

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

10 OCTOBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor T Damms (Chair)
Councillor C Hogarth (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: S Sansome, S Ball, D Hutchinson, S Ayris,
A Khayum, A Cherryholme and S Alston

CFO C Kirby, ACO A Strelczenie, S Slater, S Kelsey,
S Locking, S Gilding and B Eastes
(South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service)

J Field, N Copley, M Bray, M Potter and D Thorpe
(Barnsley MBC)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Smith,
Councillor B Johnson, Councillor P Turpin, Dr A Billings,
S Loach, S Norman, DCFO T Carlin and M Buttery

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

CFO Kirby referred to the recent discussions that had been held with Members in relation to the current pay situation across operational roles in the fire and rescue service at a national level. Following those discussions and as part of the consultation response, the Authority had fed back and had endorsed an improved pay offer that was considered at a national level by the Employers side of National Joint Council. Members noted the following statement that had been released today from the Employers:-

“The UK National Employers for fire and rescue services has made an improved pay offer of 5% on all basic pay rates and continual professional development payments. In doing so, the National Employers are clear that they believe this higher offer is more in line with those made to other public sector employees is fair and appropriate. The National Employers had sought additional funding in England from the Home Office, but this has been refused as too has other forms of suggested future financial support. The position in Wales and Scotland are more positive, while in Northern Ireland there is no Northern Ireland Executive in place and no confirmed budget for 2022/23. This pay award will be very challenging for some fire and rescue authorities, and the National Employers will continue to lobby for additional sustainable funding for all parts of the UK going forwards. However, the National Employers had decided to improve their original offer in recognition of the critical and valued role firefighters have in our communities, but recognising this constitutes the maximum offer that can be made. The National Employers note that the Fire Brigades Union’s decision to now consult its members on this final offer, and hope that employees will understand that this is the best offer that can be made.”

3 URGENT ITEMS

None.

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

RESOLVED – That agenda item 17 entitled ‘SYFR Control System Update’ 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

On 6 October 2022, Councillor Sansome had attended the Fire Authority Local Pension Board training session, that had been provided by the Local Government Association. The session had highlighted a number of interesting anomalies regarding the complexity of the different pensions schemes. A total of 61% of the active members surveyed did not understand the pensions benefits that they were entitled to. Councillor Sansome was pleased to observe that S Kelsey had agreed to look into holding a communication meeting with the active pensions members. He requested that the Authority Members be provided with a copy of the briefing that would be provided to those members.

On 7 October 2022, Councillors Ball and Khayum had attended the Service’s cadets celebration event, which had been a great opportunity to observe the young adults receiving the recognition that they deserved.

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 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

In response to a query raised by Councillor Sansome regarding when a report would be presented to the Authority to outline the lessons learnt and the contingency plans to be put in place following the high volume of fires that had occurred during the extreme weather conditions on 19 July 2022, CFO Kirby commented that it was intended to present a report to the next Fire Authority Meeting in November 2022. The matter would be discussed at the Joint Liaison Forum Meeting that was attended by Members and the Trade Union Representatives, which was scheduled to be held on 13 October 2022.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Authority Meeting held on 12 September 2022 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME - PHASE 3 UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive was presented to provide Members with a six monthly update on phase 3 of the Digital Transformation Programme, which was considered as a key enabler to modernising and facilitating improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of SYFR functions and services.

The Service had developed its first Digital and ICT Development Plan and Programme in 2019. Following which, an annual update and incremental development plan had been implemented and delivered.

Members were referred to the 22 different projects or activities that were scheduled for completion by the end of March 2023. Six of which were complete, 13 were in progress and three had not yet commenced.

In response to a series of questions received from Councillors Sansome and Ayris, S Locking commented that it was hoped that all of the projects or activities in progress would be completed by the end of March 2023. The three projects or activities that had not yet commenced related to ESN, and the other two related to the planning element to ensure that matters were undertaken in the correct order; these were also hoped to be completed by the end of March 2023. In terms of finance for ESN, the Service had received Government grant funding for its completion.

Councillor Ball referred to the extreme weather conditions on 19 July 2022, and the difficulties that had been encountered by crews from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service to locate the fire hydrants within South Yorkshire.

S Locking commented that Yorkshire Water and Seven Trent Water provided the Service with the details of all of the fire hydrants electronically within the county, which was automatically rolled out to every mobile data terminal (MDT) throughout the county on a 6 monthly basis. The Service had a 15 kilometers buffer around South Yorkshire to enable the identification of all hydrants around that area, which would include over the border. Work was ongoing with Control and operational support regarding Control quickly providing Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service's Control and crews with the electronic information for fire hydrants and sites of specific risk for South Yorkshire. S Locking was working with K Storer regarding the benefits realisation and ensuring all benefits and issues.

ACO Strelczenie commented that the crews from Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service did not have the details on their MDT to state where the fire hydrants were located within South Yorkshire. This cross the border learning could relate to capacity on the MDTs.

