

# CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

## MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

22 JANUARY 2021



### PRESENT

#### CHAIR

Councillor Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

#### HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Tim Fleming

#### STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillors Luke Frost, Jean O'Donnell, William Woodhead

#### REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

Councillor Mary Ovens

#### AUTHORISED OFFICERS

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

### APOLOGIES:

Councillors Teresa Higgins, Jon Rathmell – Middlesbrough Council

In accordance with Standing Order No. 35 Councillor William Woodhead substituted for Councillor Teresa Higgins.

### 159. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

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

### 160. MINUTES

**RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 20 November 2020 be confirmed.**

### 161. REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

#### 161.1 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 January

- Middlesbrough - 450 /100k population
- Redcar & Cleveland – 400/100k population
- Hartlepool – 500/100k population
- Stockton – 400/100k population
- While the rates are still high, there has been reductions of between 13 – 36% from previous 7 days showing the effects of the national lockdown.

## 161.1 COVID-19 Pandemic Briefing – Presentation cont.

### Staff Sickness (20 January 2021)

- 55 members of staff absent from sickness or Covid
- 15 operational staff with confirmed Covid
- 1 operational staff with suspected Covid
- 18 self isolating as result of someone in household symptomatic / Covid positive
- 10% of workforce not available – much better position than some partners
- Since 26 March, 126 members of staff have been tested for Covid because they were symptomatic with 51 members of staff testing positive
- 10% of workforce have been Covid positive at some stage since start of the Pandemic

### Vaccine Programme

- North East Region (including North Yorkshire and North Cumbria) - 705 vaccines have been delivered (approx. 7% of the population). This increases daily as more vaccination centres are established

### Strategic Intentions – Cleveland Fire Authority

- To deliver statutory functions of providing a prevention, protection and response service at all times
- Provide additional support to partner agencies
- Balanced against appropriate measures to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff

### Support Activities

- A number of staff have volunteered to fulfil non-clinical roles as part of the vaccine programme
- Some concerns around whether they are adequately protected and whether safeguards are in place regarding employment rights and health & safety – i.e. compensation schemes, insurance, pensions
- The CFO gave assurances that Risk Assessments had been completed and staff were fully covered to take part in these additional activities with information, guidance, PPE and health surveillance being provided. He noted that these roles were voluntary as they were not normally in the job description but every member of staff was being encouraged to come forward and support this live saving programme.

### Flooding Assistance

- The CFO provided Members with details of assistance provided in East Cleveland following Storm Christoph on 20 January 2021. He reported that the Brigade received 67 calls and 35 were responded to with crews working tirelessly for 9 hours to protect communities and ensure safety. This effort had been recognised by Jacob Young MP and Simon Clarke MP as well as Councillors Mary Lanigan and Adam Brook from Redcar & Cleveland who all sent messages of appreciation for the crews involved.

Councillor Ovens echoed the thanks to crews in response to the flooding in East Cleveland and queried whether the Brigade had been asked to provide ambulance drivers to NEAS as part of the Covid activities.

**161.1 COVID-19 Pandemic Briefing – Presentation cont.**

The CFO reported that a number of firefighters have been trained to drive ambulances and transfer patients but this service has not been requested to date, but remains available. Crews have continued to deliver essential items in the Middlesbrough area and were currently working with the NHS to deliver health surveillance equipment and non-clinical support.

**RESOLVED – that the briefing be noted.**

**162. ANY OTHER BUSINESS****162.1 HMICFRS COVID-19 INSPECTION – CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE**

The CFO tabled the Brigade's COVID-19 Inspection Report which covered the first wave of the pandemic and had been published by HMICFRS that day. He outlined the key findings for the Brigade which included:

- adapted and responded to the pandemic effectively by prioritising the health, safety and wellbeing of both the community and staff
- displayed good governance by adapting its pandemic flu plan and business continuity arrangements into a Covid pandemic plan
- carried out all statutory responsibilities – prevention, protection and response services
- staff wellbeing was a clear priority for senior leaders and the Brigade promoted wellbeing services throughout the period
- engaged with partners through the local resilience forum, local authorities, NEAS and NHS to offer support and assistance where requested
- managed resourced well in relation to £500,000 Covid grant received from government
- Members of the Authority were actively engaged in discharging core functions
- services were adapted and staff were quick to adapt to new ways of working, particularly home working

The CFO viewed the report as an excellent reflection of the Brigade which demonstrates why it remains one of the top performing services in the country. He praised staff for demonstrating professionalism, dedication and hard work and being driven to make a difference to the lives of the community.

Councillor Frost stated that the report positively captured the tremendous work that the Brigade continues to deliver throughout the pandemic and thanked staff for their continued efforts.

**162.1 HMICFRS COVID-19 INSPECTION – CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE cont.**

The CFO informed Members that he would be taking a detailed report to the Authority meeting on 12 February 2021.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the tabled report be noted.**
- (ii) That a full report be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 12 February 2021.**

**162.2 HMICFRS – RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC**

The CFO informed Members that this tabled report had only been published by HMICFRS that day and had been circulated to Members for information and would be presented in detail to the Authority at its meeting on 12 February 2021.

**RESOLVED :**

- (i) That the tabled report be noted.**
- (ii) That a full report be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 12 February 2021.**

**163. 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 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 any 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."

**164. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED - that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 20 November 2020 be confirmed.**

**165. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**165.1 Procurement Update Report**

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

**165.2 Provision of Occupational Health Services – Tender Acceptance**

Members examined the result of the Brigade analysis of the tenders received for the Provision of Occupational Health Services.

**165.3 Provision of HR Software Systems – Tender Acceptance**

Members examined the result of the Brigade analysis of the tenders received for the Provision of HR Systems.

**165.4 Home Office Fire & Rescue Service Data on Protection, Response and Prevention 2020**

Members received details of the Home Office Fire & Rescue Service Data Pack 2020.

**166. CONFIDENTIAL JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER**

**166.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 - 2023/24**

Members considered the recommendations of the Treasurer and CFO in relation to the MTFS, including the 2021/22 Council Tax Setting.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON  
CHAIR**