

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

22 FEBRUARY 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R Taylor (Chair)
Councillor T Damms (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: S Ayris, A Buckley, T Cave, R Frost, P Haith, C Hogarth,
P Price, C Ransome, S M Richards, C Ross and Dr A Billings

CFO A Johnson, DCFO C Kirby, ACO T Carlin, S Booth, L Murray,
S Kelsey and AM S Nicholson
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

M McCarthy, G Kirk, N Copley, M McCoolle, M Potter and L Noble
(Barnsley MBC)

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

An apology for absence was received from S Norman

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

RESOLVED – That agenda item 22 entitled ‘Independent Member – Audit & Governance Committee – Term of Office’ to be considered in the absence of the public and press.

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

None.

6 REPORTS BY MEMBERS

Councillor Haith expressed her thanks to S Wilson, Acting Strategic Finance Manager, BMBC for the Treasury Management training session that had recently been provided, and which she considered would be very useful at Item 13 – Budget and Precept Setting.

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

Members were informed of the following questions received from Mr Neil Carbutt, Secretary of the South Yorkshire Fire Brigade's Union.

Question 1

"I would like to ask a question in relation to the inclusion of the HMICFRS COVID-19 report written by Mr Matt Parr and included in the Authority agenda pack. The question is did the service provide a response in isolation?"

The FBU asked directly to be interviewed to be able give input and context into the report. Unfortunately, HMICFRS chose to not to facilitate that request and as such we would like to point out some inaccuracies.

In particular to the category of Response. Point 19. The service didn't change its crewing models or shift patterns during this period.

This is inaccurate and misleading. The FBU on a temporary basis signed a collective agreement to modify working hours for those undertaking Nightingale work away from normal working hours which was outside of national arrangements which stated that members working outside of role but under a collective local agreement will maintain their terms and conditions and in effect be detached to YAS under firefighter T&C's.

The FBU are nationally painted as a source of frustration with regard to terms and conditions, however, locally FBU faced the same frustrations with the service. Our reps have been frustrated by the frequency of 'late requests', lack of detail and unwillingness to share workplace risk assessments from partner agencies for the proposed new work streams.

This has meant that our union structures had often to meet at very short notice to be able to consult. Often without brigade committee quoracy due to operational staffing shortfalls and the unavailability of trade union leave.

On many occasions requests were able to be facilitated, but going forward we would like to see these requests and detail of ask sooner in the planning cycle which would undoubtedly result in better outcomes.”

Question 2

“Following the decision handed down from the Employment Appeals Tribunal Friday 12th February 2021 regarding Age Discrimination 1992 FPS and 2006NFPS. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority have previously refused to deal with cases where members have already retired (or should have been allowed to retire) under the terms of the pre-2015 scheme rules.

Frankly, for SYFR to continue to delay on remedy our members believe is wrong and needs addressing urgently. Further legal costs to the Authority (not government) would be borne by the South Yorkshire tax payers if further inaction and delay is experienced. Unfortunately that means that perversely our members will end up paying the price twice to obtain what they are legally entitled to.

We welcome previous efforts by the Authority to write to government, but the costs of this discrimination sit squarely with this Authority, and this Authority has within its gift the ability to enact remedy even it acts alone.

So my question is how does the Authority intend to process these members following the court’s ruling?”

SYFR provided the following responses to the questions raised:-

SYFR Response to Question 1

SYFR has no influence in who the HMI-CFRS requests to interview. If we can make suggestions to allow them to speak to the right personnel in relation to their areas of inquiry then we will but, ultimately, the HMI team decide who they wish to speak to in relation to their inspection interviews and fieldwork.

The temporary agreement to facilitate support for the potential for Nightingale transportation was something that was supported by SYFR. This was covered under the (then) Tripartite agreement and a local agreement pack was put together to facilitate local agreement on this activity. The fact is that although our volunteers were provided with training to undertake Nightingale transportation work, it was never actually required. Our staff did spend some time deployed into Yorkshire Ambulance Service premises for training and on standby in case it was needed.

Many services made decisions to change crewing models due to COVID-19 and SYFR considered amending crewing models to riding with 4 on each pumping appliance. This was considered due to the increased concern of transmission when staff were riding together on fire appliances. The SY FBU were strongly against this proposal and so the Service listened to their concerns and made the decision to increase PPE and control measures for staff to allow the crewing models to remain the same.

