
CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

20 SEPTEMBER 2024



PRESENT:

CHAIR
Councillor David Coupe – Middlesbrough Council
HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL
Councillor Ben Clayton
MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL
Councillor Dennis McCabe
REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL
Councillor Peter Chaney
STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL
Councillor Mick Stoker
AUTHORISED OFFICERS
Chief Fire Officer, Chief Fire Officer (Designate)
Treasurer, Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer
Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Strategic Planning & Resources
Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Protection

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Bob Buchan – Hartlepool Borough Council
Councillor Sufi Mubeen – Stockton Borough Council

33. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

34. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 5 August 2024 be confirmed.

35. REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

35.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade's HMICFRS Inspection 2023-25

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with an update relating to the Brigade's third HMICFRS inspection scheduled to commence on 7 October 2024 with the Strategic Brief and last for six weeks.

He outlined the outcomes of the 2021/22 inspection which found the Brigade to be 'Good' across all three pillars of effectiveness, efficiency and people. In addition, the Brigade's improvement journey was recognised by HMICFRS Roy Wilshire who noted that 12 of the 16 areas highlighted for improvement in the 2018 inspection had been resolved and 4 were being progressed.

35.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade's HMICFRS Inspection 2023-25 cont.

The CFO gave assurances that all preparations for the forthcoming inspection were on track and informed Members that the Brigade's Service Liaison Lead was Spencer Rowland with Michelle Skeer OBE QPM appointed as His Majesty's Inspector of Fire and Rescue for the Northern Region.

He noted that the Inspectorate was taking a different approach to grading for the third round with the introduction of 'adequate' between 'good' and 'requires improvement' grades making it difficult to compare to previous years' improvements.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the current position regarding HMICFRS Round 3 Inspections and the preparation activities required for Cleveland Fire Brigade's inspection in October 2024.

35.2 Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report Overview

Members considered an overview of the second phase of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report which was published on 4 September 2024 with a focus on London Fire Brigade's understanding of modern methods of construction, how some building materials behave when exposed to fire and how its officers were trained to respond to fires in high rise buildings.

The CFO referred Members to the Executive Summary report at Appendix 1 and highlighted 'Volume 5: London Fire Brigade's response' which covers a wide range of operational issues including communication, training policy and guidance, incident command and leadership.

He reported that Cleveland Fire Brigade's own Operational Assurance Team had been commissioned to identify operational and organisational learning from the event and disseminate that learning and recommend any improvements where appropriate. This would be shared with Members to consider the wider implications, and the CFO would continue to work with the National Chiefs Council to address all of the operational matters raised in the report.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Protection (ACFO-CP) informed Members that since the release of the Phase 1 report in 2020 the Brigade had established a Grenfell Action Plan to capture the relevant recommendations which is monitored regularly and funding allocated to achieve the recommendations. This included procuring smoke hoods to use on casualties, upgrading the incident command system and having evacuation plans in place for all high-rise buildings.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Phase 1 Executive Summary report, and the Inquiry Chair's important findings and recommendations at Appendix 1, be noted.**

35.2 Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report Overview cont.

- (ii) That Members agreed to receive further reports having considered the wider implications of the recommendations in relation to Cleveland Fire Brigade
- (iii) That Members endorsed that the Chief Fire Officer works with the National Fire Chiefs Council to address all of the operational matters raised in the report.

36. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006 “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.”

37. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee on 5 August be confirmed.

38. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

38.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade’s HMICFRS 2023-25: Self-Assessment

Members considered the Brigade’s self-assessment submitted as a requirement of the HMICFRS Inspection 2023-25.

38.2 Procurement Update Report

Members received details relating to contract letting procedures, exemptions to contract procedure rules and future procurement plans.

38.3 Provision of Frontline Appliances

The ACFO-SPR outlined the results of the Brigade analysis of the tenders received for the Provision of frontline appliances.

COUNCILLOR DAVID COUPE
CHAIR