

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

**HELD ON 8th DECEMBER 2016**

**Present:**

Councillor David Acton (Chairman), Councillor Tommy Judge (Vice-Chairman), Councillors John Bell, Mohammed Ayub, Stephen Coen, Chris Goodwin, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Joan Grimshaw, Daniel Hawthorne, June Hitchen, Barrie Holland, Mike Hurleston, Jan Jackson, Alan Matthews, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill, Brian Rigby, Noel Spencer, Peter Taylor, Fred Walker, Paul Wild, Steve Williams and Michael Whetton

Also in Attendance: Peter O'Reilly (County Fire Officer and Chief Executive), Donna Hall (Clerk to the Authority, Wigan Council), Tony Clarke (Assistant Director - Finance, Wigan Council), Paul Argyle (Deputy County Fire Officer), Geoff Harris (Director of Prevention and Protection), Andrea Heffernan (Director of Corporate Support), Dave Keelan (Director of Emergency Response), Gwynne Williams (Deputy Clerk and Authority Solicitor), Shelley Wright (Director of Communications and Engagement) and Donna Parker (Democratic Services Manager)

Guests: Mr and Mrs Veevers, Firefighter Stephen Hunt's Mother and Step-Father (Minute 74 refers)

**60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Walter Brett, James Grundy, Derek Heffernan, Afia Kamal, Iain Lindley and Peter Taylor.

**61. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

**62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

**63. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

There were no items of urgent business submitted.

**64. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. The Chairman advised that the meeting of the Fire Authority was going to be 'live streamed' and would be available to the public via YouTube to watch either live or retrospectively.

2. The Chairman advised that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Authority along with the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Director of Director of Corporate Support would be meeting with Trade Union Representatives at the rise of the meeting to discuss the budget outlook for 2017/18.
3. The Chairman requested all Members to confirm their attendance at the Passing-Out Event for the new Firefighter Recruits on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at 1.00pm at the Training and Development Centre, Manchester.
4. The Chairman advised that a Joint Meeting of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee and Policy, Resources and Performance Committee would be taking place on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 10.30am to consider a single item namely the 'Revised Code of Corporate Governance (CIPFA)'.

#### **65. QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There were no questions submitted.

#### **66. MINUTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2016 OF AUDIT, SCRUTINY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were submitted (Appendix 1).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016, be approved.

#### **67. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2016 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 were submitted (Appendix 2).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016, be approved.

#### **68. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID YEAR REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which reviewed the operation and exercise of delegated Treasury Management powers. The report covered the first six months of 2016/17, considered the prospects for the remainder of the financial year, and set out the Authority's Counter Party list (the organisations with which the Authority could place its surplus funds) and explained how the lending list was drawn up.

Members were advised that the Bank of England meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016 addressed the expected slowdown in growth with a package of measures including a cut in Bank Rate from 0.5% to 0.25%. The inflation report included an unchanged forecast for growth for 2016 of 2.0% but cut the forecast for 2017 from 2.3% to 0.8%.

The Treasurer advised that at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 the Authority's cash balances stood at £36.405m. The cash balances had peaked around £41m following the receipt of the Pension Top-up Grant and were expected to reduce steadily to end the year around £7.2m. However, whilst the forecasted cash balances represented the current best assessment, it was difficult to forecast these to a high degree of accuracy. Due to the anticipated low cash balances towards the end of the financial year there might be a requirement for temporary borrowing. Given this uncertainty, the cash balances were constantly monitored and the treasury management strategy adapted accordingly.

The report had been submitted to the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 (Minute 37 refers).

Resolved: That the report be accepted and comments, be noted.

## **69. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

Consideration was given to a report from Grant Thornton UK LLP which submitted the Annual Audit Letter report that summarised the key findings arising from the work they had carried out at the Authority for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

The Letter was intended to communicate key messages to the Authority and external stakeholders, including members of the public. The annual work programme had been undertaken in accordance with the Audit Plan which was agreed by the Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2016 (Minute 6 refers) and included the following audit areas:

- Finance Statements Audit (including audit opinion)
- Value for Money (VfM) Conclusion
- Whole of Government Accounts
- Certificate

And looking forward:

- Working with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority
- The changing landscape

The report had been submitted to the meeting of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016 (Minute 39 refers).

In conclusion, the Chairman advised that the report was very positive and thanked Officers both at Wigan Council and GMFRS for all the hard work that had taken place on the finances over the last 12 months.

Resolved: That the content of the Annual Audit Letter for Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016, be noted.

