

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

HELD ON 16th FEBRUARY 2017

Present:

Councillor David Acton (Chairman), Councillor Tommy Judge (Vice-Chairman), Councillors John Bell (Deputy Chairman), Mohammed Ayub, Walter Brett, Basil Curley, Chris Goodwin, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Joan Grimshaw, Daniel Hawthorne, Derek Heffernan, June Hitchen, Barrie Holland, Edward Houlton, Afia Kamal, Iain Lindley, Mike Hurleston, Alan Matthews, Jan Jackson, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill, 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), Paul Argyle (Deputy County Fire Officer), Tony Clarke (Assistant Director - Finance, Wigan Council), Andrea Heffernan (Director of Corporate Support), Peter Hogg (Audit Manager, Wigan Council), 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)

75. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen Coen and Brian Rigby.

76. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th December 2016 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In consultation with the Independent Person a dispensation had been granted to all Members to participate and vote at meetings of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (GMFRA), any Committee or Sub-Committee of GMFRA and any joint committee or joint sub-committee on which the Authority is represented in respect of matters relating to setting GMFRA's precept (and matters directly related to such decisions, including GMFRA's budget calculations). This was granted on the grounds that without the dispensation the number of Members prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business (Section 33(2)(a) of the Localism Act 2011)(Minute 88 refers).

78. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

There were no items of urgent business submitted.

79. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome Councillor Edward Houlton to his first meeting of the Authority.
2. 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.
3. The Chairman advised that a Member Training and Development Session on 'Carbon Literacy' was taking place at the rise of the meeting and would be hosted by Sam Pickles, Associate Partner Environment.
4. The Chairman advised that the 'GMFRS Long Service and Good Conduct Medal Award Ceremony' would be taking place on Wednesday 1st March 2017 from 7.00pm at the Imperial War Museum North, Salford Quays and all Members were invited to attend. It would be appreciated if Members could confirm their attendance with Donna Parker, Democratic Services Manager.
5. The Chairman advised that the Official Opening of the 'New Operational Training Site and Safety Centre' at Bury would be taking place on Friday 24th March 2017 at 10.30am and all Members were invited to attend. It would be appreciated if Members could confirm their attendance with Donna Parker, Democratic Services Manager.
6. The Chairman advised that Broughton Fire Station was being used as a Polling Station by Salford City Council for the Kersal Ward By-Election on Thursday 2nd March 2017.

80. QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

There were no questions submitted.

81. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 2016 OF AUDIT, SCRUTINY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee held on 1st December 2016 were submitted (Appendix 1).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Audit, Scrutiny and Standards Committee held on 1st December 2016, be approved.

82. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 2017 OF SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 12th January 2017 were submitted (Appendix 2).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 12th January 2017, be approved.

83. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2017 OF JOINT AUDIT, SCRUTINY AND STANDARDS AND POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Joint Audit, Scrutiny and Standards and Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017 were submitted (Appendix 3).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Joint Audit, Scrutiny and Standards and Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017, be approved.

84. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2017 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017 were submitted (Appendix 4).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017, be approved.

85. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP TO AUTHORITY 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report of the Clerk which advised of a change to the Membership of the Authority for the remainder of the 2016/17 municipal year.

It was reported that Wigan Council had appointed Councillor Edward Houlton (Conservative Group) on Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority in place of Councillor James Grundy (Conservative Group) with effect from 14th January 2017.

Resolved: That:

1. The change of Membership with effect from 14th January 2017, be noted.
2. Councillor Edward Houlton be appointed to fill the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee vacancy for the remainder of the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

86. REVISED LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which sought adoption of a revised Local Code of Corporate Governance based on CIPFA/SOLACE guidance.

The report detailed the background of the CIPFA/SOLACE corporate governance framework and how the Authority had complied with this good practice requirement. It then set out the key principles of the revised Code and the differences from the current Code. A comparison of the 2016 and 2007 frameworks was detailed at Appendix 1 and a full copy of the revised Code was detailed at Appendix 2 of the report.

The revised Local Code of Corporate Governance was considered and agreed by the Corporate Leadership Team on 28th November 2016. The overall aim of the Local Code was to ensure that resources were directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities, that there was sound and inclusive decision making and that there was clear accountability for the use of those resources in order to achieve desired outcomes for service users and communities.

Members were advised that 81% of the sub principles were fully compliant and work was ongoing to complete the remaining 19% by the end of March 2017.

It was noted that the report had been considered at the meeting of the Joint Audit, Scrutiny and Standards and Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 26th January 2017 (Minutes 5 refers).

Resolved: The revised Local Code of Corporate Governance, be adopted.

87. TREASURY POLICY STATEMENT, CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 TO 2019/20, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STATEMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which sought approval of the Authority's Treasury Management Policy and set out the requirements to determine prudential indicators for the forthcoming financial year 2017/18. The detail contained within the report was consistent with the 'Budget Strategy Report 2017/18 and Medium Term Forecast 2017/18 to 2020/21.

