoints a chairman for the Audit and Standards Committee for the year ahead and
 2. Review and approve the Terms of Reference of the Executive Committee.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the Annual Meeting in June 2021 the Authority confirmed the changes to the committee structure, which replaced the Policy and Challenge Groups with an Executive Committee, and approved the changes to the portfolio responsibilities allocated to individual members of the Executive Committee.
- 1.2 The FRA appointed an Executive Committee comprising 5 members, including the Chair and Vice-chair and one member from each of the constituent authorities and an Audit and Standards Committee made up of those members who do not serve on the Executive Committee.

2. Appointments

- 2.1 The Authority is asked to consider making appointments to the Executive Committee and the Audit and Standards Committee and to appoint a Chair for the Audit and Standards Committee.
- 2.2 Although the Fire and Rescue Authority appoints members to each Committee, all Members will continue to receive an electronic link to the agendas and papers and are welcome to attend any meeting (although not vote).
- 2.3 It has been previously agreed that the Fire and Rescue Authority Chair and Vice Chair will not be members of the Audit and Standards Committee and that a member of the Executive Committee cannot also be appointed as Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee. Under the arrangements introduced in 2020 there is a clear separation between members of the two committees.
- 2.4 The Authority is asked to appoint a member to serve as Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee.

3. Portfolios

- 3.1 In June 2021, the Authority agreed that each member of the Executive Committee would be responsible for one of the following portfolios:
 - Prevention and Protection

- Emergency Response & Resilience
- Workforce & Organisational Development
- Assets & Collaboration
- Data & Digital Transformation

Appendix A provides more information on the scope of each portfolio area.

- 3.2 The Terms of Reference of the Executive Committee, which were agreed by the FRA in June 2021, provide that the allocation of portfolios to members of the Executive Committee will be agreed following the Annual Meeting and in the event that they cannot be agreed, that the portfolios will be allocated by the Chair of the FRA. The Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix B for review and approval by Members.
- 3.3 The promotion and championing of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), whether it be from a community or workforce perspective, is a key responsibility for all Members and Officers. When reviewing the portfolio references, it was considered preferable to have all five Members of the Executive Committee promoting and championing EDI as an integral part of their portfolios rather than have just one Diversity Champion.
- 3.4 Financial overview and scrutiny is incorporated into all five portfolios with budget planning and monitoring reported to every FRA meeting and to the Audit and Standards Committee.

JOHN ATKINSON
MONITORING OFFICER

APPENDIX A - PORTFOLIO AREAS

Prevention and Protection

- Using a range of quantitative and qualitative analysis, we produce our Community Risk Analysis (CRA) document to help inform our work and ensure we are doing the right thing, using the right people and resources, provided in the right place and at the right time to help make Bedfordshire safer. We also work hard to improve our understanding of community risk through better and more innovative engagement with our diverse and hard to reach communities;
- We work to PREVENT fires and other emergencies from occurring in the first place with our firefighters, other front-line staff and partners undertaking thousands of safe and well visits each year, delivering fire and road safety talks in schools, and working with partner agencies to inform our communities about fire and road safety and reduce arson. Our vital role in safeguarding children and adults is also part of this portfolio;
- We also work to PROTECT people when emergencies do happen with our firefighters and fire safety officers undertaking inspections of workplaces, engaging with and educating owners and occupiers, taking enforcement action where necessary. The outcomes from the Building Regulation Review and the Public Inquiry into the Grenfell Tower tragedy have led to greater interest and investment by the Govt to expand our work in this important area.

Emergency Response & Resilience

- We RESPOND to emergencies including fires, road traffic collisions, air and rail crashes, water rescues and flooding, hazardous chemical incidents and many other types of emergencies;
- Our priority is to always ensure we always provide an effective and timely response to fires and other emergencies and to also continually review our emergency response cover to ensure our response resources and crewing arrangements are aligned to current and future risks;
- We also play an active part in the Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum (BLRF); a multi- agency partnership formed to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004;
- Our organisational RESILIENCE is dependent on working closely with the NFCC and multi-agency and cross-border partners to develop and test emergency and business continuity plans and procedures and to continually learn from incidents.

Workforce & Organisational Development

- Our staff are our greatest asset, so if we are to be outstanding in everything we do, we must continually invest in developing and EMPOWERING our workforce. We strive to be an employer of choice, recruiting, retaining and developing a highly skilled and diverse workforce who uphold and model our values;

- We need to foster a positive and inclusive learning culture where all staff have a voice and provide a safe and healthy working environment with low absence, accidents and injuries;
- As well as investing in providing all our staff with the best training and development opportunities, we also need to develop our managers to value, lead, motivate, develop and empower their teams to be the best they can be;
- Our strategic planning and performance management framework needs to keep pace with the demands of a modern fire and rescue service, supported by effective programme and project management arrangements.

