

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

3 JULY 2026



PRESENT:

CHAIR

Councillor David Coupe – Middlesbrough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Christopher Wallace

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Peter Chaney, Mary Ovens

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Mick Stoker

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Interim Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Treasurer

Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer

Temporary ACFO - Director of Service Delivery

BRIGADE OFFICERS

Assistant Director of Governance & Assurance

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Dennis McCabe – Middlesbrough Council

Treasurer

ACFO - Director of Strategic Planning, People & Resources

Assistant Director of Assets

17. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

18. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 15 May 2026 and Executive (Appeals) Committee on 29 May 2026 be confirmed.

19. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

19.1 Service Plan and Priorities Update – Verbal Update

The Assistant Director of Governance & Assurance (AD-G&A) presented Members with the newly developed Delivery Plan covering the four years of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2026-30. This included details of the current priorities for 2026/27 and the progress to date and also incorporated outstanding priorities from 2025/26. Cllr Chaney commended the log for showing clear links to National Fire Standards.

RESOLVED – That the Service Plan and Priorities verbal update be noted.

19.2 Recruitment and Selection Policy

The Interim Chief Fire Officer (ICFO) provided Members with the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy which had been reviewed following the introduction of standalone policies covering probation, transfers and promotions, which were previously incorporated within this policy.

Key updates included clarifying best practice regarding safer recruitment, addressing the appropriate and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and strengthening data collection and monitoring arrangements to support continuous improvement.

The revised policy also supports progress towards ensuring the HMICFRS area for improvement 'ensuring transparency and fairness in recruitment processes' by embedding merit based job related criteria, consistent structured processes, transparent assessment and decision making, equality compliance and inclusive practices, trained impartial selection panels, monitoring and continuous improvement.

The ICFO confirmed that the policy had been Equality Impact Assessed with no adverse impacts identified and had been considered by the trade unions with no issues raised.

Councillor Wallace asked for clarification regarding the number of apprentices currently employed. The ICFO confirmed that the last training course for 12 operational firefighters was running as an apprenticeship scheme and there was currently an apprentice in the procurement team and one newly recruited in the technical hub.

RESOLVED – That the revised Recruitment and Selection Policy be approved.

19.3 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Report 2024/25

Members considered this annual report which had been updated to include gender, ethnicity and disability pay gap data for the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

The Interim Chief Fire Officer (ICFO) outlined the report which demonstrated how the Brigade had met the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and specifically the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics
- Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

Members discussed the challenges of the pay gap as a predominantly white, male workforce and also acknowledged a move away from focusing mainly on fitness when recruiting and towards having the softer skills required to carry out prevention work.

RESOLVED – That the Public Sector Equality Duty Report 2024/25 be noted.

- 20. 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, 2, 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 an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) holding that information and 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.”
- 21. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**
RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee on 15 May and Executive (Appeals) Committee on 29 May 2026 be confirmed.
- 22. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**
- 22.1 Procurement Update Report**
Members received details relating to contract letting procedures, exemptions to contract procedure rules and future procurement plans.
- 22.2 Project Aspect – Presentation**
The ICFO gave a detailed presentation on the outcomes of the work undertaken by the Project Aspect team to identify potential efficiencies to address the medium term budget shortfall.

COUNCILLOR DAVID COUPE
CHAIR