

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

HELD ON 16th OCTOBER 2014

Present:

Councillor David Acton (Chairman), Councillor Tommy Judge (Vice-Chairman), Councillors John Bell (Deputy Chairman), Mohammed Ayub, Walter Brett, Lynda Byrne, Basil Curley, Jim Dawson, Jim Ellis, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Daniel Hawthorne, Derek Heffernan, June Hitchen, Barrie Holland, Bernard Judge, Afia Kamal, Iain Lindley, Alan Matthews, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill, Brian Rigby, Stella Smith, Fred Walker, Paul Wild, Steve Williams, George Wilson and Michael Whetton

Also in Attendance: Steve McGuirk (County Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Paul McKeivitt (Treasurer, Wigan Council), Paul Argyle (Director of Emergency Response), Ged Murphy (Director of Finance and Technical Services), Gwynne Williams (Deputy Clerk and Authority Solicitor), Billy Myers (Area Manager - Head of Protection) and Donna Parker (Democratic Services Manager)

Guest: Andrew North, Grant Thornton UK LLP

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Smith and Lisa Walker.

38. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4th September 2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

40. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

There were no items of urgent business raised.

41. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Chairman reported that GMFRS had been successful in achieving the Carbon Champions Award at the new Manchester Evening News Environment Awards for achieving a 25% reduction in greenhouse emissions in 5 years. This ceremony was attended by Councillor George Wilson in his capacity as Member Champion for Sustainability.

In addition, GMFRS had been shortlisted for a North West Environmental Hero award with the winners being announced on 16th October.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman took the opportunity to thank all staff involved for their hard work and commitment in achieving such positive results and the award.

2. The Chairman reported that this evening, along with the Deputy County Fire Officer, he would be attending the UK Excellence Awards, hosted by the British Quality Foundation, in London, in which GMFRS had been shortlisted as a finalist in the special award category of Leadership. To reach the finals was exceptional in what were the most prestigious excellence awards in the UK. Also shortlisted in the same category were First TransPennine Express and Virgin Trains. Previous winners included DPD UK , Marks & Spencer and Skanska UK .
3. The Chairman invited all Members to attend the exclusive screening of '40 faces' – a short film celebrating 40 years of GMFRS on Friday 31st October at 2.30pm in the Canteen area at Fire Service Headquarters at the rise of the Colleague Recognition Event. It would be appreciated if Members could confirm their attendance. This date had been changed from Thursday 23rd October 2014.

In response, Members requested that the short film was shown at the of the next meeting of the Authority on Thursday 4th December 2014.

4. The Chairman invited all Members to attend the GMFRS Future Fire Fighting Event Working Dinner on Wednesday 29th October from 6.30pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Manchester. The purpose of this event was to present, demonstrate and discuss how GMFRS were embracing new technologies which supported the Service's ambition to advance firefighting methods, reduce the risk to operational crews and improve firefighter safety, whilst ensuring that this was underpinned by public value. It would be appreciated if Members could confirm their attendance.
5. The Chairman invited all Members to attend Stockport MBC Councillor Briefing Session that was being held on Thursday 13th November 2014 at Whitehill Community Fire Station between 5:30 pm and 8:30 pm. The evening would start with a buffet and informal introductions. Three informative sessions that highlight the work and aspirations of the Fire and Rescue Service in Stockport would be delivered and the evening would conclude with a practical demonstration of specialist Firefighter skills.
6. The Chairman advised that this would Mr Andrew North's, Engagement Manager from Grant Thornton last Authority meeting as he was due to leave Grant Thornton at the end of November to commence his new role at Cheshire East Council.

On behalf of the Authority the Chairman took the opportunity to thank Andrew for all his hard work, commitment and support he had given to Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority over the years and wished him all the best in his new job.

In addition to the Chairman's announcements the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive took the opportunity to announce his intention to retire in 2015. He advised that he was making this announcement in advance to allow plenty of time for succession planning working in partnership with the Chairman of the Authority and Lead Members. Further information regarding this matter would be reported to a future meeting of the Authority.

42. QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

There were no questions submitted.

43. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the meeting when the following items are considered for the reasons set out below:

Agenda Item No.	Title	Minute No. (to be added)	Description of Exempt Information by reference to the paragraph number(s) in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
E.1	Fire Crime and Disorder	52	1 (Information relating to any individual) 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) 7 (Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime)
E. 2	DV20 Operational Training Site and Community Hub Update	53	3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

44. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2014 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 18th September 2014 were submitted (Appendix 1).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 18th September 2014, be approved.

45. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2014 OF AUDIT, SCRUTINY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee held on 25th September 2014 were submitted (Appendix 2).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee on 25th September 2014, be approved.

46. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2014 OF SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 2nd October 2014 were submitted (Appendix 3).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee on 2nd October 2014, be approved.

47. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

Andrew North, Senior Manager from Grant Thornton UK LLP was in attendance and presented the Annual Audit Letter 2013/14 to the Authority.

The report summarised the key findings for the year ending 31st March 2014 with regards to auditing the '2013/14 accounts and Whole of Government Accounts' submission and assessing the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The Annual Audit Letter was intended to communicate key messages to the Authority and external stakeholders including members of the public. The detailed findings from the audit work were presented to the Authority's Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee on 25th September 2014 in the 'Audit Findings for GMFRS Year Ended 31st March 2014' report (Minute 6 refers).

Grant Thornton reported that their final fee charged for the audit was £52,992 and confirmed that this had not changed from the original plan previously reported to the Committee and there were no fees for the provision of non-audit services.

The Chairman reported that this was an excellent report and took the opportunity to thank both Members of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee and Officers for their involvement in this process. The Chairman of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee, Councillor Brian Rigby, seconded the Chairman's comments.

Resolved: That the Annual Audit Letter 2013/14, be noted.

48. COUNTY GUARD UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which detailed how GMFRS had and were responding to the industrial action called by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU); in order for the Fire and Rescue Authority to meet its statutory obligations to date. The last update on this matter was reported to the last meeting of the Authority on 4th September 2014 (Minute 33 refers).

Members were advised that since the last update no further strike dates had taken place or been called. However, Action Short of Strike (namely a refusal to undertake voluntary overtime, non-contractual overtime or additional hours and a refusal to do voluntary 'acting-up') was implemented by the FBU from 16th August 2014 and was still currently in place.

Attached at Appendix 1 of the report was an open letter to all Firefighters, from Penny Mordaunt MP dated 3rd October 2014 stating that the Firefighters Charity would be receiving up to £1 million of funding to enhance their existing services to Firefighters and fire service personnel, MIND, the national mental health Charity, would be receiving up to £4 million to provide focused support and information services to all emergency services personnel and £1 million had been set aside to establish an endowment for the emergency services sector, to support bereaved families of active service personnel.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The policy decisions previously adopted and detailed in paragraph 30 and 31 of the report, be noted.
3. The activities undertaken in order to mitigate the risks associated with Industrial Action, be noted and commended.

49. COMMUNITY RISK INTERVENTION TEAM PILOT

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an update on the progress towards delivering an interim pilot of Community Risk Intervention Teams (CRIT) in Manchester, Salford and Wigan. The interim pilot was being introduced prior to the announcement on the outcome of the bid to the DCLG Fire Transformation Fund, to deliver the CRIT across Greater Manchester.

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that a number of work streams had been identified and actioned to ensure the introduction of the interim pilot in all three boroughs by early 2015 and recruitment to all roles was now at an advanced stage. Constructive discussions had taken place with representatives from the Fire Brigades Union regarding the recruitment required for the pilot.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The ongoing development of the interim CRIT pilot, be supported.

50. SPATE CONDITIONS AND DEGRADATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE AND ASSOCIATED GUIDANCE

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which introduced the 'Spate Conditions and Degradation' Policy and Procedure and associated Guidance document that were detailed at Appendix A and B of the report. The policy and procedure operated within the principles of the Corporate Plan and supported the Business Continuity planning arrangements for GMFRS. They were also part of the suite of documents and processes which form GMFRS's integrated risk management planning (IRMP) processes.