We did not alter shift patterns for our wholetime workforce. We did, however, offer a number of wholetime contracts to some of our on call (retained) staff to offer additional resilience and this was beneficial to the Service and to those individuals who took up these contracts as some were furloughed from their primary employer. The question from the HMICFRS was in relation to the Service fulfilling its statutory function only.

The fact also remains that throughout the pandemic there have been very few occasions where workplace transmission has occurred and this is testament to the control measures and infection prevention control in place throughout the pandemic.

In regards to the 'late requests', lack of detail and unwillingness to share workplace risk assessments from partner agencies, this is something that the service would have to challenge. The Service itself faced many situations where the requests for support were generated at the Local Resilience Forum and these requests had to be quickly acted upon. This is the reality of dealing with a major incident, and is a way of working that the Fire sector excel in, hence our significant contribution to the command and control of the COVID-19 response in LRFs across the country.

The position that Services found themselves in has been well documented in the HMICFRS report. A nationally agreed position on specific additional activities had to then be replicated through local agreements. Risk assessments were developed with as much speed as possible to facilitate these requests, there was a dedicated 'additional activities pack' put together for all the additional support that SYFR considered and these were shared and agreed (where possible) with all rep bodies prior to this work commencing. Indeed many packs were put together and the work was then never actually required.

To date, there have been 30 formal additional activity meetings with rep bodies to discuss the details around these requests. There is usually an informal notification process to all rep bodies immediately following any formal request into the Service, and then the formal additional activity meetings progress these discussions and show how the Service has consulted with its rep bodies on all areas that are considered outside of role.

The Service appreciates that once local requests for our support are generated, this does place demands on the local rep bodies to consider these requests. If they fell within the tripartite agreement areas, then we either adopted or slightly adapted the then nationally agreed risk assessments so they were already well documented and shared widely, but they would also be included as part of the additional activities pack for consultation and agreement.

Trade Union facilities time allows officials to request time away from normal working activity to undertake TU duties and activities and this would include attending FBU brigade committee meetings. However, these requests have to be considered against the operational demands of delivering the service and not all of them can be accommodated. SYFR has 2 full time funded FBU officials in place at present and this is very generous compared to many other similar Services who have 0-1 funded post. There also exists the opportunity for staff to still participate in

TU meetings from their normal place of work now that many meetings are taking place online (virtually). We have also offered the option for a staff member to dial into the meeting from their place of work and have offered a suitable rest period prior to and after the meeting in these circumstances.

SYFR Response to Question 2

We are awaiting advice on the outcomes of the EAT on 12 February. Until this advice is received, the FRA will retain the current position. The FRA recognises this is a very complex situation and that the uncertainty for current and previous pension scheme members is very difficult. However, to take action without full and detailed advice could be equally as costly to the FRA.

The outcome of the HM Treasury consultation is now known and we are moving towards the implementation stage of remedy. We have clarity that the choice to be offered to members for the remedied period will be on the Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) basis, to be implemented by October 2023.

9 **MINUTES OF THE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2021**

Councillor Ayris requested that the minutes of the last Authority meeting be amended to incorporate within the Service Improvement Update section that he had asked about the progress and the terms of reference of the retained duty system review for on-call firefighters, to which GM Rowland had stated that it was hoped to report the tangible outcomes at the end of the financial year. In relation to the Sargeant Immediate Detriment, he had requested that the Audit and Governance Committee Members had sight of the job description and person specification for the additional post to deal with the potential volume of work that would be required due to the Sargeant ruling, which was due go from the Service's HR Finance Working Group as a recruitment business case.

RESOLVED – That subject to the above amendments, that the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 11 January 2021 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 **SYFR COVID-19 UPDATE**

Members were provided with an update on SYFR's response and recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the introduction of the new national lockdown, which commenced in January 2021, the Service had been well prepared with a number of arrangements that were already in place that were designed to maintain the service delivery throughout the winter period whilst ensuring the safety of staff. The Service had undertaken a review of the Operational Parameters and had republished the document which set out how the core activities around prevention, protection and response would be delivered in relation to any local or national restrictions that may be in place at any given time. It was considered that this would be an important reference document in light of the imminent announcement expected from the Prime Minister, as the restrictions would gradually begin to be relaxed moving towards the summer period.