The Assistant Director – Finance, advised on the incremental impact of capital investment decisions on council tax. He advised that the indicator identified the revenue costs associated with proposed changes to the four year capital programme recommended in the 'Revenue Budget and Precepts 2017/18' report (Minute 88 refers) compared to the Authority's existing approved commitments and current plans. The assumptions were based on the budget, and would invariably include some estimates, such as the level of Government support, that were not published over a four year period.

Councillor Michael Whetton raised his concern regarding borrowing following the move to Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). In response,

the Assistant Director – Finance advised that the GMCA would consider the wider borrowing powers of ‘Devolution’ when setting the Budget Strategy once the Mayor had been elected.

It was noted that the report had been updated to reflect the GM Fire and Rescue Authority Budget Strategy report since it was considered at the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 26th January 2017 (Minutes 54 refers).

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2017/18, be adopted.
3. The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2017/18, be adopted.
4. The various Prudential Indicators, as detailed within the report, be approved.

88. REVENUE BUDGET AND PRECEPTS 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which recommended the setting of the Revenue Budget as required under Section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in the Localism Act 2011) and the precepts and relevant levels of Council Tax required under sections 40, 42B and 47 of the Act (refer to Appendices A to H of the report).

At the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017 (Minute 53 refers) the Authority’s budget was considered in detail a copy of the report was detailed at Appendix H, for information. A number of recommendations were made in respect of the budget strategy and based upon these recommendations being acceptable the report detailed the necessary resolutions and statements required to be approved by the Authority in order to set the budget and precept for 2017/18.

Members were advised that at the time of writing the report for the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee the position on District Council tax bases and surpluses or deficits on Collection Funds together with the position on the Authority’s share of the Retained Business Rates was not available as the deadline for part of the information was 31st January 2017. The figures had now been received and were showing an improvement over that previously reported that would reduce the level of required savings.

A report on the ‘GMFRA Budget 2017/18 and Medium Term Strategy’ had also been considered at a Joint Meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and AGMA Executive on Friday 27th January 2017.

Councillor Michael Whetton reminded Members that at the meeting of the Authority (Precept) held on 11th February 2016 the Conservative Group had

submitted an amendment to the Proposed Budget Recommendation to approve a Precept Freeze (0% increase) for 2016/17. Members had a healthy debate on the amendment that was lost when it came to the vote. He advised that at the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26th January 2017 the report titled 'Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 2016/17: Revenue and Capital' detailed the projected revenue underspends to date (Minute 51 refers) proved that the precept increase in 2016/17 was not required. In response, the Chairman advised that the funds raised from the precept increase had assisted to fund a number of projects including the recruitment of new firefighters. GMFRS had the second lowest precept across the country and if the Authority agreed to raise the GMFRS part of the Council Tax bills by 1.99% for 2017/18 it would only equate to 78p per year extra on a Band A property or £1.17 on a Band D.

In conclusion, the Local Government Act 2003 required the Authority's Chief Finance Officer, to make a report on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves and balances which provided the Authority with the information necessary to make the relevant decisions. The Authority had traditionally maintained its balances at a minimum of 5% of net budget. The balances were felt to be at an appropriate level taking into account external factors such as the transition of budget funding over the next four years.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Authority's budget for 2017/18 as detailed in Appendix A of the report together with the calculation of the precepts and Council Tax rates as detailed in Appendix D and E of the report, be approved.
3. The Revenue Estimates in accordance with the summary submitted for 2017/18, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
4. It be noted that the Authority had calculated the amount of 723,198 as its Council Tax base for the year 2017/18, being the aggregate of the tax bases calculated by the Districts, as detailed at Appendix C of the report, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 made under Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
5. The following amounts to be calculated in accordance with Sections 42A to 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, be approved:-
 - (a) £117,146,902 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 42A (2) (a) to (d) thereof (Appendix B)
 - (b) £73,791,182 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 42A (3) (a) to (b) thereof (Appendix B)

- (c) £43,355,720 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 42A (4) of the Act, being its budget requirement for the year (Appendix B)
- (d) £59.95 being the amount at (c) above all divided by the amount at paragraph 15 of the report (Resolution 4), calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 42B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (Appendix D).

(a) Valuation Bands

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
<u>£39.96</u>	<u>£46.62</u>	<u>£53.28</u>	<u>£59.95</u>	<u>£73.27</u>	<u>£86.59</u>	<u>£99.91</u>	<u>£119.90</u>

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Band D, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (b) The Amounts (precepts) payable by each Billing Authority are detailed at Appendix E of the report, calculated as being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) by the tax bases calculated by Districts in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, adjusted for surpluses and deficits on District Collection Funds.

89. DEVOLUTION - GMCA GOVERNANCE REVIEW AND SCHEME: PHASE 2

Consideration was given to a report of the Clerk which provided an update on the devolution of fire and rescue functions in Greater Manchester.

