

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2023 AT 2 PM

Present: Councillors J Burnett (Chair), M Headley (Vice-Chair), R Goodchild, S Hussain and A Sultan
CFO A Hopkinson, G Britten (Monitoring Officer) and Mrs N Upton
Councillor S Owen attended as an observer

23-24/EC/1 Apologies

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

23-24/EC/2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

23-24/EC/3 Communications

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Annual Service Awards would be held on 12 July 2023 at Cranfield University.

23-24/EC/4 Minutes

Councillor Goodchild asked for an update on the development of a Community Panel, as it had been noted in the Minutes that a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that this report had been deferred due to staff illness.

Councillor Goodchild requested that the slides relating to the call handling presentation given at the last meeting be circulated to new Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority for information.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the year-end performance information would be presented to the next meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority and that an update would be provided on the review of the Key Performance Indicators for 2023/24.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023 be confirmed as a true record.

23-24/EC/5 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).

23-24/EC/6 Appointment of Lead Members

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the item by referring to slightly amended Lead Member roles that had been developed in accordance with the Service's new Community Risk Management Plan and its new strategic direction.

The Monitoring Officer referred the Committee to the Terms of Reference of the Authority in which the Lead Member roles were particularised as: prevention and protection, emergency response and resilience, workforce and organisation development, assets and collaboration and data and digital transformation. Therefore, appointment of Members to the new Lead Member areas would require a change to the Terms of Reference of the Authority. This would need Fire and Rescue Authority approval and subject to a separate report from the Monitoring Officer.

The new roles were proposed as being: prevention and protection, emergency response, people and culture, physical and digital assets and finance, productivity and efficiency. The first three areas were similar to the current Lead Member areas and as such could be appointed to at this meeting. The asset area had been expanded and finance, productivity and efficiency had been added as a new area, given the risks associated with the challenging financial environment.

Having each been proposed and seconded, the following appointments were made:

Prevention and Protection: Councillor Sultan

Emergency Response and Resilience (will become Emergency Response): Councillor Goodchild

Workforce and Organisational Development (will become People & Culture): Councillor Hussain

Assets and Collaboration & Data and Digital Transformation (will combine and become Physical and Digital Assets): Councillor Burnett

Finance, Productivity and Efficiency: Councillor Headley

The Fire and Rescue Authority would be asked to consider changes to the Terms of Reference to formalise the new Lead Member roles and ratify the appointment to the new posts.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that, once the appointments had been finalised, meetings would be arranged between Lead Members and senior Officers.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Authority receive a separate report on the Executive's Terms of Reference to amend the Lead Member areas.
2. That the following Members be appointed to Lead Member roles of:
Prevention and Protection: Councillor Sultan
Emergency Response and Resilience: Councillor Goodchild
Workforce and Organisational Development (will become People and Culture): Councillor Hussain
3. That the Authority ratify the following appointments, subject to the changes being made to the Authority's Terms of Reference:
Assets and Collaboration and Data and Digital Transformation (will become Physical and Digital Assets): Councillor Burnett
Finance, Productivity and Efficiency: Councillor Headley

23-24/EC/7 National Pay Award for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and advised that the Executive was acting in this matter as the employer in a pay negotiation. The Chief Fire Officer would be representing the employee's side, which consisted of the four members of staff employed under Gold Book conditions, the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Officer. Three options were set out in the report for the Executive's consideration.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that the pay negotiations had been very protracted and that the Executive, on behalf of the employer, was being asked to consider pay awards for the two years beginning in 1 January 2022 and 1 January 2023.

In early March 2023, a revised pay offer from the employers reminded Fire and Rescue Authorities of the twin track approach set out in the Salaries section of the NJC for Brigade Managers 'Gold Book' scheme of conditions of service which applies to the Principal Officers employed by this Authority, which took into account the national level of pay increase agreed by the NJC, whilst also undertaking a review at a local level.

A national award of an increase of 4% from 1 January 2022, and an increase of 3.5% from 1 January 2023 had been agreed in May 2023.

It was agreed that, pursuant to Sections 100A(2) and 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the discussion of this item on the grounds that the matters to be discussed involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 to 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

The Chief Fire Officer left the meeting at this stage.

The Chief Fire Officer was invited back into the meeting room.

23-24/EC/8 Work Programme

Members received the updated work programme for 2023/24 and noted the cyclical items.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that the following items would need to be programmed into the Executive's work programme:

- New Service KPI's and how these should be reported to Members
- Independent review of governance
- Update on Community Panel
- HMI Inspection outcome
- Update on new Corporate Risk Register

The Chair requested that the culture and values paper previously submitted to Members be recirculated to the new Members of the Authority for information.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme 2023/24 be received and the cyclical agenda items be noted.

The meeting ended at 3.25 pm