

**SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY****24 NOVEMBER 2014**

PRESENT: Councillor J Andrews (Chair)  
 Councillor A Atkin (Vice-Chair)  
 Councillors: A Bosmans, A Buckley, A Cave, I Hussain,  
 S Phillips, C Ransome, C Ross, S M Richards and J Satur

M McCarthy, L Noble and M McCoole (South Yorkshire Joint Secretariat)

J Courtney, M Shaw, B Sandy and J Roberts (South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

A Frosdick, J Bell and F Foster (BMBC)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor T Fox

1 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was noted as above.

2 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

3 **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

4 **ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

None.

5 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS IN RELATION TO ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

6 **REPORTS BY MEMBERS**

Councillor Ross had attended the Business Continuity Meeting on 23 October 2014, where Members were given assurance that the Service's Business Continuity Programme was going well; requests had been made for the lead person to speak at conferences, and could provide an opportunity to provide training courses at other organisations.

Councillors Ross and Fox had met with representatives from the Control Room staff, in relation to the SYSTEL System. The 'teething' problems had been discussed with SYSTEL and they had given an undertaking to resolve these as a matter of urgency.

Councillor Cave gave thanks to Members for permitting her to attend the recent Asian Fire Services Association Conference, together with thanks to W Latif who had accompanied her. Members would be provided with brief notes from the conference. Councillor Cave noted that six Chief Fire Officers had been in attendance at the conference, but was disappointed that no senior fire officers from SYFR had been present. She hoped that they may be able to attend the next Conference.

Councillor Richards asked if the learning points from Councillor Cave's notes could be considered by the Service. M McCarthy said these would be shared with the Service/W Latif for action as appropriate.

Councillors Satur and Buckley had visited the Achieving, Respect and Confidence (ARC) Passing-Out Parade at Rotherham Fire Station on 31 October 2014; which was an important event for young people going through the ARC process. Councillor Buckley commented that the retired (volunteer) firefighters who ran the course were doing an excellent job and should be congratulated.

Councillors Satur and Ransome had attended the Middle Manager Engagement Day (MMED) on 19 November 2014 where Dr Patricia Oakley had given a presentation on health issues, government policies and the future of the Fire and Rescue Service. Copies of the slides would be forwarded onto Members, together with Councillor Ransome's notes.

Councillor Satur referred to the Member Learning and Development Day held on 21 November 2014 in relation to equalities and inclusion which she had found extremely useful, and she encouraged Members to attend any future events.

Councillor Andrews commented that the Barnsley Midwives' Sleeping Safely Project, which was an SSCR funded project, had been nominated for a national award in London on 27 November 2014; the project was being rolled out to Sheffield, Doncaster and Rotherham.

Councillor Buckley gave thanks to the Red Watch staff, who had recently shown him around the Control Room.

Councillor Buckley and the Chief Fire Officer had attended a seminar on 28 and 29 October 2014 for the Fire Improvement Group, where collaborative working and the sharing of good practice were discussed. West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) had given the Service an opportunity to look at their 'Safeside', which was the equivalent to the Lifewise Centre; WMFS had a canal scenario, and the Service was asked to consider whether this could be incorporated at the Lifewise Centre.

Councillor Bosmans reported that the Workforce and Organisational Development Board scheduled for 19 November 2014 had been postponed until early December 2014.

Councillor Richards commented that Councillors Satur, Ross, Phillips and herself regularly carried out visits to their respective fire stations.

Councillor Phillips had visited Dearne Fire Station on 12 November 2014; all problems encountered by the Control Room staff were being taken seriously and would hopefully be resolved. Councillor Phillips requested to revisit the station in January 2015.

7 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

None.

8 TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

9 MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2014

Councillor Bosmans referred to the Operational Assessment (OpA), and queried when Members would receive the full action plan.

M Shaw commented that the matter would shortly be discussed at the Corporate Management Board, prior to the Action Plan being brought to the Authority.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 20 October 2014 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 PROVISION OF PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES TO THE AUTHORITY - SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH BARNESLEY MBC

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was submitted which sought the Authority's approval in implementing the SLA with effect from 1 April 2015.

Members noted that the Scrutiny Board had given consideration to the draft Service Level Agreement at its meeting on 13 November 2014.

Councillor Andrews commented that the Independent Audit Committee Members had requested that the way the SLA operated be reviewed after a period of 6 months; it had been agreed at the last Authority Meeting to scrutinise the SLA within 6 months to 1 years' time.

F Foster commented that a further financial breakdown of costs for 2015/16 had been included in the revised SLA; further savings would continue to be found moving forwards.

Councillor Buckley queried whether equality analysis should be included on the SLA.

A Frosdick commented that an equality impact assessment had not been undertaken; BMBC equality policies applied to all staff at the moment. There was no concern that the proposal raised any equality issues; BMBC were actively managing equality issues and would continue to do so. The report did not give rise to equality implications.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Considered the content of the Service Level Agreement.
- ii) Agreed its implementation with effect from 1 April 2015.

11 CONFERENCE REPRESENTATION - LGA ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION - 10-11 MARCH 2015

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was submitted which sought Members expressions of interest to attend the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2015, on 10 to 11 March 2015, at the Gateshead Hilton Hotel.

M McCarthy commented that nominations would be sought through the Policy Development Group, from each of the four local authority areas, and would be reported back to the Authority in due course.

RESOLVED – That Members considered representation at the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2015.

12 SEPTEMBER 2014 PROJECTED OUTTURN REPORT

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Treasurer was submitted which informed Members of the projected revenue and capital spend for the 2014/15 financial year based on the first six months of the year and taking into account other known factors.

