

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

20 NOVEMBER 2020



PRESENT

CHAIR

Councillor Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Tim Fleming

MIDDLESBROUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Teresa Higgins, Jon Rathmell

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Luke Frost, Jean O'Donnell

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Mary Ovens

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Chief Fire Officer, ACFO – Strategic Planning & Resources, ACFO – Community Protection, Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer, Treasurer

135. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

136. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 25 September 2020 be confirmed.

137. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

137.1 COVID-19 Pandemic Briefing - Presentation

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with a detailed update on the COVID-19 pandemic which covered:

Situational Awareness – up to 15 November

- Middlesbrough - 710 cases (495/100k population)
- Redcar & Cleveland – 710 cases (496/ 100k population)
- Hartlepool – 581 Cases (583 / 100k population)
- Stockton – 923 cases (443 / 100k population)
- At 13 November Hartlepool had the highest rate and Stockton lowest.
- The North East local authorities which had been put into lockdown earlier than Cleveland had now seen a reduction in the rate

137.1 COVID-19 Pandemic Briefing – Presentation cont.

Key Emerging Issues

- Pandemic Fatigue
- Increased rates of infection
- Combination prevention, i.e. vaccine, social distancing and covid-secure workplaces
- Increased impact on Primary Trusts
- Increased Impact on Public Service (staff absences)
- Mass testing programme – learning from Liverpool pilot

Strategic Objectives

- Ensure operational response remains resilient and effective
- Support broader public sector
- Maintain highest possible standards in respect of health, safety and wellbeing of staff

Operational Response

Performance over first 6 months of this financial year compared to 2019, highlights:

- Total calls received by fire control was 5,780 (reduction of 19% on last year)
- Total incidents attended 4160 (17% reduction in operational response)
- Deliberate secondary fires down by 26% - positive picture but the longer term trend is that CFB has the highest rate of deliberate fires across the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS)
- Accidental Dwelling Fires – 16% increase at 78 fires. However, five year trend put CFB at second lowest in the country after Warwickshire FRS
- Accidental Dwelling Fire injuries have increased 100% to 15 injuries. However, 9 of these were from the same operational incident at a house fire in Hartlepool where a large family were rescued by CFB

Broader Support

- Tripartite Agreement - 14 additional areas of work have been agreed to become core work for the FRS throughout the pandemic. Nationally, this agreement is due to be extended to enable the work to be carried out as the pandemic continues
- Locally, agreements are in place with trade unions and risk assessments have been undertaken to allow staff to carry out this additional work in a safe manner

Additional Broader Support

- Seconded officers into local authorities to help with coordination and planning
- Delivered welfare unit to support mobile testing sites
- Undertaken temperature testing in Middlesbrough area
- During Performance (DP) inspections to ensure commercial buildings are complying with restrictions
- Seconded officers to Local Resilience Forum to support planning / activities
- In process of seconding officers to the planning for mass testing programme
- Working closely with regional NHS to support mass vaccination programme

137.1 COVID-19 Pandemic Briefing – Presentation cont.

How Staff are Supported

- Enhanced occupational health support
- Individual welfare conversations with line manager linked to personal record
- Enhanced mental health and stress management
- Supported staff with financial hardship
- All carried out in partnership with the two trade unions
- Identified vulnerable members of workforce and took the approach to address these people as priority
- Staff kept informed with most up to-date-guidance

RESOLVED – that the briefing be noted.

137.2 Fire Service Agreements 2004: Section 13 and 16

Members received details of the arrangements made by the CFO under the Authority's Scheme of Delegation to provide mutual support and reinforcement with Country Durham and Darlington FRA (Appendix 1) and North Yorkshire FRA (Appendix 2) under the Fire Services Act 2004, Sections 13 and 16.

In addition, they were asked to consider the draft agreement proposed by the CFO to provide Principal Officer Cover in extenuating circumstances to County Durham and Darlington FRA, Northumberland County Council, and Tyne and Wear FRA under the Fire Services Act 2004, Section 16 (Appendix 3).

The CFO referred Members to the agreements contained within the appendices, as summarised below:

Cleveland Fire Authority and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue

This agreement relates to the provision of specialist response and support appliances; standby arrangements; wildfire arrangements and fire investigation as set out at Appendix 1.

Cleveland Fire Authority and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority

This agreement relates to the provision of Reinforcements; and an emergency response to certain parts of North Yorkshire as set out at Appendix 2.

Cleveland Fire Authority, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, Northumberland County Council and Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

This agreement relates to the provision of Principal Officer Cover in extenuating circumstances as set out in the document at Appendix 3.

Councillor Ovens endorsed the arrangement as a 'failsafe back-up system' which may never be utilised but provides an extra layer of risk management should it be required in the future. Councillor Frost sought clarity on the boundaries of the map contained within Appendix 2 and raised concerns about capacity.

137. Fire Service Agreements 2004: Section 13 and 16 cont.

The CFO confirmed the Brigade would only be mobilised if that capability was available and gave assurance that similar arrangements were in place across the UKFRS, with the ultimate aim being to provide the fastest response to any incident. Councillor Rathmell highlighted the importance of cross-border arrangements for the more rural areas of Cleveland and confirmed that parts of his own ward benefitted from having an overlapping service.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Operational Provision (Agreements) that have been made by the Chief Fire Officer under the Authority's Scheme of Delegation to provide mutual support and reinforcement with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority and North Yorkshire Fire Authority under the Fire Service Act 2004 Sections 13 and 16 as attached in Appendices 1 and 2, be endorsed.**
- (ii) That the Operational Provision (Agreement) that is proposed by the Chief Fire Officer to provide Principal Officer Cover in extenuating circumstances with County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and Northumberland County Council under the Fire Service Act 2004, Section 16 as attached in Appendix 3, be approved.**

138. 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 paragraph 3 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 financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) holding that information."

139. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 25 September 2020 be confirmed.

140. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

140.1 Procurement Report

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

140.2 Provision of Business and Administration Apprenticeships – Tender Acceptance

Members examined the result of the Brigade analysis of the tenders received for the Provision of Business and Administration Apprenticeships.

141. ANY OTHER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

141.1 Firefighter Update

The CFO gave an update to Members.

141.2 Bonfire Night Summary

Members received details of operational activity from this period.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON
CHAIR**