

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

16 OCTOBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillor L Burgess (Chair)
Councillor A Atkin (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: S Ayris, A Buckley, M Clements, T Damms,
P Haith, C Hogarth, C Rosling-Josephs, C Ransome and
J Satur

CFO J Courtney, DCFO M Blunden, T/ACO M Mason and
S Booth (South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

A Brown, N Copley, A Frosdick and D Cutting (Barnsley MBC)

M McCarthy, L Noble and M McCoolle
(Joint Authorities Governance Unit)

M BATTERY (Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime
Commissioner)

Apologies for absence were received from
Councillor M Maroof, Dr A Billings and D Terris

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were 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 Burgess had recently visited Tankersley Fire Station with CFO Courtney, as part of a range of visits undertaken by senior officers to all South Yorkshire fire stations and watches. She supported Members attendance on such visits, which provided a good opportunity to interact with the senior officers and staff; Members had been provided with a revised schedule of the visits.

Councillor Burgess had recently attended an HMICFRS meeting in London with CFO Courtney in relation to developing an inspection programme for the fire and rescue sector. Delegates had learned about the process to date, and had provided feedback on those issues that were being considered for inspection together with the methodology being developed; Members would be provided with further information at the Corporate Advisory Group meeting held later today. She was sure that SYFR would deal with the inspection in a very appropriate and positive manner.

Councillor Burgess and CFO Courtney had also attended the LGA Fire Commission meeting in London on 13 October 2017, where a large input had been provided by the Professional Standards Body for those working in the fire and rescue services in relation to the development of the standards. Input had also been provided from the Head of the Retained Firefighters Union and the Chair of the National Pensions Scheme Advisory Board, who had made a request to ensure that appropriate linkages were in place between the Authority (as Scheme Manager) and the Local Pension Board. Input had also been received from the Business Service Director of the Fire Service College in relation to what they can offer fire and rescue services. There had been an interesting discussion regarding at least 250 social housing buildings nationwide, to which the Government expected that any improvements would be funded from each local council's HRA; it was anticipated that this would cause problems for the local councils in funding such developments. A proposal had been made for the establishment of a Sprinkler Working Group in relation to the issues post Grenfell, to provide for a much stronger case for the installation and retrofitting of sprinklers, in particular in high rise buildings. Members noted that updates following the Grenfell Tower fire would remain on the agenda for some time.

Councillor Haith thanked GM D Henderson for his presentation at the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership on 28 September 2017 on Making Every Contact Count and the Safe and Well Visits, which had prompted a good debate and questioning.

Councillor Atkin requested that congratulations be given on behalf of the Authority to the SYFR BA Team who had recently won the national competition.

Councillor Clements referred to a recent visit to Cudworth Fire Station where he had visited Green Watch. He had been very interested to meet with the crew and to receive a demonstration of the equipment; he looked forward to attending further visits.

RESOLVED – That Members noted that:-

- i) The position would be ascertained, to ensure that appropriate linkages were in place between the Authority (as Scheme Manager) and the Local Pension Board.
- ii) Updates following the Grenfell Tower fire would feature on the Authority's agendas for the foreseeable future.

7 RECEIPT OF PETITIONS

None.

8 TO RECEIVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC, OR COMMUNICATIONS SUBMITTED BY THE CHAIR OR THE CLERK AND TO PASS SUCH RESOLUTIONS THEREON AS THE STANDING ORDERS PERMIT AND AS MAY BE DEEMED EXPEDIENT

None.

9 MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

Councillor Ayris referred to the request he had made at the last Audit and Governance Committee that any information that had been provided as a result of Members' questions should be appended to the minutes, particularly in relation to the Grenfell Tower fire. He considered that it was important that any findings or data regarding the buildings within South Yorkshire were made clear and transparent, to enable an audit trail of the findings to include the data and action taken, in the event of a similar incident occurring within South Yorkshire.

Councillor Burgess stated that Members would have received several emails from L Noble to provide responses to the questions raised that were unable to be answered at the meetings; the information was recorded within the governance section. She stated that the responses did not form part of the formal minutes, but that further consideration should be given to establish an appropriate way that the responses to the questions could be suitably published for openness and transparency.

M McCarthy commented that it had been agreed that any questions or requests for information raised by Members would feature within the resolutions within the minutes. He was unsure how workable it would be to append the relevant information to the minutes in terms of length.

Councillor Ayris stated that his concern was that the information provided in relation to the follow up from the Grenfell Tower fire should be within the public domain in order to inform members of the public of the discussions undertaken, and to provide reassurance that the Authority and SYFR were taking the appropriate action.

A Frosdick stated that the principle was that if an answer could not be provided at the meeting to a question that was raised, that there was a need to capture the response available logistically without the need to produce reams of paper. He

suggested the inclusion of a link to the responses within the minutes to the questions raised to be published in a proportionate way, to enable a process to be designed without making the task too onerous in terms of resources or complexity.

Councillor Ayris commented that he did not want to overburden the meetings with excessive sets of minutes, but highlighted the need for members of the public to gain access to the responses provided to Members.

A Frosdick suggested that the inclusion of a link within the electronic minutes to a file containing the correspondence would provide the level of transparency required.

Councillor Burgess stated that the Authority did not wish to hide any information from the public.

Councillor Haith highlighted that the minutes be amended to indicate the correct spelling of St Leger.

Councillor Haith referred to the progress report on the improvements to the procurement and property functions. She queried when the Authority would be provided with the updated Contract Standing Orders for consideration and approval, and a draft Procurement Strategy for approval.

S Booth stated that Members would be provided with the documents at the November 2017 Authority meeting.

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 18 September 2017 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.
- ii) Members would be provided with the updated Contract Standing Orders and a draft Procurement Strategy at the November 2017 Authority meeting.
- iii) A way of publishing responses to Members' questions for public consumption would be explored.

