

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

3 MARCH 2023



PRESENT

CHAIR

Councillor Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Ben Clayton

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Tom Mawston

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Lynn Hall, Jean O'Donnell

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Billy Ayre (Sub), Mary Ovens

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Chief Fire Officer, Legal Adviser & Monitoring Officer, Treasurer

ACFO – Strategic Planning & Resources

ACFO – Community Protection

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Naweed Hussain – Middlesbrough Council

In accordance with Standing Order No. 35 Councillor Billy Ayre substituted for Councillor Naweed Hussain.

106. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

107. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 20 January 2023 be confirmed.

107.1 Matters Arising - Pay Claim Update

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided an update on the ongoing firefighters pay dispute and reported that the 7% offer for 2022/23 and 5% for 2023/24 was out for consultative ballot and it was hoped strike action would be avoided. He assured Members that the cost of business continuity planning arrangement to the Authority, including the cost of training military personnel, had been documented and would be reported to a future meeting.

108. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

108.1 Community Risk Management Plan 2022-23 – Progress Report

Members received a summary progress report on the priorities contained within the Service Plan 2022/23.

The CFO referred Members to the Brigade's Internal Operating Plan for 2022/23 which captured the progress of improvement actions and highlighted key achievements. Members acknowledged the extensive workload undertaken across both directorates and passed on thanks to all staff for their ongoing hard work.

RESOLVED - That the progress on the corporate priorities set out in the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 and Service Plan 2022/23 be noted.

108.2 Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023/24

Members considered the updated Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement 2023-24 which demonstrates the Authority's ongoing corporate commitment to ensure compliance with Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. In addition, the statement aims to ensure there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of the Authority's business.

The CFO referred Members to the Statement at Appendix 1 which covers three key areas of risk: Supply Chain; Employment/Recruitment; and Training/Community Safety. The Statement covers work already undertaken within each area of work and new objectives to be implemented for 2023/24 which will be monitored on a quarterly basis.

RESOLVED – that the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for 2023/24 be approved.

109. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER

109.1 Pay Accountability - Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

The Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) reported that in line with the provisions set out in the Localism Act 2011, the Authority had a statutory duty to prepare a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year relating to:

- the remuneration of its chief officers
- the remuneration of its lowest paid employees
- the relationship between:
 - the remuneration of its chief officers and
 - the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers

The LAMO outlined the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 at Appendix 1 and highlighted the remuneration of the lowest paid employees, which assumed the latest settlement offer of a 7% pay rise in 2022/23 and 5% for 2023/24. This was:

- Firefighter (Development) - £28,310
- Non-operational employees Grade B (Development) - £20,812 (£21,852 estimated 5% for 2023/24).

109.1 Pay Accountability - Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 cont.

He reported that the Government's National Living Wage sets a minimum wage for all workers aged 25 years and over which equates to £18,325.50, which was lower than the Authority's lowest paid employees Grade B (Development) which is currently £20,812 (£21,852 estimated 5% for 2023/24).

The LAMO confirmed that the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 was based on the current pay offer and any changes would be reported to the Authority on 24 March 2023. He also acknowledged that Gold Book staff had not received a pay increase since 2021 and any changes may impact the 5.2 pay multiple at paragraph 9 of the Statement.

RECOMMENDED:-

- (i) That Cleveland Fire Authority's Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 be considered and approved at its meeting on 24 March 2023.**
- (ii) That the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 be published by the Authority, once approved.**

110. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

110.1 Appointment of Independent Persons

The LAMO informed Members that in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2012 an advertising campaign had taken place to recruit two Independent Persons (IPs) for a four-year period from 1 July 2023. The Authority's current IPs, Messrs Paul McGrath and Steve Harwood, were appointed on 1 July 2021 and their term expires on 30 June 2023.

The LAMO confirmed that the only expressions of interest received following the advert were from the existing two IPs therefore he was asking Members to recommend the re-appointment of the Authority's existing IPs for a four-year term, subject to the approval of the Authority at the annual meeting on 9 June 2023.

Councillor Clayton asked whether there was a limit on the maximum service for IPs. The LAMO confirmed that there was no limit contained within the legislation.

Members supported the re-appointment of the existing IPs and the Chair agreed that this was the most efficient process, avoiding the need to convene a Special Executive Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED – That the two current Independent Persons be re-appointed by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 9 June 2023 for a four-year term, commencing 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2027.

111. 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, 4 and 7 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; namely information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.”

112. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee on 20 January 2023 be confirmed.

113. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

113.1 Procurement Report

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

113.2 Pay Claim 2023 – Green Book

The CFO provided Members with the latest position in relation to the Green Book pay claim.

COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON
CHAIR