The Service's staff sickness absence levels continued to remain low in relation to COVID-19, which was considered to be attributable to the introduction of auditing of the infection, together with prevention and control measures. This guidance continued to be followed strictly across all fire stations, and in the Control Room. At the end of w/c 15 February 2021, the Service had no confirmed cases of COVID-19, with only 7 members of staff that were self-isolating for various reasons.

As a result of the different strains of COVID-19 that had begun to impact different parts of country, and on advice of Public Health England, the Service had introduced an additional control measure for face coverings to be worn in all areas of the workplace, especially when in immediate contact with other individuals. The control measure would continue to be reviewed.

It was noted that those members of staff that could work remotely from home had been asked to continue to do so. Regular welfare contact continued to be maintained with those individuals.

Members noted the debate around the national agreements between the National Fire Service Employers through the National Joint Council in relation to the additional activities that the fire and rescue services could support at a local level, which were deemed to be wider than the normal role of fire and rescue services, specifically in relation to providing support during the pandemic. The Service considered that it should be prepared and willing to provide support to local partners through requests at the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). In comparison to other fire and rescue services, the Service had, to date, received minimal requests in terms of the Service being asked to undertake additional activities. This was a testament to the organisation across the LRF and the partner agencies' capabilities to deliver the vast majority of work that was required within South Yorkshire. The Service had recently received a request to consider whether its organisation, command and control could be utilised to support the potential surge testing that could be required across the communities of South Yorkshire. This had now been implemented within specific areas across Leeds. One of the Service's officers had commenced work with the local authorities on the issue to begin planning for the organisation of surge testing across South Yorkshire should it be required. This may require consideration to ascertain whether the Service's 200+ volunteers would be willing to undertake support to deliver and collect testing kits from members of the community. Discussions would continue with the trade unions at the regular additional activities meetings, where the document packs were developed which contained all relevant information and any required training for the volunteers.

In early March 2021, the Service would host a workshop to seek and capture the views across the workforce as to how it would operate post COVID-19. Members would be invited to attend the workshop.

Councillor Richards queried the number of the Service's firefighters that had been eligible and able to have the COVID-19 vaccinations, and whether there had been any discussions to progress further the vaccinations for the blue light services at this time.

DCFO Kirby referred to the national requests to determine whether frontline workers within fire and rescue services could be eligible for the vaccinations. To date, the Service had not received confirmation. As a result of inclement weather, a local vaccination centre had recently informed the Service and other agencies of a number of spare, last minute vaccinations which could be administered 30 – 40 minutes before the vaccination centre closed. A number of staff from a local fire station had attended this session. A log book had been created to capture those members of staff that had received the vaccinations. The Service wished to prioritise its more vulnerable members of staff for any available vaccinations.

Councillor Hogarth queried whether there had been any incidents where the Fire Brigades' Union had blocked requests for the Service to provide assistance to other services.

DCFO Kirby stated that all requests follow a process to determine whether it was covered under the existing local agreement through the LRF. Consultation would be carried out with the respective trade unions in terms of what the request entailed and to agree an additional activities pack across the representative bodies before requesting the Service's staff to undertake the activity. In the event that a specific trade union did not agree with a particular request, the members of staff from that trade union may be precluded from participating in the activity. The majority of conversations regarding requests were either ongoing with the trades unions, or had been delivered at a local level.

Councillor Taylor expressed his thanks to DCFO Kirby for inviting Members to attend the workshop to be held in March 2021, and for the Service's ongoing efforts and the work undertaken during the pandemic.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

11 HMICFRS COVID-19 INSPECTION UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted to provide an update on both HMICFRS Responding to the Pandemic national report and the Service's HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection outcome letter, together with the key findings and identified areas for improvement.

CFO Johnson was pleased and proud to report the overall positive feedback that had been received following the Service's HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection which was undertaken between 14 and 25 September 2020. The Service had been complemented on the positive and constructive manner in which it had supported the inspection process.

