

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

4 MARCH 2022



PRESENT

CHAIR

Councillor Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Tim Fleming

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Teresa Higgins

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Lynn Hall, Jean O'Donnell

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Mary Ovens

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

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

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Luke Frost – Stockton Borough Council

ACFO – Strategic Planning & Resources

113. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

114. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 26 November 2021 be confirmed.

115. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

115.1 Community Integrated Risk Management Plan 2021/22 – Progress Report

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with an update on the 2021/22 priorities captured within the Service Plan 2021/22 and detailed in the Corporate Internal Operating Plan at Appendix1.

The CFO reported that most priorities had been completed and highlighted the following outstanding areas:

CSP7: Fire and Rescue Reform – the Government's White Paper is expected to be issued by the end of March 2022 which will allow the CFO to progress any associated priorities.

CUOR5: Enabling Services – reviews of Admin Services, Democratic Services and Ground Maintenance Services will continue into 2022/23.

CUF1.3: produce a partnership engagement strategy and implement year 1 actions – recruitment for a Partnership Manager currently underway. This work will slip into 2022/23.

115.1 Community Integrated Risk Management Plan 2021/22 – Progress Report

DUF2.1: Evaluate new working arrangements in Brigade Control Room – this is scheduled to be considered by ELT in March 2022.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the progress on the corporate priorities set out in the Authority’s CIRMP 2018-22 and on the Directorate priorities as agreed by the Chief Fire Officer for progression within the Brigade.

115.2 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26

Members considered the outcomes from the consultation exercise on the draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022-26, as detailed in the feedback report at Appendix 2.

The CFO reported that the CRMP sets out the Authority’s risk management proposals for the next four years which will direct work activities and resources. These are summarised below:

- enhancements to our risk identification and assessment arrangements
- helping people stay safe in their homes
- tackling arson and deliberate fire setting
- delivering efficient, effective and value for money community safety activities
- supporting businesses to keep their buildings safe
- ensuring our fire-fighters can respond quickly to operational incidents including those across the border
- supporting national resilience
- being better prepared to deal with incidents involving buildings where the height can have serious impact on firefighting and evacuation
- efficient deployment of our operational resources
- exploring further collaboration and partnership working

The CFO noted that Members had previously approved the Authority’s Vision for 2030 and Corporate Plan 2022-26 at the Cleveland Fire Authority (CFA) meeting on 30 July 2021 and the set of draft CRMP Proposals had been approved for consultation by the CFA on 15 October 2021.

He referred Members to Section 5 of the report and highlighted an updated MTFS position, as approved by the CFA on 15 February 2022, which included an additional £646,000 from the allocation of a new Service Grant. He noted that while this balanced the budget for 2022/23, it did not provide reassurance of the financial uncertainties facing the Authority for 2023/24 and beyond with potential deficits of between £0.551m and £1.467m. These deficits are set against a range of planning scenarios which may require temporary short-term use of the Budget Support Fund.

Reflecting on the current risk assessment outcomes and the outcomes from the consultation exercise, the CFO informed Members that no changes were required to the draft CIRMP Proposals 2022-26, at Appendix 1.

115.2 Draft Community Risk Management Plan 2022-26 cont.

RECOMMENDED:-

- (i) That the details of the consultation exercise in relation to the Authority's draft CRMP proposals 2022-26 as set out in Sections 5 and 6 of this report and in the Consultation Feedback Report at Appendix 2, be noted.
- (ii) That Members noted the updated medium term financial position, the continued uncertainty in future funding and the potential deficits of between £0.551m and £1.467m as detailed in paragraphs 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 of this report and set out in full in the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/26 that was approved by the Fire Authority on 15 February 2022.
- (iii) That in light of the Authority's comprehensive risk assessments, financial position and consultation exercise, Members recommend the proposals as set out in the CRMP 2022-26, attached as Appendix 1 of this report, for approval by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 25 March 2022 for publication and implementation on 1 April 2022.

115.3 Flexible Working Policy

This policy had been reviewed in line with the Authority's key document framework arrangements in November 2021 and updated to: reflect the current organisational structure and new policy design format; and provide clarity on core hours for home working arrangements.

The CFO confirmed that all flexible working requests from staff would be approved by the Head of People with appeals being heard by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Strategic Planning and Resources (ACFO-SPR).

RESOLVED – That the Authority's Flexible Working Policy at Appendix A be approved.

115.4 Grievance Policy

The CFO informed Members that the Grievance Policy had been routinely reviewed and updated to reflect role title changes and formatting. It gives greater focus on informal resolution of grievances by line managers and removes references to Bullying and Harassment which is covered under the Dignity at Work and Discipline Policies.

The policy has been equality impact assessed with no detrimental impact and has been subject to consultation with the FBU and UNISON with no issues arising.

RESOLVED – That the Authority's Grievance Policy attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

115.5 Gender Pay Gap Report 2021

The CFO reported that in line with new regulations set out under the Equality Act 2010 in April 2017, it is a requirement of all employers of more than 250 employees to calculate and publish information about the gender pay gap in their organisation.

115.5 Gender Pay Gap Report 2021 cont.

The CFO referred Members to the Gender Pay Gap Report at Appendix 1 which included a table of the data used as at the end of March 2021 and the outcomes of the six calculations required which show the difference between the average earnings of men and women.

He reported that the challenge for the organisation is to eliminate any gender pay gap and the results can be used to assess:

- the levels of gender equality in the workplace
- the balance of male and female employees at different levels
- how effectively skills are being maximised and rewarded.

The CFO added that the Authority had a duty under the regulations to publish the data on the Brigade website by 31 March 2022.

RESOLVED – that in line with the provisions set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information), Members noted Cleveland Fire Authority's gender pay gap data as detailed at Appendix 1.

116. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER**116.1 Pay Policy Statement 2022/23**

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 2022/23 at Appendix 1 and highlighted the remuneration of the lowest paid employees which was:

- Firefighter (Development) - £25,702
- Non-operational employees Grade B (Development) - £18,562 (£18,887 subject to confirmation of April 2021 payment).

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 was £18,562 (£18,887 subject to confirmation of April 2021 payment).

RECOMMENDED:-

- That Cleveland Fire Authority's Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 be considered and approved at its meeting on 25 March 2022.**
- That the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 be published by the Authority, once approved.**

117. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

117.1 Ukraine Crisis

Councillor Ovens informed Members that colleagues at Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council were collecting supplies to drive to Poland on Thursday 10 March and that all donations would be welcome. The CFO agreed to circulate the request to staff and noted that nationally, the fire and rescue service was reviewing all procurement pipelines to ensure no Russian connections and also collecting firefighting equipment to send to Ukraine.

RESOLVED – that any donations from staff be forwarded to Redcar & Cleveland Council by Thursday 10 March 2022.

118. 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 items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 & 4 of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006” namely 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.”

119. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee on 21 January 2022 be confirmed.

120. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

120.1 Cleveland Fire Brigade’s HMICFRS Inspection 2022

Members considered the Brigade’s self-assessment submission to HMICFRS ahead of the inspection scheduled for May 2022.

120.2 Procurement Update Report

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

120.3 Provision of Bistro/Cafeteria Service - Tender Acceptance

Members considered the results of the Brigade analysis of the tenders received for the Provision of a Bistro/Cafeteria Service at the Queens Meadow Complex.

120.4 Immediate Detriment

The CFO provided Members with an updated pension position in relation to Immediate Detriment.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON
CHAIR**