Members were advised that following public consultation in August 2016, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) submitted a report to the Department of Communities and Local Government which sought approval of the GMCA Governance Review and Scheme: Phase 2 which included changes in the governance arrangements for Fire and Rescue functions in Greater Manchester. In January 2017 a draft Order, The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Fire and Rescue Functions) Order 2017, was submitted to the parliamentary Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments for pre scrutiny. The ten Greater Manchester constituent councils consented to the making of the Order and the draft Order was laid before Parliament on 6th February 2017. The draft Order provided that on 8th May 2017 fire and rescue functions would transfer to the GMCA and that they would be exercisable by

the elected Mayor. The arrangements would allow the Mayor to appoint a committee of up to 15 members from the Greater Manchester constituent councils to exercise fire and rescue functions, subject to certain non-delegable matters and the draft Order provided for the abolition of the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority.

A copy of the draft Order that was laid before Parliament on 6th February 2017 was detailed at Appendix 1 of the report, for information.

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

90. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which detailed the Authority's proposed Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18, in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011. The Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 detailed the Authority's policies in relation to the pay of its workforce. Members were advised that the Pay Policy Statement did not supersede the responsibilities and duties placed on the Authority in its role as an employer under employment law. A copy of the Statement for 2017/18 was attached at Appendix A of the report, for reference.

Members were advised that each year the financial viability of respective elements of the pay policy were reviewed and this year there were three proposed updates as detailed within the report.

The Deputy County Fire Officer advised that the document stated that the Trade Unions had been consulted however to date this had not taken place and Trade Unions would be consulted after this meeting.

Resolved: That:

1. The Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18, as detailed at Appendix A including the updates detailed at paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 of the report, be approved and published accordingly.
2. Trade Unions be consulted on the content of the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 accordingly.

91. CHIEF'S ACTIVITY REPORT OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2016

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive presented the 'Chief's Activity Report' for Quarter 3 2016/17 – 1st October to 31st December 2016, for Members' information and comments. The report provided Members with information on the wide ranging activities which had taken place across the Boroughs during this period and also provided an update on the following subject matters:-

- General News;

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

Members had a detailed discussion on the content of the report and the activity which had taken place across the Service in Quarter 3. Councillor Michael Whetton took the opportunity to congratulate Firefighter Jayne Jeffery on receiving a Colleague Recognition Award after saving a young woman's life. In response, the Chairman advised that he would send a letter of commendation on behalf of the Authority to Firefighter Jayne Jeffery.

Councillor June Hitchen took the opportunity to congratulate the Prevention and Protection Team on the 'GMFRS Firework Amnesty' campaign with specific reference to the box of 30 year old fireworks that had been handed in by a Manchester resident. In addition, she welcomed the GMFRS campaign to Government for costumes that were currently classed as toys to be tested to the same fire safety standards as nightwear and requested that the campaign continued.

Councillor Paul Wild referred to the increase in false alarm calls in the Bolton area compared to Quarter 3 2015/16 (previous year) and requested an explanation for this increase. In response, the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that false alarms covered a wide area. A report which provided an update on the levels of automatic fire alarm actuations in hospital premises that were categorised as 'False Alarm Due to Apparatus' (FADA) and sought support to influence NHS Trusts to be proactive in reducing calls of this type in hospital premises was considered at meeting of the Service Delivery Committee held on 12th January 2017 (minute 39 refers).

Councillor Steve Williams referred to the fire at Maple Mill in Oldham on 15th December 2016 which involved over 80 firefighters and took the opportunity to thank both Firefighters and Officers for their hard work and commitment in tackling the fire which lasted a number of days and supporting the local residents in Oldham. He advised that the last major fire at Maple Mill took place in April 2009. The Chairman advised that he attended the incident on the day and would also like to express his thanks and appreciation to all those involved.

Resolved: That:

1. The 'Chief's Activity Report' for Quarter 3 2016/17 – 1st October to 31st December 2016 and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Chairman to send a letter of commendation on behalf of the Authority to Firefighter Jayne Jeffery for saving a young woman's life.

92. OPERATION FLORIAN

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided an update on recent activities that had involved GMFRS staff within Operational Florian overseas projects and sought continued support.

Steve Jordan, Station Manager was in attendance and gave a presentation on Operation Florian that was a UK registered fire and rescue humanitarian charity and had received continued support from GMFRS for over 14 years.

Members welcomed the informative presentation and sought advice on how this good work could be promoted across Greater Manchester. In response, the Chairman advised that once the Authority had moved into the GMCA he would promote this area of work to the Greater Manchester Leaders.

Resolved: That:

1. The Authority provide continued support and recognition to Operation Florian and GMFRS volunteers who work on overseas projects.
2. The Authority continue the provision of special leave, under the same working criteria for uniformed and non-uniformed members of staff.
3. The Authority continue to provide donations of fire appliances and equipment to Operation Florian.

CHAIRMAN