The key findings indicated that the Service had adapted and responded effectively to the pandemic, it had activated its pandemic flu plan immediately, and it had maintained its statutory function to respond to incidents together with the prevention and protection activities whilst providing additional support to fire communities and following the National Fire Chiefs' Council Guidance. It had also been acknowledged that the Service had managed its resources well and had dealt with a number of serious incidents throughout the pandemic. It had been recognised that the Service had not been seriously affected financially during the pandemic

and that the reserves had not been utilised. The COVID-19 grant had been utilised to cover the cost of additional activities. The key findings had also indicated that the Service had managed its staff absence well, and that the Service's sickness absence had reduced by almost 25% during the period of the inspection. The Service's client availability had remained at the same level as 2020. On-call staff had been utilised to supplement the wholetime staffing to provide resilience for sickness absence during the pandemic. Training had been provided to support staff to provide resilience to the Command and Control Centre.

The Service had also been complemented in the manner in which it had supported staff's health and wellbeing, home working and had provided personal protective equipment (PPE) in a timely manner. Staff had indicated that the Service had engaged with them well via various methods of communication.

The HMICFRS had recognised that the Authority had allowed the Senior Leadership Team to progress matters, particularly in the early stages of the pandemic, whilst continuing to provide support and governance through virtual meetings. It had also recognised the great deal of work undertaken with partners and that, whilst the tri-partite agreement had caused some delays in delivery, the Service had continued to deliver its main statutory functions. The Service had delivered PPE and essential items to the communities, and had provided assistance with the Nightingale Hospital.

The inspection had identified two areas for improvement in relation to future planning and how the Service would adapt post COVID-19. A working group had been established to progress these issues. The HMICFRS had included a statement within every fire and rescue service's report to ensure that wholetime firefighters were fully productive whilst minimising their risk to contracting the virus.

Councillor Ayris congratulated the Service on the overall positive assessment as outlined within the HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection outcome letter. He queried whether the outcome letter had suggested that the Service should review the pandemic flu plan, and if so, what plans were in place.

CFO Johnson commented that the Service's pandemic flu plan was in date, it had been activated and would be reviewed. The date of the review had been shortly after the start of the pandemic, and it would be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Dr Billings sought clarity in relation to paragraph 27 of the HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection outcome letter, which referred to the review undertaken by the Service as to how it defined premises as high risk during the pandemic, and that as a result it had added schools, GP surgeries, shopping centres and supermarkets to its list of premises that were at increased risk from fire.

CFO Johnson referred to the fact that supermarkets had changed the flow of people in and out of the buildings. Some supermarkets had blocked a number of the exits, which had potentially increased the risk of individuals not being able to escape the buildings in a safe manner in the event of a fire. The Service had reviewed those premises that had changed the way in which they had operated due to the pandemic, and had offered advice to ensure that measures were in place to

ensure that individuals would still be able to safely escape the premises in the event of a fire.

Councillor Ross congratulated the fire officers for the work involved and he suggested that the Authority should endorse the positive way in which the Service had responded to the HMICFRS inspection.

Councillor Frost congratulated everyone concerned on the very good HMICFRS COVID-19 inspection outcome letter. In particular, he was pleased to observe that the people within South Yorkshire were well supported throughout the pandemic, that the resources had been well managed, that the Service had responded to several critical fires during the pandemic, and that staff wellbeing had been a clear priority for the Service, which had been recognised by the senior leaders who had actively promoted wellbeing services and had encouraged staff to discuss any worries that they may have.

Councillor Taylor commented that this was yet another positive report for the Service which clearly showed the direction of travel, and he hoped this would long continue and be reflected within the next report.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report.

12 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2020/21

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive and Clerk and Treasurer was submitted as the third in a series of reports that Members would receive throughout the financial year to inform them of the likely financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2021. The report included an estimated revenue outturn position, an updated reserves position statement, an update on the capital programme and a narrative commentary to provide an explanation of the key financial changes that were contributing to each of them.

Members were reminded of the 2020/21 approved operating budgeting of £54.850m, with a planned contribution to reserves of £0.471m. There was a net operating spend of £52.799m based upon the latest expenditure and planned contributions to/from earmarked reserves.