Assets & Collaboration

- We strive to UTILISE our assets and resources efficiently and effectively. We do this by providing the best facilities, vehicles, equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) we can afford, to enable our staff to respond and support the range of emergency incidents and other activities that we attend in ways that are professional, effective and efficient;
- When investing we are mindful of our duty to collaborate and the national procurement agenda wherever there is a clear business case to do so, always seeking to specify, procure and maintain our assets under the principles of protecting the front line, improving firefighter safety, and providing value for money;
- We work closely with many partners including our blue light and local authority colleagues, viewing collaboration as an opportunity to reduce costs and improve services to the public, so we continue to explore new opportunities to work together through the Blue Light Collaboration Strategic Board;
- We also work in partnership with other fire and rescue services on both front line and support services, such as our shared strategic operational command arrangements and shared Information and Communications Technology (ICT) service with Cambridgeshire.

Data & Digital Transformation

- MAXIMISING the use of data and digital solutions to increase self-awareness and drive improvement has been a key focus during the life of this CRMP following feedback from our staff and 2018 HMICFRS inspection who told us that some of our IT systems and processes were hindering our productivity;
- We are striving to improve how we collect, store and utilise our data so our staff have greater insight into how we are performing and the risks we are working to reduce. Giving staff access to more information is enabling us to empower them to take greater ownership in driving improvements in everything we do, whilst allowing proper evaluation against our objectives;
- Digital technologies available today can act as real enablers, not only speeding up our processes but also generating intelligence through analysis that allows evidence-based decisions to be made about where best to utilise our resources. We would have struggled to respond effectively to the Covid19 pandemic had we not invested in mobile working technology. True digital transformation will improve the ways in which we work, how we interact with partners, the public and each other

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee has been established to undertake the following functions on behalf of the FRA:

Decisions

- To take urgent decisions in between meetings of the FRA;
- To appoint selection panels and carry out the arrangements for the appointment of the Chief Fire Officer and Principal Officers;
- To exercise the FRA's responsibilities in respect of employment disputes including collective grievances/collective disputes and, matters referred to the FRA under stage two of the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP) and other related matters.
- To manage the employment relationship between the FRA and the CFO, including such matters as objective setting and appraisal, discipline and grievances.

Policy Development

- To provide support and constructive challenge to the Principal Officer Team in the development of strategies and plans within the overall policy objectives agreed by the FRA.
- To keep abreast of developments and policies at national, regional and local level and to provide reports to the FRA on any significant developments.

Delegated Powers and Reporting Arrangements

The Executive Committee is authorised to exercise any functions of the FRA that come within its terms of reference. Decisions taken by the Committee under its delegated powers will be reported to the next meeting of the FRA, except where the decision taken is quasi-judicial or where the subject matter considered is exempt from publication under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Membership

The membership of the Executive Committee shall be as follows:

- The Chair and Vice Chair of the FRA; and
- One Member from each constituent authority.

The Chair of the FRA shall be Chair of the Executive Committee.

In the event that a political party or constituent authority is not represented at a meeting of the Executive Committee, a named observer from that party/constituent authority may attend the meeting.

Special Responsibilities

Each member of the Executive Committee will have special responsibility for one of the following portfolios:

1. Prevention and Protection

Including the Fire Safety Order, other fire safety legislation and the National Framework as appropriate.

2. Emergency Response and Resilience

including the Fire and Rescue Services Act, the Civil Contingencies Act and the National Framework as appropriate.

3. Workforce & Organisational Development

including the FRA's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employment law, the equality duty and related legislation.

4. Assets & Collaboration

including the FRA's responsibilities within the Police and Crime Act 2017.

5. Data & Digital Transformation

Where possible the portfolios will be agreed amongst the members of the Executive Committee following the Authority's annual meeting. However, in the event that they cannot be agreed, the portfolios will be allocated by the Chair of the FRA.

Portfolio holders will carry out the following responsibilities within their portfolios:

- To act as a sounding board for senior officers and provide support to deal with any problems at a strategic level.
- To review, in conjunction with senior officers, the effectiveness of service within their portfolio.
- To report to the FRA on significant issues arising within his/her portfolio.
- To represent the FRA on bodies, at events and at conferences as agreed by the FRA related to his/her portfolio and to provide feedback to the FRA on any relevant or significant issues.

Quorum

Business shall not be transacted at any meeting of the Executive Committee unless at least three members of the Committee are present with at least one member from two of the constituent authorities.

Support

The Committee will be supported by the Principal Officer Team and the FRA's Secretary /Monitoring Officer.

Regularity of Meetings

The Executive Committee will meet as and when required to transact any business within its terms of reference.

Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference are reviewed by the FRA on an annual basis at the Annual Meeting.