## **70. COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an overview of the findings from the most recent Cost Benefit Analysis in terms of the value that GMFRS provided when responding to primary building fires.

The report provided the results taken directly from the Cost Benefit Analysis undertaken by Corporate Support in relation to GMFRS response interventions at primary building fires. The Cost Benefit Analysis involved operational crews making an assessment of lives and property saved on a case by case basis, based on events at each primary building fire.

GMFRS integrated its approach to cost benefit analysis into operational crew's incident recording practices via a bespoke section (Section 11) within the Incident Recording System during 2014/15. Data had been collected for the second full year within the Incident Recording System during 2015/16. The 2015/16 Cost Benefit Analysis Review had been produced using this data and was detailed at Appendix 1 of the report. The key findings from the cost benefit analysis for 2015/16 included the following:

- Operational response costs totaled £58.2 million, which compared favourably with £249.8 million in saved lives and £802.7 million in saved property.
- As a result, for every £1 spent, GMFRS response interventions saved £18.07 in life and property during 2015/16.

Councillor Fred Walker requested further information on how the value of the property saved was identified. In response, Lyndsey Bell, Risk and Strategic Analyst, advised that the information was extracted from two external sources one for commercial property and one for residential property that was stored in an internal database and updated on an annual basis. It was not assumed that all property had been saved and the assessment was made by operational crews at the incident by identifying the proportion of the property that had been saved. GMFRS was the first Fire and Rescue Service to undertake such work

In conclusion, the Chairman advised that the report was very informative and commended Lyndsey Bell, Risk and Strategic Analyst for all her hard work and commitment in compiling the Cost Benefit Analysis.

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

## **71. CHIEF OFFICER'S ACTIVITY REPORT QUARTER 2 (1ST JULY 2016 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2016)**

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive presented the 'Chief Officer's Activity Report' for Quarter 2 2016/17 – 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016, for Members' information and comments.

The report provided information on the wide ranging activities which had taken place across the Boroughs during this period. The report also provided an update on the following subject matters:-

- General News;
- Operational Incidents;
- Service Delivery;
- Prevention and Protection;
- Communications and Engagement.

Councillor Grace Fletcher-Hackwood made reference to the Homeless Pledge which had been launched in Manchester which saw a number of organisations working together to help with the growing problem. Donna Hall, Clerk advised that a report was due to be considered at the meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2016 titled 'Tackling Homelessness' that would provide an overview of initial proposals which had been submitted to the Department of Local Government and Communities in relation to funding opportunities to help tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

Councillor Paul Wild advised that following a recent report to the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee titled 'Fire as a Health Asset Presentation' (Minute 29 refers) he had attended a Safe and Well Visit on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2016 along with a Community Risk Advisor in the Bolton area. He provided information on what the visit had entailed and the service that was provided to the resident and took the opportunity to praise the professionalism of the Community Risk Advisors.

Councillor Steve Williams advised that over a 24 hour bonfire period from Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November evening to 08.30hrs Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2016 he had been 'riding out' with the operational fire crews from Green Watch and White Watch at Oldham Fire Station and provided information on a number of the jobs that were attended.

Councillor Fred Walker sought clarity on whether the statistics relating to Special Service Calls (excluding RTCs) also included attendance at Cardiac Arrest calls and if so could these be separated in future reports. In response, the Deputy County Fire Officer, advised that the statistics currently included Cardiac Arrest calls and he would look to separate this information in future reports.

Councillor Jan Jackson welcomed the informative report and made reference to the recent floods which had taken place in Greater Manchester with

Tameside being one of the most affected areas. She took the opportunity to thank fire crews for helping the local community at this difficult time.

Resolved: That:

1. The 'Chief Officer's Activity Report' for Quarter 2 2016/17 – 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016, including the comments raised, be noted.
2. The Cardiac Arrest calls currently included Special Service Calls (excluding RTCs) to be separated in future CFO Activity Reports.

## **72. QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2016-17**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which presented and sought approval of the Service's Quarter 2 Performance against the development and delivery goals contained within the 2016/20 Integrated Risk Management / Corporate Plan. The report provided a view of performance for each of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) against forecasted target and variances when compared to Quarter 2 of 2015/16.