S Booth referred to the capital investment and the difficulties faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic to get onto site to progress the works; although good progress had been made. It was anticipated to spend approximately £9m by the end of the year from the original £11m that had been put forward in the approved capital programme. This would enable significant investments to be made in terms of refurbishment of Aston Park Fire Station, completion on the refurbishment of Tankersley Fire Station hopefully by the beginning of March 2021 and completion of the refurbishment of Rivelin Valley Fire Station which was also due to complete around the beginning of March 2021. The development of the new Barnsley Fire Station was continuing. A new fire kit and PPE had been ordered which would be a significant step forwards in terms of firefighter protection and operability, together with a technical rescue jacket. Due to the pandemic, the Service had moved to more agile working which had been achieved through

investment into ICT. The Service continued to make investments into the wildfire provision and it was now the pilot for the emergency services network for Systel.

Councillor Haith referred to the inclusion of apprentices within the support staff budget, and she was pleased to note that two of the apprentices had been successfully recruited into permanent posts during the year. In relation to the repairs and maintenance budget, she queried the overspend position and the reasoning for this.

S Booth stated that over the last 2 year period, the Service had consistently reported to the Authority the way in which the Service maintained the estate, and it had always been accepted that there would be a significant number of legacy issues to be dealt with as a result of moving to a more planned preventative approach. It had previously been anticipated that this would be completed within a 2 year period, although it was now envisaged to take 3 years due to fact that the capital investment programme had to be completed. Significant ongoing failure with the boiler, heating and ventilation systems continued to be encountered and this would continue to be reviewed as part of the new capital investment programme, which would equate to approximately £200k. The Service was extremely mindful of this and L Murray was liaising with finance colleagues on the matter.

Councillor Haith hoped that the replacement of the boilers would rectify the increase in the energy costs and that the replacement boilers would not be gas boilers but other sources of energy.

S Booth referred to the work to be undertaken at the Training and Development Centre. Work was underway to commission a company with a view to replacing the whole system in order to adopt a more sustainable strategy. The Service had recently been unsuccessful in their application to the Government's decarbonisation fund, due to it being significantly over subscribed. The Service was determined to introduce a sustainability strategy for the estate over the next 12 - 24 month period.

RESOLVED – That Members noted:-

- i) The emerging underlying estimated revenue performance which is showing a potential operating underspend of £2.878m for the financial year ended 31 March 2021.
- ii) The underlying and significant financial risks likely to be facing the Service and Sector and UK public services during the remainder of this financial year and into 2021/2022.
- iii) The latest estimated change in General and Earmarked Reserves as set out in Section C of this report and the proposed approach for transferring any surplus above the minimum General Reserve balance (£5m) to the Post Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve.
- iv) The adjusted capital programme for the financial year ending 2020/21, which is broadly in line with expectations due to Covid-19 restrictions.

13 2021/22 ANNUAL REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

A report of the Clerk and Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented to approve the 2020/21 revenue budget and to set the Council Tax and Precept by the legislative deadline.

S Booth referred to the progressive plans which endeavoured to take the Service forward and to improve the service provided to the public, with a sensible level of investment in the key priority areas. This included an increase in the number of firefighters to be deployed from 530 to approximately 600 and to strengthen the Service's protection activity, to enhance the contingent resilient firefighter capacity and the continuous investment into health and wellbeing. The budget made a cautious investment and it was optimistic for the future, whilst recognising the significant financial risks and uncertainties.

In relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan and budget reduction measures, Councillor Ayris referred to the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of the reserves that were satisfactory at the point of setting the budget, but would be subject to ongoing review over the coming financial year. He queried when, and by what mechanism, this would be reported to the Authority.

S Booth referred to the financial planning, monitoring and reporting framework which included four quarterly reports to the Authority, together with a number of Corporate Advisory Group meetings to discuss financial performance.

Dr Billings referred to the transport related costs, and he queried the plans to replace the Service's ageing vehicle fleet.

S Booth commented that work had been undertaken with S Gilding, the Joint Head of Vehicle Fleet and through the Strategic Vehicle Fleet Board the business need for future vehicles and the Service's wildfire provision. This had identified that some of the vehicles did not need replacing as often as in the past. A full review of the business need for vehicles would be undertaken and the extent to which current assets currently in use should be replaced. ACO Carlin and AM Strelczenie had highlighted the need for a more resilient vehicle fleet, to enable more spare vehicles to be available. Work would be undertaken with suppliers to ascertain the extent to which the Service could refit or refurbish the more older appliances. A contract was currently out for tender to appoint a supplier to undertake a full review of the appliances, with a view to enabling the vehicles to be kept within Service to provide greater resilience, together with a further contract to obtain eight fire appliance rescue pumps, to be run over a 6 week period.

