

# CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

## MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

14 OCTOBER 2022



**PRESENT:**

**CHAIR**

Cllr Paul Kirton – Stockton on Tees Borough Council

**HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Cllrs Ben Clayton, Angela Falconer

**MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL**

Cllrs Teresa Higgins, Naweed Hussain, Tom Mawston

**REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Cllr Julie Craig

**STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Cllrs Luke Frost, Steve Matthews, Jean O'Donnell

**AUTHORISED OFFICERS**

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

**APOLOGIES:**

Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Community Protection  
Treasurer

Councillor Leisa Smith – Hartlepool Borough Council

Councillor Jon Rathmell – Middlesbrough Council

Councillors Billy Ayre, Martin Fletcher, Mary Ovens - Redcar & Cleveland BC

Councillor Lynn Hall - Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

**50. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST**

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

**51. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – that the Minutes of proceedings of the Annual Meeting of 17 June 2022 be confirmed.

**52. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** - that the Minutes of the Audit & Governance Committees on 24 June and 26 August 2022, Executive Committees on 8 July and 23 September 2022 and Executive (Appeal) Committees on 22 July, 5 September and 5 October 2022 be confirmed.

**53. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR**

- Gill Gittins - Pay Negotiations 2022
- LGA - Pay Claim, Fit for the Future

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

## **54. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

### **54.1 Firefighters' Pay Claim 2022**

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) provided Members with the current status of the negotiations between the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU) and the Employers' side of the National Joint Council (NJC) with regard to the 2022/23 Firefighters' Pay Claim. He provided the background to the claim and outlined the following timeline:

- 19 July - FBU unanimously rejected the 2% pay uplift contained within the circular EMP/1/22.
- 2 August - Chair of Employers' side wrote to the Home Secretary requesting financial support toward the increase pay offer for Grey Book employees aligned to that received by the police service pay award.
- 2 September - Executive Committee of FBU agreed to prepare ballot for strike action which give potential for strike action commencing mid-November.
- 20/21 September – NJC Employers' Side held pay consultation sessions with fire and rescue authorities to establish their capacity and desire to improve on the 2% pay offer.
- 30 September - the Home Office confirmed that fire service pay was the responsibility of the authorities via the NJC mechanism and ministers had agreed not to provide any funding support.
- 4 October - National Employers made an improved pay offer of 5% on all basic pay rates.
- 5 October - the FBU Executive Council recommended the 5% uplift be rejected and agreed to commence a membership consultation on the revised proposals with the outcomes expected early November.

The CFO reminded Members that they had agreed a 2% pay uplift in the 2022/23 budget based on affordability and while the Authority supports fair and reasonable pay awards that reflect inflation, anything over 2% posed a risk to jobs and services.

He confirmed that every additional 1% pay increase would cost the Authority circa £250k and the Treasurer was putting together the exact medium term financial position which would be reported to the Authority in December and was estimated to change the budget deficit from £0.547m to £1.521m.

Councillor Mawston referred to the Authority's uncertain financial position and asked if the Brigade would be able to continue operating at current levels. The CFO confirmed that from an operational perspective Cleveland had one of the highest risk areas in the country due to the number of COMAH sites and high levels of social deprivation. Funding uncertainties, along with unfunded pay increases, threatened CFBs current provision of 13 whole time pumps, 8 retained pumps and 52 whole time firefighters on duty at any one time.

**RESOLVED – That Members noted the Employers' side of the National Joint Council (NJC) improved offer on firefighters' pay (5% on all basic pay points and continual professional development payments) and agreed to received additional reports as appropriate.**

**54.2 Information Pack**

54.2.1 Employers Circulars

54.2.2 National Joint Circulars

54.2.3 Campaigns

**Stay Fire Safe This Winter – National Campaign**

The CFO informed Members that the Brigade was supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) Stay Fire Safe campaign in response to the rising cost of living crisis which may result in people choosing unconventional and potentially dangerous ways of heating and lighting their homes.

This includes working closely with partners to ensure vulnerable residents have access to blankets, heaters and other means of keeping warm. In addition, prevention staff will be delivering increasing home fire safety checks and providing alarms where appropriate as well as providing advice and assistance to vulnerable residents which will include highlighting the dangers of carbon monoxide and providing risk reduction equipment.

**RESOLVED – that the information pack be noted.**

**55. 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 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."

**56. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of proceedings of the Annual Meeting of 17 June 2022 be confirmed.**

**57. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committees on 8 July and 23 September and the Executive (Appeal) Committees on 22 July, 5 September and 5 October 2022.**

**58. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**58.1 Business Continuity for Industrial Action**

The CFO outlined the Brigade's arrangements for business continuity in the event of Industrial Action.

**COUNCILLOR PAUL KIRTON  
CHAIR**