

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY**MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING****7 JUNE 2024****PRESENT:****CHAIR**

Cllr David Coupe – Middlesbrough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Gary Allen, Bob Buchan, Ben Clayton

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs John Kabuye, Naweed Hussain, Dennis McCabe

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Peter Chaney, Barry Hunt, Mary Ovens, David Taylor

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Jim Beall, Stefan Houghton, Sufi Mubeen, Andrew Sherris, Mick Stoker

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer, Treasurer,

Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Strategic Planning & Resources

Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Community Protection

APOLOGIES:

Chief Fire Officer

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) opened the meeting and informed Members that nominations had been received for two political groups with 7 Members for Labour and 6 for Conservative. He sought nominations for the position of Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2024/25.

Councillors David Coupe and Ben Clayton were subsequently proposed and seconded. A vote was taken and both nominees received eight votes. The LAMO suggested a recess to speak to both nominees. Members agreed and on their return the LAMO announced that Councillor Coupe to be appointed Chair for the ensuing year. Councillor Coupe thanked Members for their support.

RESOLVED – that Councillor David Coupe be appointed Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2024/25.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

It was noted no Declarations of Interests were submitted to the meeting.

3. APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Chair sought nominations for the position of Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2024/25. Councillor Ben Clayton was proposed and seconded. The Chair welcomed Councillor Clayton to his new role and said he looked forward to working together over the coming year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Ben Clayton be appointed as Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2024/25.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of proceedings of the Ordinary meeting of 22 March 2024 be confirmed.

5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive (Appointment) Committees on 15/16 April and 20/21 May 2024, Extraordinary Audit & Governance Committee on 19 April 2024 and the Executive Committee on 17 May 2024 be confirmed.

6. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

No communications were received by the Chair.

7. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER

7.1 Business Report 2024

The Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer (LAMO) referred Members to The Constitution at Appendix A which included:

- CFA Membership 2024/25
- Calendar of Meetings 2024/25
- Terms of Reference
- Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Procedure Rules
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Ethical Governance Framework
- Standing Orders of the Authority Regulation of Proceedings & Business
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Members Allowance Scheme

Voting took place on the nominations received for Committees and outside bodies. With the consensus of the Members present, it was unanimously agreed that the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the Audit & Governance Committee would take place at this Annual meeting and not at the initial committee meeting on 28 June 2024.

Appointment of Audit & Governance Committee Chair and Vice Chair

Nominations took place for the position of Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee. Councillor Mary Ovens was subsequently proposed and seconded.

Nominations took place for the position of Vice Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee. Councillor Stephan Houghton was subsequently proposed and seconded.

7.1 Business Report 2024 cont.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Constitution as outlined at paragraph 3 and Appendix A be approved.
- (ii) That Member appointments to committees and outside bodies (as nominated and outlined in the table below) be approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CON	COUPE (CHAIR)	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	CLAYTON (VICE CHAIR)	HARTLEPOOL
CON	BUCHAN	HARTLEPOOL
LAB	CHANEY	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
MICA	MCCABE	MIDDLESBROUGH
CON	MUBEEN	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	STOKER	STOCKTON ON TEES

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

LIB DEM	OVENS (CHAIR)	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
CON	HOUGHTON (VICE CHAIR)	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	ALLEN	HARTLEPOOL
LAB	BEALL	STOCKTON ON TEES
IND	HUNT	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
LAB	HUSSAIN	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	KABUYE	MIDDLESBROUGH
CON	SHERRIS	STOCKTON ON TEES
CON	TAYLOR	REDCAR & CLEVELAND

FPS LOCAL PENSION BOARD 2024/25

LAB	CLAYTON	HARTLEPOOL
CON	COUPE	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	STOKER	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	ALLEN (SUB)	HARTLEPOOL

REPRESENTATIVES FOR OUTSIDE BODIES 2024/25

LGA FIRE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE	COUPE
Substitute:	MUBEEN
REDCAR & CLEVELAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP	TAYLOR
STOCKTON SAFER PARTNERSHIP REPN	HOUGHTON

7.2 Member Development Plan

The LAMO presented the Member Development Plan 2024/25, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report, and informed Members that a Corporate Manslaughter development seminar had been arranged for 26 July 2024.

RESOLVED – that the Member Development Plan 2024/25, at Appendix 1, be approved.

8. REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

8.1 Information Pack

- 8.1.1 National Joint Circulars
- 8.1.2 Employers Circulars
- 8.1.3 Campaigns

RESOLVED – that the information pack be noted.

9. REPORT OF THE CLERK

9.1 Appointment of Chief Fire Officer

Members received details in connection with the appointment of the new Chief Fire Officer for Cleveland Fire Authority by the Executive (Appointments) Committee on 15/16 May 2024.

The ACFO-SPR outlined the robust three-stage appointment process and proposed conditions of service detailed at Appendix 1.

The LAMO recorded a vote, and Members unanimously approved the appointment of Mr Peter Rickard as the Chief Fire Officer of Cleveland Fire Authority.

RESOLVED – That the appointment of Peter Rickard to the post of Chief Fire Officer, subject to the confirmation of the necessary medical, reference checks and Enhanced DBS and Security Clearance, be approved.

10. JOINT REPORT OF THE TREASURER AND FORVIS MAZARS

10.1 The Financial Report 2022/23 and Audit Completion Report

The Treasurer presented Members with the 2022/23 Financial Report which had been published on the website on 16 June 2023 and scrutinised by the Audit & Governance Committee on 25 August 2023. He reported that owing to a backlog of local government audit work the external audit had not commenced until January 2024.

Mazars had presented a report to the Executive Committee on 17 May 2024 to advise Members that the External Auditors had substantially completed the audit review which enabled the 2023/24 Financial Report to be finalised. The Treasurer confirmed that this put the Authority in a good position and audit work was now up to date.

The Audit Engagement Lead (AEL) presented the Audit Completion Report and informed Members that an unqualified audit opinion had been issued, without modification, on the 2022/23 financial statements and if approved could be signed off and published on the Brigade website on 10 June 2024.

He reported that the Auditors Annual Report would go to the Audit & Governance Committee on 28 June 2024 for detailed consideration and would include value for money commentary to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and financial sustainability.

He also noted that the Whole of Government accounts reporting would be submitted the following week and once clearance was received, expected around the end of November 2024, the Audit Certificate could be issued.

10.1 The Financial Report 2022/23 and Audit Completion Report cont.

The AEL informed Members that this was his final year working with the Authority as he was to be replaced by Mr James Collins. He passed on sincere thanks to Members and Officers and wished them well for the challenging future the Authority faced.

The Chair recorded thanks to the AEL for the many years hard work he had dedicated to the Authority.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the 2022/23 Financial Report (including the statement of accounts) attached at Appendix A be approved.**
- (ii) That the Audit Completion Report (ACR) at Appendix B and ACR follow up letter at Appendix C be noted.**
- (ii) That Members noted that the Management Representation Letter will be issued once the audit has concluded.**
- (iv) That the Auditors' draft Annual Report attached at Appendix D be noted.**

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006

RESOLVED - "That Under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, namely information relating to any individual; information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) holding that information and namely information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority."

12. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF MEETINGS

That the Confidential Minutes of the Executive (Appointment) Committees on 15/16 April and 20/21 May 2024 and Executive Committee on 17 May 2024 be confirmed.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID COUPE
CHAIR**