Councillor Ayris commented that he would be supportive of the recommendations within the report. He expressed concern around the general financial uncertainty in the longer term, not least in relation to the impact post COVID-19 when the support funding would come to an end. He considered that the Service was making better use of its reserves, and he remained of the view that the Council tax increases were a temporary fix rather than a long term solution to the uncertainty.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Approved the Authority's 2021/22 Revenue Budget at Appendix A.
- ii) Noted the Treasurer's Section 25 Statement (Section H – paragraphs 76-88) in support of the budget.
- iii) Approved the Capital Investment Strategy (Appendix B) including the updated Capital Programme and new approvals as set out in Section E of this report.
- iv) Endorsed the proposed approach for managing reserves as set out in Section D to this Report in particular, the proposal to increase the Generally Available Reserve by any in year (2020/21) operating underspend until such time as there is greater clarity on the funding position in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and/or the longer term Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and to note the likely use of those useable earmarked reserves over the term of this Plan.
- v) Approved the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy at Appendix C.
- vi) Approved the fees and charges schedule for 2021/22 at Appendix D.
- vii) Approved a Council Tax Increase of 1.99% for 2021/22.

14 REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive/Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was presented regarding the Service's Performance Management Framework, which was reviewed annually to ensure that it reflected the Service's key priorities and to enable the related outcomes to the priorities to be monitored.

At the Authority meeting held on 10 February 2020, Members had approved the recommendation to undertake an in-depth review of the Performance Management Framework and to retain the existing framework for 2020/21, with minor amendments. A Task and Finish Group had been established to undertake the review. AM Nicholson expressed his thanks to Councillors Cave and Buckley who had sat on the Task and Finish Group throughout the process.

Members noted the proposed Corporate Level performance measures which would be introduced with effect from 1 April 2021.

Dr Billings referred to the corporate level strategic measures which would be reported to the Authority annually, and he queried whether these could also be reported to the Authority on a quarterly basis by exception. He queried whether the HMICFRS priorities could impact on the Authority's priorities. He also queried what the proposed new measure for call handling would entail.

AM Nicholson commented that consideration would be given to reporting the corporate level strategic measures to the Authority on a quarterly basis by exception. Members on the Performance and Scrutiny Board received performance reports on a quarterly basis, and this would continue even with the

introduction of the new Power-Bi reporting tool, albeit with a much shorter report Effectiveness, efficiency and people had been discussed within the Task and Finish Group. It was considered that whilst there was a potential risk for the Authority's priorities to be impacted, it was an opportunity for the Authority to align with what the HMICFRS would be likely to request to be reported upon, and it would also be beneficial to align both for the Performance and Data Team. The proposed new measure for call handling would enable the Service to performance manage in a positive and effective way in terms of the response to the public for the initial call handling phase and to the mobilisation phase to alert crews at the fire stations and the travel times.

Councillor Taylor requested that AM Nicholson determine the exceptions and the benefit of the corporate level strategy measures to be reported to the Authority on a quarterly basis, whilst being mindful of any duplication, and the availability to all Members of the Power-Bi system for 'real time' data.

Councillor Cave welcomed the report which contained both useful and innovative ideas. The Task and Finish Group had discussed in length the criteria and inspection by the HMICFRS, and aligning the performance measures.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Reviewed and approved the proposed Corporate Level performance measures for the 2021/22 - Performance Management Framework.
- ii) Agreed that the review should be undertaken in two phases.
- iii) Agreed the proposed changes to the reporting levels.
- iv) Agreed the proposal to use the HMICFRS inspection areas as categories for the performance measures.
- v) Agreed to continue using tolerance levels where appropriate.

15 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted to provide the revised Pay Policy Statement for the Authority for 2021/22 for consideration as required under the Localism Act 2011.