Following a number of queries raised by Councillors Hogarth and Alston in relation to the training for the Hazard Alert System, S Locking commented that training was underway for the understanding for crews and community safety staff regarding how to implement the temporary hazards. Written guidance would be issued shortly. Generally, the training would be incorporated into the timescales of the projects. Some of the projects required equipment replacement rather than training.

Councillor Khayum requested further information on the Applicant Tracking System.

Members noted that the Applicant Tracking System was the corporate recruitment online system which replaced the paper based recruitment process for individuals that wished to join the Service.

RESOLVED – That Members endorsed the latest update of the Digital and ICT Development Programme 2022 – 2023 as a key enabler to modernising and facilitating improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of SYFR functions and services.

11 ELM LANE REBUILD

A report of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive was submitted which highlighted the benefits of moving towards modular builds for the future of the Service's estate. Elm Lane Station had been built in 1973. It was felt that the station was no longer fit for purpose and would require significant funds to provide a suitable station that would fit with the Service's strategy. There was a high level of suspected asbestos within a large portion of the building.

Modular buildings were a new concept, which to date had not yet been used by any other fire and rescue service in the UK. Therefore, the Service could become the first fire and rescue service in the UK to utilise modular buildings, with the potential to set the benchmark for future fire stations. The timeframe for modular buildings from order through to opening was 22 weeks in comparison to traditional buildings which could take up to 2 years.

Councillor Ayris queried whether any investigation for modular fire stations had been undertaken outside of the UK together with the track record of Actiform in this area. He sought reassurance of the longer term sustainability in using modular buildings in comparison to traditional buildings.

B Eastes referred to the research that had been undertaken which had identified that small modular fire stations were utilised in the US. A number of European cities heavily utilised modular buildings for houses. Actiform was one of many modular companies, which had assisted the Service to understand the process. The Service would go out to tender when proceeding with modular buildings. Modular buildings were increasing in popularity and a Government framework was now available. Modular fire stations would not compromise the estate's long term sustainability.

In response to a series of questions received from Members, B Eastes commented that the largest saving in using modular buildings would be the temporary accommodation. The precise requirements would be ascertained which would enable a higher cost saving on materials in comparison to traditional buildings. A cost exercise would be undertaken initially regarding demolishing the existing building. A desktop exercise would shortly commence on the existing land. It was not envisaged that any planning permission issues would be encountered for a modular fire station.

Members were referred to the upcoming new BRE BPS7014 regulations which would look to ensure the longevity of modular buildings. Modular fire stations would enable parts of the building to be moveable i.e. modules could be added onto the side of the building to facilitate water rescue; all of which would be determined at the design stage. It was noted that the modular buildings could be made adequately sound proof.

The Service's Sustainability Officer was working on a Green Plan which included solar, ground force heat pumps and air source heat pumps. The matter would be looked into further with a view to the energy cost crisis.

ACO Strelczenie commented that with an ever changing risk profile within South Yorkshire, the Service had to be on the forefront to ensure that the correct stations were located in the correct areas to protect the communities, to which modular buildings were an advancement of this. Members would be kept fully updated on the position. Training would form part of the planning assumptions.

CFO Kirby commented that it was not intended to provide modular buildings across the whole of the estate, but to prove the concept and to give the assurance that modular buildings were sustainable moving forwards, and delivered the quality that was required for the buildings across the Service. He added that the equipment, fire engines, training, skills and capabilities of the firefighters needed to be specialist rather than the buildings themselves. There had been huge advances in modular construction, and the Senior Leadership Team were internally seeking assurances on the matter. Following the Salix funding that had been secured by the Service, consultants had looked across the whole estate on sustainable and green solutions moving forwards.

Councillor Damms expressed his thanks for the comprehensive presentation.

RESOLVED – That Members:-

- i) Accepted moving forward with modular builds as a construction approach.
- ii) Agreed on progressing with Elm Lane as a priority and concept station.
- iii) Secured appropriate subject matter experts to create and sign-off Building Design Guides for this and future builds/renovation.
- iv) Considered upon successful concept to roll out modular builds across the estate where stations no longer meet the modern fire station requirement.

12 STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Members were provided with a handout which outlined the strategic principles that had been developed by the Service for periods of industrial action, which linked to the values and behaviours that the Service's staff were expected to follow.

The document referred to the legal requirements of the Service and the Authority, which placed responsibility on the Authority to ensure that a level of business continuity arrangements, including the cover for emergency response, were able to be delivered during periods of industrial action. This would enable the Service to provide emergency response as set out in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Members were referred to the key strategic principles as highlighted within the document, in relation to putting the communities of South Yorkshire first, respecting the rights and views of all individuals, continuing to collaborate with key partners specifically across the Local Resilience Forum and regionally, and to safeguard the Service's commitment to good local relations. Members noted the strategic objectives as set out within the document.