10 SYFR ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

A report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Director of Service Development was submitted to present the SYFR Annual Report for 2016/17, to review SYFR's performance and achievements over the past year, and to provide a summary of how the priorities set out in the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for 2013 to 2017 were met.

DCFO Blunden stated that the Authority met the priority of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England by demonstrating its accountability to the communities for the services provided; the report would be made available on the SYFR and FRA websites.

Councillor Ransome referred to the 30% increase in accidental fires in non-domestic premises. She queried whether SYFR was reviewing the issue and how this could be improved in the future.

DCFO Blunden stated that the number of accidental fires in non-domestic premises in 2009/10 had stayed around the current level; the lowest level had been achieved in 2012/13. SYFR took the issue extremely seriously and worked with local authorities, SYP and coroners where appropriate, to ensure that SYFR did the utmost to support those businesses effected by fire.

Councillor Haith queried the number of members of the public that had viewed and commented on the SYFR Annual Report 2015/16 that was available on the SYFR website.

DCFO Blunden stated that he would ascertain the position.

Councillor Ayris suggested that members of the public viewing the report would be unable to ascertain the causation factors of the increase in the number of primary fires in South Yorkshire, and the work undertaken to resolve the issue.

DCFO Blunden stated that reference was included within the SYFR Annual Performance Report, which he would include within the SYFR Annual Report 2016/17 to demonstrate the work undertaken.

Councillor Atkin suggested that the report be amended at page 32 to remove the reference made to 'last week'.

Councillor Buckley informed Members that a second throwline station had been unveiled at Ulley Country Park last week.

Councillor Burgess gave thanks for the report.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Endorsed the contents of the report.
- ii) Be provided with the number of members of the public that had viewed and commented on the SYFR Annual Report 2015/16.
- iii) Noted that the causation factors of the increase in the number of primary fires in South Yorkshire and the work undertaken to resolve the issue would be included within the SYFR Annual Report 2016/17.
- iv) Noted that the report would be amended at page 32 to remove the reference made to 'last week'.

11 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION REVIEW

A report of the Director of Support Services was presented seeking Authority approval to utilise £70,000 of the Authority's Invest to Save – Transformation Reserve to procure a forensic analysis and review of its current operational and business processes across all service areas.

Councillor Hogarth queried whether consideration had been given to how other fire and rescue authorities in the country dealt with the matter, and what information SYFR had obtained from other fire and rescue authorities.

S Booth stated that a business partner with the right experience would be commissioned, to ensure that SYFR had the correct solution and that it was as streamlined as possible whilst meeting the customer needs. SYFR would take soundings from other fire authorities where appropriate to do so.

Councillor Clements commented that he was pleased that Phase 1 would commence with an inventory of SYFR's assets; he assumed that the assets would be recorded on an asset register. He queried how SYFR would procure a business partner. He was interested to learn of the discussions that had already taken place with potential business partners.

S Booth confirmed that SYFR had an asset inventory in place together with a large amount of application software; it was the extent to which the use of the business software was optimised to its best functionality. There were opportunities for the finance system to be used smarter and to turn on those applications that were not currently utilised. SYFR would review a framework agreement, as part of the procurement exercise, for consultancy services that had been established by national leading procurement agencies. Members noted initial discussions had been undertaken with a small number of companies to shape the brief, to test the market and the pitch and value of the process undertaken. SYFR envisaged the commissioning of an intensive and forensic piece of work that would result in the consultant spending a considerable amount of time on site, to deliver a high proportion of workshops and conduct one-to-one interviews. He therefore considered that the request for the initial investment of approximately £70,000 to procure the services of a relevant business partner was at the appropriate level.

Councillor Ayris queried that Authority's approval was sought today for up to £70,000, but that there may be a requirement to request additional investment from the Authority in the future. He queried the position in relation to the Contract Standing Orders.

S Booth stated that the only commitment sought by the Authority was for an investment of £70,000. The work that SYFR would procure through a supplier would be through a framework agreement that had been through a competitive tendering process, that was both managed and navigated by CCS, YPO or SPO to which SYFR could utilise those framework agreements to ensure the organisation was fully compliant with the Contract Standing Orders. This work had been closely undertaken with Michael Wood, the Interim Procurement Officer. In relation to Phase 2, there was no financial commitment to any company that SYFR had decided to work with as part of Phase 1. The intention was to have a separate

contractual arrangement, if opportunities had been identified, to which SYFR would present an identified business case to the Authority to set out the tangible business benefits that could be realisable if SYFR implemented or invested further monies.

M Buttery stated that Dr Billings, the Police and Crime Commissioner was very supportive of the digital strategy which would enable many collaboration opportunities. She added that the ability to share data between agencies was key.

RESOLVED – That Members approved:-

- i) An initial investment of approximately £70,000 to procure the services of a relevant business partner to complete the work identified in Section C of the report.
- ii) That the estimated cost of the works was funded from the Authority's Invest to Save Reserve in line with its intended purpose.

12 CONFERENCE REPRESENTATION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) ANNUAL FIRE CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2018 ON 13 - 14 MARCH 2018

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was submitted to seek expressions of interest to attend the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2018 on Tuesday 13 – Wednesday 14 March 2018, at the Hilton Hotel, Newcastle Gateshead.

Councillor Burgess sought Members interest in attending the event.

Councillor Ayris requested that a full feedback report be provided to the Authority.

Members agreed that Councillors Burgess, Atkin, Damms and Clements would represent the Authority at the conference.

RESOLVED – That:-

- i) Members approved representation at the LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2018.
- ii) A full feedback report to be provided to the Authority.

13 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 18 September 2017.

CHAIR