
CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING

1 APRIL 2016



PRESENT: **CHAIR:-** Councillor Jan Brunton – Middlesbrough Council
HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL
Cllrs Rob Cook, Marjorie James, Ray Martin-Wells
MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL
Cllrs Ronald Arundale, Shamal Biswas, Teresa Higgins, Naweed Hussain
REDCAR & CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL
Cllrs Billy Ayre, Norah Cooney, Brian Dennis, Ray Goddard
STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL
Cllrs Gillian Corr, Paul Kirton, Jean O'Donnell, Stephen Parry, Mick Stoker,
William Woodhead
AUTHORISED OFFICERS
Chief Fire Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Legal Adviser and
Monitoring Officer, Treasurer
BRIGADE OFFICERS
Director of Technical Services
MAZARS
Mr Ross Woodley

APOLOGIES Cllr Stephen Akers-Belcher - Hartlepool
FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Tom Mawston – Middlesbrough Council
Cllr Mary Ovens - Redcar & Cleveland Borough
Cllr John Gardener – Stockton Borough Council

92. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

Councillors James and Martin-Wells declared a personal interest as members of NEREO. Minute No. 97.1 refers.

Councillors Cook, James and Martin-Wells declared a personal interest as members of Hartlepool Borough Council. Minute No. 102.1 refers.

93. MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Ordinary Meeting on 12 February 2016 be confirmed.

94. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive Committee on 4 March 2016, be confirmed.

95. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR

- Clair Alcock, LGA
 - Contribution Banding Change on 1 April 2016
 - GAD v Milne – Ombudsman Statement – March 2016
- Gill Gittins, LGA – Firefighter Fitness Best Practice

RESOLVED – that the communications be noted.

96. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

96.1 Protection Policy

The CFO reported that the existing Protection Policy, as attached at Appendix 1, had been reviewed and considered by the Executive Committee on 4 March 2016 for approval by the Authority.

The CFO outlined the Authority's commitment to:-

- Having a risk based approach to compliance and enforcement
- Recognising business needs and providing support where appropriate
- Proactively engaging to improve understanding on all protection matters

The CFO noted that the Authority had invested Cleveland Fire Brigade with the authority to enforce statutory duties in respect of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

The CFO reported that there were circa 14,000 active commercial and industrial premises on the Brigade's Community Fire Risk Management Information System (CFRMIS) which fall under the remit of this legislation and it was estimated that this risk could rise to over 25,000 over the next year with the introduction of a new information system.

The CFO highlighted the Authority's on-going lobbying for sprinklers to be included in social housing - both new build and retro fit into existing properties. He reported that Executive Committee Members had requested guidelines be drawn up by the Authority for use by local planning committee members when considering applications.

Councillor James confirmed that it would be very helpful to all planning committee members if they had very clear guidelines in relation to properties more than 3 storeys high and houses of multiple occupation.

The Chair reported that 'sprinklers' had been on the agenda at the recent Fire Conference and it was vital to ensure planning committees continued to push for their inclusion.

The CFO reported that to date, Cleveland was the only Authority to have ever installed sprinkler systems in social housing.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the contents of the Protection Strategy be noted.**
- (ii) That the Protection Policy be approved, as recommended by the Executive Committee.**
- (iii) That the Authority provides guidelines to local authority planning committees outlining criteria where the inclusion of sprinklers should be advised.**

96.2 Rebuild Programme – Progress Report

The Director of Technical Services (DoTS) updated Members on the progress of the Rebuild Programme. He reported that following a base line review in 2011 the Authority embarked on a major programme of estate renewal which was set out in the Asset Management Plan (AMP) and supported through a capital strategy. The DoTS outlined the progress of the following rebuild and refurbishment projects:

96.2 Rebuild Programme – Progress Report continued

- (i) Headland Community Fire Station - Rebuild
Formally opened in October 2014, completed on schedule and within the allocated budget of £847,489
- (ii) Middlesbrough Community Fire Station - Rebuild
Formally opened in September 2015, completed on schedule and delivered with an overall end cost of £4,409,000 - £11,000 under budget.
- (iii) HQ Complex – Rebuild
Construction of the Training and Administration Hub commenced in April 2015 and is on budget and four weeks ahead of schedule to be completed in June 2016.

Fire Control is due transfer to the new building in July 2016 with the rest of the Authority's administration staff moving across immediately afterwards.

Construction of the Technical Hub is under way with completion scheduled for June 2016 and the immediate transfer of the Authority's vehicle and equipment workshops from their current Thornaby site.

The current HQ building is due for demolition in September 2016 with work commencing to locate the external training facilities on this site by June 2017. These will include a fire house, fire behavior training rigs, petrochemical rig and a stretch of dual-carriage way to simulate road traffic accident training scenarios.