The purpose of the 'Spate Conditions and Degradation' Policy and Procedure was to provide managers and staff with an approved framework for recognising Spate Conditions and the subsequent prioritisation and management of the quantity, type and location of operational resources during those conditions, which utilised a risk assessed system of operational resource Degradation. The Spate Conditions and Degradation guidance set out a 'top-down' guidance on degradation of resources, starting from the point that the normal quantity of day to day appliances were operationally available and stated service delivery standards were able to be met (business as usual), stepping down incrementally to the last 22 appliances that should remain available to meet the service delivery standards that reflect the reduction in resources.

The report described the fact that the organisation's response standards in 'business as usual' and also its Business Continuity Management (BCM) response standards have been consulted upon through the IRMP and Corporate Planning consultation processes. As GMFRS were currently in an on-going and continuous period of industrial action, GMFRS were operating the BCM enhancement plan (County Guard) which started by aiming to maintain 22 appliances on the run however would put as many on the run as resources allowed.

In conclusion, Members welcomed the informative report.

Resolved: That:

1. The contents of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The 'Spate Conditions and Degradation' Policy and Procedure and associated Guidance document, as detailed at Appendix A and B of the report, be noted and recognise that these documents were part of a suite of policies and procedures and pieces of analysis which form the organisational Integrated Risk Management Planning process.
3. The process, as detailed in paragraph 20 of the report, where if there is a change in the relevant operational resource base of the organisation, the Policy and Procedure and associated Guidance be refreshed and updated as described, be approved.

51. PRESENTATION ON OPERATIONAL CREWING

The Director of Emergency Response was in attendance and gave a presentation on 'Operational Crewing Arrangements' which provided a detailed update on the current situation regarding vacancies and industrial action, future budget pressures and reduction in operational activity. As part of the presentation a short video was shown which explained how GMFRS mobilised its resources to protect Greater Manchester.

It was reported that from 12th October 2014 a 'Tactical Plan' had been implemented which included standing down four 2nd pumps from Blackley, Moss Side, Heywood and Salford Fire Stations per shift due to industrial action; and also to reconstruct relevant Watches to minimise Detachment and Travel costs as an interim measure. The impact of this would result in 52/51 pumps being on the run by day/night with minimal impact on response times. It was noted that some other appliances may also go off the run in March 2015 and occasionally earlier than this date.

Members raised a series of questions and comments on the presentation received that were answered by Officers accordingly.

Resolved: That the content of the presentation and comments raised, be noted.

52. FIRE CRIME AND DISORDER

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an update on GMFRS involvement in regulatory partnership activity to support the statutory obligations in relation to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Government's Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2013.

In addition, the report provided a number of examples of the types of multi-agency enforcement activity that GMFRS were actively engaged in across the country.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The continued engagement with Partner Agencies to reduce Serious and Organised Crime, be supported.

53. DEVELOPMENT GOAL 20 OPERATIONAL TRAINING SITE & COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an update on progress made to date in respect of the DV20 Operational Training and Community Safety Site. The Director of Finance and Technical Services as part of the report presented a 3D fly through video showing how the site would look like and the facilities it would include once complete.

In addition, Members were advised that there were on-going discussions with Greater Manchester Police and the North West Ambulance Service for the development of joint training facilities at the site.

Resolved: That:

1. The information provided relating to the DV20 Operational Training and Community Safety Site and comments raised, be noted.
2. Delegated authority be given to the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Authority and the Treasurer to approve the funding of the mining survey void remediation from the risk management fund up to the maximum amount stated in paragraph 34 of the report.
3. Option 2 to establish the cost to remediate and to remediate the whole site in anticipation of further development to accommodate GMP and/or NWAS or further expansion of our own Authority training requirements in the future, as detailed in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the report, be approved in principle
4. Delegated authority be given to the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Authority and the Treasurer to approve the asbestos remediation scheme.
5. Delegated authority be given to the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority to approve the signing of the PSPC 6 as long as the AMP does not exceed the agreed budget.

6. The current proposed dates for signing the PSPC 6 and for start-on-site, as detailed in the report, be noted.

CHAIRMAN