Councillor Ross wished to register his disquiet to the recent decision that had been taken by the Appointments Committee to re-employ CFO Johnson for a maximum 12 month period, as a result of the absurdities of the pensions system, which had provided a financial disincentive for continuous employment that would have been the most appropriate route for the Authority. He had expressed his concern to similar decisions that had previously been taken by the Authority.

S Kelsey commented that the pension situation, as a whole, was very unsatisfactory and unsettling, which had made it difficult for both individuals and the Service to plan.

RESOLVED – That Members approved the Pay Policy Statement.

16 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Yorkshire and Humber Employers' Association held on 21 January 2021.

17 LOCAL PENSION BOARD KEY ISSUES AND MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2021

Members were presented with the key issues paper and the draft minutes arising from the Local Pension Board meeting held on 21 January 2021.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the key issues paper and the draft minutes of the Local Pension Board meeting held on 21 January 2021.

18 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2021

At the Appointments Committee meeting held on 11 January 2021 succession planning had been discussed, in accordance with the terms of reference of the Fire and Rescue Authority's Constitution Part 2 Articles of Association Part 7.

Members were provided with assurance of the Service's temporary arrangements to cover CFO Johnson's service break for the period 7 April 2021 to 9 May 2021. During the period, the arrangements would be as follows:

T/CFO – C Kirby
T/DCFO – T Carlin

Following discussions with the three Area Managers, it had been agreed that AM Nicholson would become the T/Assistant Chief Fire Officer. Preparatory work for the professional discussions for the interim Area and Group Manager appointments was underway. It was envisaged that there would be a Station Manager vacancy due this being a short service break period.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Appointments Committee held on 11 January 2021.

19 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 11 January 2021.

20 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE APPEALS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2020

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Appeals and Standards Committee held on 1 December 2020.

21 PROGRESS REPORT ON ESTATES AND FACILITIES SERVICE
IMPROVEMENTS

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was presented which provided the details on progress to improve the Estates and Facilities Service.

At the Authority meeting held on 11 January 2021, Members had been informed of the intention to cease the existing management team arrangements with SYP by 31 March 2021, albeit with ongoing arrangements in specific areas. The interim structure of the Estates and Facilities Team continued to work well and it would be reviewed as part of the baseline exercise that was underway within the Service for the short, medium and long term.

In relation to projects, the steelwork had now been erected at the new Barnsley Fire Station site. Discussions were ongoing with the contractor regarding the extensions of time to the programme due to the delays in obtaining the steelwork, and Members would be provided with an update in due course. Positive negotiations continued on the cost variation to the construction contract for the requirement for more expensive retaining walls etc. Work was underway to establish the proposed onsite multi-use community building and the new training facility.

The Stations Improvement Programmes for Edlington, Lowedges and Aston Park Fire Stations were now complete. Tankersley Fire Station was on programme for completion by the middle of March 2021.

Plans were in place for a wider station improvement programme to be drawn up over the next 12 to 24 month period as part of the Estates Strategy Renewal programme, which would provide a Masterplan 'blueprint' for each station/asset. It was envisaged that the minor works contract at Rivelin Valley Fire Station would be completed by early March 2021. The heating, ventilation and cooling systems at the Central Station and Dearne Fire Station were now complete with final commissioning required to reflect the differing levels of occupation within the buildings.

The final tranche of Estate improvement works was expected to be completed by the end of February 2021. The relocation of the SYP body and paint shop facilities into the Fleet Workshop at Eastwood, Rotherham was now complete.

Work continued to ensure that all of the Service's buildings were COVID-19 secure.

The Service had been unsuccessful in their application to the Government's decarbonisation bid. However feedback had indicated that the Service had submitted a good application which would be kept on file.

Councillor Ross sought reassurance that the Service would not miss any future collaboration opportunities following the cessation of the existing management team arrangements, and that a mechanism would be in place for joint working with SYP and other agencies.

CFO Johnson provided reassurance that the Service would continue to consider and actively seek out any future potential collaborative opportunities with SYP and other agencies.

Councillor Cave requested confirmation of the anticipated completion date for the new Barnsley Fire Station, and he queried how confident the Service was that this would be achieved.

L Murray stated that the original date for the completion of the new Barnsley Fire Station was May 2021, and this currently stood at mid-May 2021. This date was being considered as part of the delay in the delivery of the steelwork, and she would provide Members with a new anticipated completion date as soon as the discussions had concluded.

