

CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING

4 JUNE 2021



PRESENT:

CHAIR

Cllr Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Tom Cassidy, Ben Clayton

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Teresa Higgins, Naweed Hussain, Jon Rathmell, Ashley Waters

REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Billy Ayre, Adam Brook, Cliff Foggo, Mary Ovens

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cllrs Luke Frost, Lynn Hall, Steve Matthews, Jean O'Donnell,

AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Strategic Planning & Resources, Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer, Treasurer

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Tim Fleming, Hartlepool

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chair welcomed new Members Councillors Tom Cassidy, Ben Clayton and Steve Matthews to the meeting and placed on record thanks to Councillor William Woodhead from Stockton Borough Council for his valued support and commitment to Cleveland Fire Authority over many years.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) sought nominations for the position of Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2021/22.

Councillors Paul Kirton and Lynn Hall were subsequently proposed and seconded. A vote was taken and Councillor Kirton received eight votes to Councillor Hall's seven.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Paul Kirton be appointed Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2021/22.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

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

4. APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE CHAIR FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

The Chair sought nominations for the position of Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2021/22. Councillors Jean O'Donnell and Luke Frost were proposed and seconded with Councillor O'Donnell receiving eight votes to Councillor Frost's seven.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Jean O'Donnell be appointed as Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2021/22.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of 16 April 2021 (adjourned from 26 March 2021) be confirmed.

6. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive (Appeals) Committee meeting on 22 March 2021 and Executive (Appointments) Committee on 26 April 2021 be confirmed.

7. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

LGA

- NJC Circulars
- Core Code of Ethics for Fire And Rescue Services

RESOLVED – that the communications be noted.

8. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER

8.1 Member Code of Conduct

Members received details of the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 which had been considered by the Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 26 February 2021.

The Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer (LAMO) reported that the Authority's existing Code of Conduct referenced all ten general principles of conduct in public life and made reference to the LGAs earlier Template Code and Guidance Note on Conduct. However, the Audit & Governance Committee recommended the adoption of further sections of the LGAs Model Code pertaining to: bullying, harassment and discrimination; and the area of dispute. These additions would be included under the General Obligations Section of the CFA Code of Conduct.

The LAMO confirmed that the revised CFA Code of Conduct would be incorporated into the Authority's Constitution and referenced in the Member Development Plan for 2021/22.

RESOLVED: -

- (i) **That the adoption of parts of the LGA Model Code, as detailed at paragraph 4.1 of the report, be approved.**
- (ii) **That Members' receive Ethical Governance Training, alongside the Independent Persons, during the municipal year 2021/22.**

8.2 Business Report 2021-22

The LAMO referred Members to The Constitution at Appendix A which included:

- CFA Membership 2021/22
- Calendar of Meetings 2021/22
- Terms of Reference
- Scheme of Delegation
- Financial Procedure Rules
- Code of Corporate Governance
- Ethical Governance Framework
- Standing Orders of the Authority Regulation of Proceedings & Business
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Members Allowance Scheme

Voting took place on the nominations received for Committees and outside bodies. At the Chairs request and with the consensus of the Members present, the appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair for the Audit & Governance (A&G) Committee was also undertaken. Councillor Waters was nominated for Chair of A&G and received seven votes to Councillor Foggo's six votes. Councillor Hussain and Councillor Foggo were both nominated as Vice Chair of the A&G Committee and tied with seven votes each. In accordance with Standing Order No.15 (2) the Chair had the casting vote and Councillor Hussain was appointed as Vice Chair.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Constitution as outlined at paragraph 3 and Appendix A be approved.
- (ii) That Member appointments to committees and outside bodies (as nominated and outlined in the table below) be approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

LAB	KIRTON (Chair)	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	O'DONNELL (Vice Chair)	STOCKTON ON TEES
LAB	HIGGINS	MIDDLESBROUGH
CONS	HALL	STOCKTON ON TEES
CFAIG	FROST	STOCKTON ON TEES
CFAIG	FLEMING	HARTLEPOOL
LIB DEM	OVENS	REDCAR & CLEVELAND

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MIG	WATERS (Chair)	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	HUSSAIN (Vice Chair)	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	CLAYTON	HARTLEPOOL
CONS	CASSIDY	HARTLEPOOL
CFAIG	RATHMELL	MIDDLESBROUGH
LAB	AYRE	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
CFAIG	BROOK	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
IND	FOGGO	REDCAR & CLEVELAND
CONS	MATTHEWS	STOCKTON ON TEES

REPRESENTATIVES FOR OUTSIDE BODIES 2021/22

LGA FIRE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE	Cllr KIRTON
Substitute:	Cllr O'DONNELL
REDCAR & CLEVELAND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP	Cllr AYRE
STOCKTON SAFER PARTNERSHIP REPN	Cllr KIRTON

8.3 Appointment of Independent Persons

The LAMO informed Members that the term of office for the current Independent Persons was due to end on 30 June 2021. He reported that following a recruitment campaign, only three suitable candidates were identified: the two existing Independent Persons plus a third who was unable to attend the Executive (Appointments) Committee on 26 April 2021. Executive Members recommended the re-appointment of the two existing Independent Persons for a two year term with effect from 1 July 2021.

RESOLVED – That as recommended by the Executive (Appointments) Committee, Mr Paul McGrath and Mr Steve Harwood be re-appointed as the Independent Persons to Cleveland Fire Authority from 1 July 2021 for a two year term of office.

8.4 Member Development Plan

The LAMO presented the Member Development Plan 2021/22, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report, and informed Members that all training needs should be directed to Bev Parker, Democratic and Administration Manager.

RESOLVED – that the Member Development Plan 2021/22, at Appendix 1, be approved.

9. REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

9.1 COVID 19 – update

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with a detailed presentation on the latest position of the Covid-19 pandemic which covered:-

- National infection / death / hospital admission rate over last 7 days
- North East Authorities – infection rate over last 7 days
- National / Regional Vaccinations to date
- CFA Strategic Objectives
- COVID-19 Staff Wellbeing
- Performance April 2020 – March 2021
- Additional Broader Support

Councillor Ayre referred to recent news reports of violence to emergency services staff and asked what the age profile of offenders was. The CFO confirmed that this tended to be those at the younger end of the scale delivering both verbal and physical abuse and that the Brigade would not tolerate this behaviour.

Members expressed their thanks to all staff on behalf of the Authority for their exceptional efforts and continued support throughout the pandemic.

RESOLVED – that the presentation be noted.

9.2 Information Pack

- 9.2.1 National Joint Circulars
- 9.2.2 Campaigns

9.2 Information Pack cont.

Councillor Hall asked for an update regarding the number of hoax calls received and how the Authority would ensure staff safety going forward. The CFO confirmed that Fire Control utilise a 'call challenge' approach which allows them to establish if the caller is genuine, resulting in a dramatic reduction of hoax calls. The CFO confirmed that a risk based approach has been taken on the road to recovery and agile working measures were in place with approximately 40% of support staff present at the Training and Administration Hub.

RESOLVED – that the information pack be noted.

- 10. 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 items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 4 and 5 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 that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual; 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; and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings."
- 11. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF MEETINGS**
RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive (Appeals) Committee on 22 March 2021 and Executive (Appointments) Committee on 26 April 2021 be confirmed.
- 12. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**
12.1 Age Discrimination Remedy
Members received details on the current position of the implementation of the Age Discrimination Remedy and immediate detriment cases, in relation to Firefighters Pension Schemes.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON
CHAIR**