The matter would be discussed further at the Corporate Advisory Group Meeting to be held at the conclusion of the Authority Meeting, and at the Joint Liaison Forum Meeting that was scheduled to be held on 13 October 2022.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

13 FLEET UPDATE - PRESENTATION

Members were provided with an update on the latest position of the vehicle fleet.

Members noted the following key points:-

- Across the SYFR and SYP vehicle fleet collaboration there was approximately 58 staff, 17 of which were directly employed by SYFR, with 19 staff budgeted for.
- The HGV workshop and the collision repair facility were located at the Eastwood Fire Station in Rotherham. A light vehicle mechanical, commissioning and auto electrical workshop was located in Sheffield.
- There were approximately 1,000 vehicles within the fleet, with 201 vehicles for SYFR and 729 items of specialist equipment to be maintained for SYFR.
- The Service travelled approximately 1 million miles per annum, in comparison to 12 million miles per annum for SYP.
- The Service had 19 bunkered fuel sites and two electric vehicle charging points.
- There was a £1m revenue budget and a £2m capital budget for the Service.
- Members noted the aims of the vehicle fleet as highlighted within the presentation slides.

Members were provided with an update on the achievements made since last reported to the Authority, which included a Joint Fleet Strategy, and had been recognised by Fleet News as Fleet of the Year in terms of the joint collaboration in

terms of the work undertaken and the strategy in place. There was a shared site for the collision repair facility, and the Service had a 10 year vehicle replacement programme. A contract had been awarded for eight new appliances, four of which had been due in September 2022, but due to some delays in receiving parts and the chassis of the vehicles, it was envisaged that the first appliance would arrive in Service during October 2022, with the following three appliances to arrive on a month by month basis. The remaining four appliances would be received into the Service within the 2023/24 financial year. A tender had recently been awarded for the following 5 years for 2024/25 onwards for four appliances to be received into the Service each year. It was intended that the first eight fire appliances would be kept and utilised by the Service as spare appliances. The installation of telematics on all fleet owned vehicles had now been completed, and a tender had recently been awarded for a nuclear management system which would enable the Service to remotely track the fuel tanks.

The upgraded Fleet Management System was in process and would be the same for both SYP and SYFR to schedule in vehicles for maintenance and repair. It was envisaged that the full system would be live by the end of the calendar year. Focus was being made to the road to net zero and a review of the specialist vehicles was currently underway.

Members were referred to the challenges, as highlighted within the presentation slides which included that from the 201 vehicles within the SYFR fleet, a total of 50 HGV's were required to be serviced every 13 weeks. This would leave 1.4 hours per remainder of the fleet to be maintained and repaired. The Service had agreed for additional staff within the department and work was underway with the HR Department in relation to recruitment.

In response to a query raised by Councillor Ball in relation to the electric vehicles and charging points, S Gilding commented that the possibilities were endless for most of the fleet and that some of the vehicles would fit well for electric. There were 10 electric Nissan vans on the SYP side of the fleet, which could be charged overnight within the estate area. It would be timely to ensure that the infrastructure was implemented at SYFR at the same time as the vehicles arrived. A small amount of funding from the Service's Innovation and Service Improvement Fund would be utilised to commence matters. Work was underway on the replacement programme. Electric vans would be utilised initially and consideration would be given to the flexi duty and officer cars.

ACO Strelczenie chaired the Service's Sustainability Board Meeting. The Service was considering electric/hybrid vehicles for the future. At present, there were only two fire and rescue services in the country that were trialling electric fire appliances. The evaluation of fire appliances was awaited from the National Fire Chiefs Council.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the update.

14 KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY BOARD MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2022

Councillor Ball commented that he found the new format of the key issues paper to be informative. He suggested that consideration be given for a key issues paper to be provided to the Authority for every committee/board.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the key issues arising from the Performance and Scrutiny Board Meeting held on 8 September 2022.

15 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

RESOLVED – That Members noted the draft minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 12 September 2022.

16 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.

17 SYFR CONTROL SYSTEM UPDATE

A report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive was submitted which provided Members with an update on the SYFR Control System.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the content of the report.

Actions Table

No.	Action	Timescale	Officer(s)	Status/Update
1	A report to be presented to a future Authority meeting to outline the lessons learnt and the contingency plans to be put in place following the high volume of fires that had occurred during the extreme weather conditions on 19 July 2022.	To a future FRA meeting	DCFO Carlin	<p><u>Update 12.09.22</u></p> <p>A report to be presented to the Members within the upcoming couple of Authority Meetings.</p> <p><u>Update 10.10.22</u></p> <p>It was envisaged that a report would be provided to the Authority Meeting in November 2022.</p>

2	To provide Members with a copy of the briefing for the active pension members regarding their pensions benefits.	In due course	S Kelsey	
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CHAIR