

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

9 OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Councillor C Hogarth (Chair)
Councillor A Cherryholme (Vice-Chair)
Councillors: J Ridler, T Smith, S Ball, S Ayris and S Alston

CFO C Kirby, ACFO A Strelczenie, L Haigh, AMB S Dunker,
AM M Gillatt, S Kelsey and S Locking (South Yorkshire Fire &
Rescue Service)

N Copley, M Potter, S Ghuman, C Smallman, D Thorpe and
D Nutall (Barnsley MBC)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor
T Damms, Councillor M Elliot, D Mitchell and Councillor
K Wyatt

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

2 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members of the Committee expressed thanks to former Councillor Sansome for his effort and commitment to the Fire Authority.

Cllr Ball raised a concern around the changes to the Fire Authority membership. His concerns were noted by the FRA and the Chair confirmed that membership of the FRA was down to local determination within each of the 4 Local Authorities. The PCC challenged the validity of the comments made by Cllr Ball and requested that the FRA moved onto the business on the agenda.

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

None.

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 11 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 11 September 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10 WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AND EFFICIENCY PLAN 2023-25

S Kelsey provided Members with an update on the Workforce Investment and Efficiency Plan 2023-24 which was introduced in 2020. The plan included an annual planning cycle as well as a five-to-ten-year projection of the resourcing requirements.

The annual planning cycle included a workforce planning event in June each year, prior to which all functions heads would be invited to present a business case for either additional resources, where required, to help meet the current and future priorities and to support the service improvement work, or efficiencies in recognition of the challenging economic climate.

S Kelsey highlighted the Business Fire Safety team as two additional officer posts had been created which were allocated government funding.

Within the Procurement team there had been a slight restructure alongside a new business partner which in time would show an improvement in customer services. The new structure would mean an efficiency saving of over 20k.

Councillor Alston queried the additional government funding related to the Business Fire Safety recruitment asking if there had been changes in regulations to allow it. S Kelsey explained that an increase in roles was a national initiative, so the funding was regional. The risk of not having future funding could be managed comfortably as the challenge of recruitment and retention was a national one.

A discussion was taken around internal recruitment, S Kelsey explained that there was a clear pathway as staff are supported through training which results in higher levels of commitment meaning retention is stronger.

RESOLVED - That Members approved the business cases contained within the Workforce Investment and Efficiency Plan to support the service's strategic objectives and service's improvement and efficiency plans.

11 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023-24

S Kelsey provided Members with the Pay Policy Statement 2023-24 update explaining that in future reports benchmarking would be included from similar services for Members information.

The pay award had not been settled so was not included in the figures.

RESOLVED - That Members:-

- Approved the annual Pay Policy Statement
- Approved any amendments to the annual Pay Policy Statement to be published throughout the financial year, following the application of the national negotiating committees pay award decisions.

12 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

S Locking provided the Digital Transformation update explaining that it was a fundamental enabler for both modernising and making further improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation.

S Locking continued that currently there were 13 projects, 11 in progress and 2 not started. There were hopes that all 13 would be completed by the end of March 2024.

RESOLVED - That Members endorsed the latest update of the Digital and ICT Development Programme 2023-2024 as a key enabler to modernising and facilitating improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of SYFR functions and services.

13 GREEN PLAN 6 MONTH UPDATE

A Strelczenie provided Members with the Green Plan 6 Month Update which had been approved in January 2023.

Councillor Ball asked if the Service had any plans to use solar power or batteries in the future. A Strelczenie explained that those options may be considered in the years to come.

Dr Billings reassured Members that discussions were taking place as the Police had conducted partnership meetings for infrastructure and electric vehicle fleets. It was agreed that future reporting would be kept to the 6 monthly basis.

RESOLVED - That Members:-

- Noted the contents of the Green Plan update report.
- Noted the contents of the 2022-23 greenhouse gas emissions report.
- Advised on the frequency of future reporting on Green Plan required - six monthly was recommended.

14 CULTURE UPDATE

S Kelsey provided the Committee with a Culture Update, the key points to note were as follows:

- A staff culture survey had been launched and there were hopes to see a completion rate of over 50%.
- In the future a higher completion rate would be achieved if the survey was run more regularly as staff would feel more confident/comfortable with sharing their opinions.
- There would be communications of the results and the actions which the Service would take.
- 360 feedback for managers and leaders had begun with action plans currently in development.
- Managers were receiving feedback training which can be used within their teams.
- The next phase of 360 feedback for middle managers was due to launch before Christmas and then junior officers by 2024.
- There was an independent speak up service available for staff as an alternative route for raising concerns anonymously.
- In terms of DBS checks, there was a process in place for all staff alongside frontline roles receiving an external check.

Cllr Alston queried the demographic of staff completing the surveys. S Kelsey explained that all employees were invited to provide their demographic information which could then be compared with future surveys.

S Kelsey also assured the Committee that the speak up service would be regularly communicated throughout the Service.

RESOLVED - That Members noted the update.

15 SEASONAL WATER RISK (PRESENTATION)

M Gillatt presented the Committee with the Seasonal Water Risk update.

Councillor Smith queried potential flash flooding in South Yorkshire and dam checking. M Gillatt responded explaining that routine reports were conducted alongside regular checks.

Councillor Alston asked who was responsible for checking the water safety equipment was available for use and not damaged. M Gillatt explained that the owners of the relevant body of water have the responsibility of checking all their equipment (local authorities or private landowners).

RESOLVED - That Members noted the update.

16 DRAFT MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2023

RESOLVED - That the draft Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 11 September 2023 were noted.

17 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

None.

CHAIR