B Sandy commented that the previous report taken to the September 2014 Authority Meeting had suggested an overspend of approximately £731,000, resulting from the assumptions made on the costs of the Hillsborough Inquiry and the scale of industrial action to that date. Members noted that no industrial action had occurred during September and October 2014; the projection of the report presented today was based around the possibility of no further industrial action. The Service had recently encountered 4 days of industrial action, which would impact upon future monitoring reports.

Members noted that the action short of strike had created an underspend against casual overtime for wholetime staff. Due to recent industrial action the wholetime costs would be reviewed for the December 2014 report. The support service review process was currently underway and therefore there had been no recruitment for support staff during the period; the underspend would be increased

for the year on support staff to £50,000. It was unlikely that all of the repairs, alterations and maintenance work would be completed in 2014/15 due to the loss of a member of staff on a fixed term contract position for two years. It was expected that an underspend of £14,000 would be incurred for 2014/15, and the work would slip into the 2015/16 financial year.

B Sandy referred to a substantial change in the capital financing costs, which were responsible for the underspend position. There had been considerable slippage in direct revenue funded projects; the largest scheme which contributed £1.3m to the changed position related to the procurement of four appliances.

Councillor Bosmans made reference to the declining number of wholetime firefighters.

M Shaw commented that the issue would be discussed at the Members' Corporate Planning Workshop in December 2014. The Service was currently in a plus position across the organisation; the Chief Fire Officer had given assurance to representative bodies and firefighters that additional staff would be brought in for occasional overtime work when necessary.

There was a wide-ranging discussion around Close Proximity Crewing (CPC). The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that, as CPC did not commence in March 2014, two pumps had been taken off the run in March 2014. Due to the numbers that had left the service through retirement it has not proved possible to reinstate both appliances, however, the Rotherham appliance is put on the run when staffing permits. There was no possibility for the Barnsley pump to be reinstated at the moment. Plans had recently been set out to provide accommodation at Lowedges Fire Station to facilitate CPC.

The Chief Fire Officer commented that it was the Service's aspiration to provide 18 personnel at all retained fire stations; some stations already had 18 personnel. The Service were envisaging bringing a report to the Authority setting out a proposed Reward Scheme, which would offer an incentive or reward to employees who introduced anyone to the Service as a retained firefighter.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report.

### 13 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER TWO - 2014/15

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Clerk and Treasurer was submitted which provided Members with details of corporate performance for quarter two of 2014/15.

Members noted the following key points:-

- LPI 1.2 – Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs). For quarter 2 of 2014/15 the level of ADFs and the number which were cooking related, were above the Upper Tolerance Level. During quarter 2 cooking related fires were 12% higher than in the previous quarter, and ADFs were 9% lower than the previous quarter.

- LPI 1.3 – Fires in Non-Domestic Premises. During the first quarter of 2014/15 there had been 42 fires, which was below the Lower Tolerance Level; the Service continued to work with occupiers of the premises.
- LPI 1.7 – Arson Incidents. During the second quarter of 2014/15 arson incidents had been significantly higher, although both Primary and Secondary Arson Incidents continued to be below the Lower Tolerance Level.
- LPI 1.6 – Special Service Incidents. The Service had entered into a formal agreement with Yorkshire Ambulance Service and South Yorkshire Police, to provide assistance with bariatric patients; the average number of bariatric incidents attended averaged at 22 per year.

Members noted that some of the figures within the report were subject to data quality issues due to the change in the way the figures were brought together.

Councillor Bosmans commented that the Service should be applauded on its work with bariatric patients, which should be shown as an example to other services in the country.

Councillor Buckley commented that, at the recent Scrutiny Board, Members had been advised that the replacement of smoke alarms in properties, which would shortly reach their 10 year expiration date, would be replaced on a rolling programme. The Scrutiny Board had been keen to monitor Home Safety Checks (HSCs) as part of the Corporate Performance report.

Councillor Buckley requested that a report be submitted to the Scrutiny Board to consider whether the Service should charge for special services.

M Shaw commented that the special services were regularly reviewed, but that information would be brought to Scrutiny Board.

Councillor Bosmans queried whether there would be a dwelling fire campaign leading up to Christmas 2014.

M Shaw commented that each year the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) ran a national Christmas lights campaign, together with highlighting the dangers associated with the Christmas period. Local campaigns would also be run and include information on cooking related fires.

Councillor Bosmans referred to automatic false alarms, and the potential of charging persistent offenders; he added that if a report was produced, it would be interesting to see how to progress the matter further.

M Shaw commented that, in the past, the Service had delivered fire safety education to South Yorkshire businesses and had maintained a good relationship with them. A report would be produced to look at the potential of charging persistent offenders, but the Service would prefer to approach it from a fire safety education perspective.

Councillor Atkin commented that a high percentage of cooking related fires occurred within vulnerable homes, and he queried whether the Service had considered issuing fire blankets as well as smoke alarms at those properties.

M Shaw commented that a whole host of interventions were considered for vulnerable people, and that the Service's response would be tailored to the circumstances found at the properties.

Councillor Richards queried whether Christmas outdoor lights and decorations had proved more hazardous compared to indoor lights, and whether the use of candles had increased the number of property fires.

M Shaw commented that there had been no increase in fires due to outdoor Christmas lighting. However, a number of property fires were attributable to the use of candles, and the Service recommended battery operated candles be used instead.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the contents of the report.
- ii) Scrutinised and commented on the information presented in the report.
- iii) Agreed that a report be taken to the Scrutiny Board, to consider whether the Service should charge for special services.

CHAIR