In relation to the investment for boiler replacements, Councillor Frost queried whether carbon neutral and other heat sources would be considered in place of gas heated boilers.

L Murray anticipated that newer technologies for boiler replacements would be considered as part of the baseline and plans for the future, with a view to moving away from gas heated boilers.

S Booth referred to the Training and Development Centre, a building where the Service was very keen to install the latest technology. A company had been commissioned to undertake a survey of the premises to consider the available technologies.

Members noted that L Murray would shortly be leaving the Service. Councillor Taylor expressed his thanks, on behalf of the Members to L Murray for all the work she had undertaken for the Service and for the comprehensive report to the Authority, and he wished her the very best for the future.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Noted the contents of the report.
- ii) Endorsed the ongoing, positive progress and improvements made so far in Estates and Facilities as part of the Service's improvement journey and its continuation towards being an effective and efficient support service of SYFR.
- iii) Noted the arrangements made to facilitate the cessation of the existing joint management team from SYP and the approach being taken to determine a new service delivery model for SYFR Estates and Facilities.

22 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and the public interest not to disclose information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

23 INDEPENDENT MEMBER - AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - TERM OF OFFICE

A report of the Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority was submitted to provide the outcome of the appraisal that had been carried out by Councillor Haith, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee on 21 January 2021.

RESOLVED – That Members agreed to appoint the individual to a second four year term as an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee with immediate effect. The term would cease on 16 January 2025.

Actions Table

No.	Action	Timescale	Officer(s)	Status/ Update
1	To present information to Members over the next 12 months to enable the Performance Management Framework to be shaped, prior to Authority approval.	CAG	ACO Carlin	Update 1-3-21 Cllrs Buckley and Cave continue to be consulted as part of the Task and Finish Group.
2	To provide sufficient detail on apprentices within the Financial Performance Reports.	FRA 22-02-21	S Booth	ACTION DISCHARGED
3	Workforce Development Strategy Report.	FRA 26-04-21	S Kelsey	
4	To provide a final report on the SSCR Round 3 funding.	FRA 26-04-21 (Provisional)	M McCarthy	
5	To provide further transparency to the figures in future Procurement Service reports to enable Members to identify whether	To be reported annually	S Booth and D Nichols	

No.	Action	Timescale	Officer(s)	Status/ Update
	real budgetary revenue savings had been made, savings on the capital investment programme, cost avoidance or artificial savings.			
6	To report progress and the terms of reference for the Retained Duty Staff review which was due to be completed by the end of March 2021.	FRA 26-04-21	GM Rowland	
7	To provide the A&G Committee Members with the job description and person specification for the postholder to be recruited to deal with the additional workload in relation to the Sargeant Immediate Detriment.	ASAP	S Kelsey	<u>Update 02-03-21</u> The job description/ person specification has been drafted, and was currently being reviewed by the SYFR HR/Finance Group. Once agreed, it would be job evaluated for the grade and presented to SLT for agreement to recruit.
8	To invite Members to the COVID recovery workshop scheduled to be held in March 2021.	ASAP	DCFO Kirby	
9	To determine the exceptions and benefits of the corporate level strategy measures to be reported to the Authority on a quarterly basis, whilst being mindful of any	ASAP	AM Nicholson	<u>Update 1-3-21</u> Members to be reminded that 'real-time' performance can be accessed via the Power-Bi system. Written reports will continue to be received (quarterly)

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No.	Action	Timescale	Officer(s)	Status/ Update
	duplications.			by P&S Board with a more detailed annual report to the FRA. A road map will be developed by the Business Intelligence Team which will include the embedding process of Power-BI, the corporate reporting framework and reporting frequency. This will be delivered to the task and finish group which includes Councillor Cave and Councillor Buckley for approval.
10	To provide Members with the new anticipated completion date of the Barnsley Fire Station.	ASAP	L Murray	

CHAIR

Please follow the link below for further information on the updates of the actions arising from the Fire and Rescue Authority meetings:-

<https://meetings.southyorks.gov.uk/ecSDDisplayClassic.aspx?NAME=SD1250&ID=1250&RPID=402996&sch=doc&cat=13039&path=13039&zTS=D>