Members were advised that the thunderstorms on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016 had caused disruption over the Manchester area, where widespread surface water flooding affected a number of roads and took out the Metrolink tram system after lightning struck at several substations. There was flooding at various major stores in Manchester City Centre and a section of the M56 was closed for a time due to surface water flooding. This resulted in North West Fire Control dealing with a high number of calls, which at the height of the storm peaked at over 100 in 90 minutes. The performance figures highlighted the impact of the associated incidents attended by crews in response times, specifically for September 2016.

It was reported that there had been 9,263 calls (999) handled by North West Fire Control during Quarter 2, as this data was not available in 2015/16 no comparison was available. GMFRS had recorded 3,121 fires that was reduction of 52 when compared to the same period last year. Road traffic collisions totalled 279 which had increased by 18 when compared to Quarter 2 2015/16 and a total of 2,123 special service calls had been received which represented an increase of 954. The increase was mainly associated with cardiac arrest incidents that had been attended alongside North West Ambulance Service. There had been no fatalities from fires during Quarter 2, compared with 3 that were sadly attended in Quarter 2 2015/16.

Members were advised that the quarterly, year to date and previous year to date figures for all key performance indicators were detailed at Appendices A and B of the report. A series of histograms providing a view of incident data since April 2012 to date was detailed at Appendix C and a summary of progress against Quarter 2 scheduled activities from Directorate Plans was detailed at Appendix D of the report.

Members welcomed the informative report and a number of questions and comments were raised on the increase in staff sickness levels and whether this was due to promoting the awareness of mental health and encouraging employees to talk openly regarding their issues. The number of safe and well visits completed during Quarter 2 and the benefit these provided to local communities and the Personal Performance Review (PPR) Completion Rate that were answered by Officers accordingly.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Quarter 2 2016/17 Performance against Key Performance Indicators, as detailed at Appendices A and B of the report, be approved.
3. The series of histograms providing a view of incident data since April 2012 to date, as detailed in Appendix C of the report, be noted.
4. The summary of progress against Quarter 2 2016/17 scheduled activities from Directorate Plans, as detailed in Appendix D of the report, be noted.

### **73. ROAD NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL ISSUES IN GREATER MANCHESTER**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an overview of the impacts on the road network following a road traffic collision which included the impacts on GMFRS and other services responding; the wider impacts on the local economy; and the role of Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and Highways England in reducing these impacts.

At the meeting of the Authority held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016 the Chairman requested that a report detailing the 'Road Network Infrastructure Operational Issues in Greater Manchester' was submitted to a future meeting of the Authority (Minute 44 refers).

Members were advised that the continued maintenance of, and improvements to, the highway network presented challenges to GMFRS and partners in traffic incident management on the strategic road network. Working closely and collaboratively with partners such as Department for Transport, Home Office, National Police Chief's Council, Chief Fire Officers Association and Association of Ambulance Chief Executives assisted in improving the understanding of the priorities of each organisation and improving incident management. GMFRS met regularly with all stakeholders involved in the M60 'SMART Motorway' works, including the contractors for the works, Highways England representatives, Local Authority representatives, TfGM and emergency responders. Strategies were discussed to reduce the number of avoidable breakdowns, education initiatives and the provision of free recovery to get the traffic flowing as soon as possible following a breakdown.

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

#### **74. GMFRS FATAL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT, OLDHAM STREET INCIDENT 13 JULY 2013**

The Chairman held a minute's silence in remembrance of Firefighter Stephen Hunt.

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which presented the full 'Fatal Accident Investigation Report' written following the conclusion of the GMFRS internal investigation in the death of Firefighter Stephen Hunt on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

The report presented the findings of the investigation based on evidence collated since the incident, including witness initial accounts, Police statements, CCTV footage and coroner court transcripts. In addition, it outlined a sequence of events at the incident, the identified learning outcomes and the actions that would now be taken to address these outcomes. A copy of the 'Fatal Accident Investigation Report' was detailed at Appendix A, of the report.

It was reported that the content and learning within the report would be shared with the wider Fire and Rescue Service family via the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Institution of Fire Engineers.

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive and a number of Members took the opportunity to speak on the item including the Director of Communications and Engagement on behalf the family.

In conclusion, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank all Officers involved in supporting Firefighter Stephen Hunt's family during this difficult time and the Cranbrook Team for their hard work and commitment in providing the "Fatal Accident Investigation Report".

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The work undertaken by the Cranbrook Team in compiling the 'Fatal Accident Investigation Report', be noted.
3. The conclusions, recommendations and actions identified within the 'Fatal Accident Investigation Report', be supported.
4. The national dissemination of identified learning contained within the 'Fatal Accident Investigation Report', be supported.

CHAIRMAN