- (iv) Grangetown and Thornaby Community Fire Stations - Rebuild
To be rebuilt concurrently sharing an identical design concept to secure construction efficiencies. Budget allocations in the AMP are £2,990,000 for Grangetown and £2,689,430 for Thornaby. Construction works are due to commence in August 2016 with projected completion by August 2017 for both stations.
- (v) Billingham Community Fire Station
Refurbished in 2013
- (vi) Saltburn and Skelton Fire Stations
Refurbished in 2015
- (vii) Stranton Fire Station, Hartlepool
Major refurbishment due to commence in Summer 2016
- (viii) Guisborough and Loftus Fire Stations
Refurbishment work due to commence late 2016

The DoTS confirmed that progress of the Rebuild and Refurbishment Programmes continues with tight financial management ensuring that the approved cost envelope set out in the Capital Strategy is achieved.

The Chair noted that the new Middlesbrough Fire Station was successful as a valuable community facility in addition to providing a good working environment for firefighters.

Councillor Arundale reiterated the sentiment and thanked the DoTS for bringing the projects in on time and within the budget, which he acknowledged was an achievement.

96.2 Rebuild Programme – Progress Report continued

Cllr Cook commended the Authority for undertaking the major rebuild and refurbishment programme for its estate and asked for further clarification regarding the use of apprentices and local workers on the Queens Meadow site. The DoTS reported that the apprentices were working on the site as part of one, two and three year NVQ programmes and had been moved between sites by ISG within that programme.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the progress made in the delivery of projects approved in the Authority's Asset Management Plan relating to Rebuild and Refurbishment Projects be noted.
- (iii) That the progress of the Rebuild Projects currently underway at the Queens Meadow Business Park be noted.
- (iv) That the plans going forward regarding the rebuilds of Grangetown and Thornaby Community Fire Stations and the principles underpinning the site locations, functions and outline designs for these two developments be noted.
- (v) That Members will receive update reports regarding the Authority's Rebuild Programme, as and when appropriate.

96.3 Information Pack

- 96.3.1 National Joint Circulars
- 96.3.2 Campaign Launches
- 96.3.3 LGA Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition 2016

RESOLVED – that the information pack be noted.

97. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER AND MONITORING OFFICER

97.1 Pay Accountability – Pay Policy Statement 2016/17

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 2016/17 at Appendix 1 and noted it had been updated to reflect the decision of the Fire Authority on 12 February 2016.

The LAMO reported that in April 2016 the Government's National Living Wage was to become law and the minimum wage for all workers aged 25 years and over would be £13,891, which was lower than the Authority's lowest paid employees.

Councillor Ayre referred to paragraph 3.2 of the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 and asked for clarity regarding Firefighters' pay during the twelve week induction period. The LAMO agreed to add a notation to make this clearer.

97.1 Pay Accountability – Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 continued

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 (Appendix 1) be approved, as recommended by the Executive Committee on 4 March 2016, subject to the addition of a notation at paragraph 3.2 clarifying firefighter pay during the 12 week induction period.
- (ii) That the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 be published by the Authority.

98. REPORTS OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE CHAIR

98.1 Information Pack

Councillor Stoker reported on the agenda items presented at the 19 February 2016 meeting. He highlighted the Organisational Performance and Efficiency Report for April – December 2015 and the external auditor's Value for Money Conclusion Risk Assessment and Audit Strategy Memorandum reports.

RESOLVED – That the information pack be noted

98.2 Audit Strategy Memorandum - Mazars

Mr Ross Woodley reported on the tabled Audit Strategy Memorandum which had previously been scrutinised by the Audit & Governance Committee. He outlined the key sections which included:

- Significant Risks – no changes from last year
- Value for Money Conclusion – introduction of a traffic light system – no 'red' risks
- Fees – significant reduction in audit fees of 25%
- Materiality – set at £609,000
- Forthcoming accounting – change to audit timetable with effect from 2017/18 but agreed to trial for 2016/17 to allow any issues from the change to be resolved.

RESOLVED – that the Audit Strategy Memorandum be approved.

99. 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, 3 & 4 below 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 an individual, 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.

The CFO, DoCS and DoTS left the meeting.

100. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Ordinary Meeting on 12 February 2016 be confirmed

101. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF COMMITTEES
RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee on 4 March 2016 be confirmed.

The LAMO left the meeting. The DoCS re-joined the meeting.

102. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

102.1 Provision of Legal Services

The Director of Corporate Services updated Members on the arrangements for the provision of the Authority's Legal Services.

103. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair noted that this was the last CFA meeting of the municipal year and thanked Members and Officers for all their support in protecting the community of Cleveland.

COUNCILLOR JAN BRUNTON
CHAIR