

Minutes

Full Authority

Date: 27 September 2024

Time: 10:30

Venue: Dewsbury Town Hall

Present:

Cllr D O'Donovan (in the chair), Cllrs I Ahmed, A Ali, K Bruce, J Bryan L Buckley, E Carlisle, R Dickenson, R Downes, D Hall, T Hinchcliffe, A Parnham, M Pollard, K Renshaw, T Salam, F Shaheen, S Tulley and R Wood.

Apologies:

Councillors C Burke, C Keith and U Sutcliffe

33.Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed Cllr Aafaq Butt to the Authority

34.Admission of the public

There were no items that required to exclusion of the press and public.

35.Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

36.Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under discussion at the meeting.

37.Minutes of meeting held on 12 July 2024

Resolved

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 12 July 2024 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

38. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

39. Minutes of Committees held since 12 July 2024 and of other relevant Outside Bodies

Resolved

That the Minutes of Committees and other relevant outside bodies as circulated be received.

40. Statement of Assurance

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report which sought Members' approval for the annual Statement of Assurance for 2023 – 24 as a valid assessment of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority's performance. The Annual Statement of Assurance is a requirement of the National Framework and will be published online in an accessible format.

Members discussed the revised backstop date for the 2022/23 Audit which will be produced by Deloitte and the deadline for the 2023/24 Audit, which will be produced by Grant Thornton along with the Value for Money report. Members further discussed payment of the Audit Fee for 2022/23.

Members challenged the report author on the actions taken on the areas for improvement identified by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Members were pleased to note that the changes made under the efficiency and productivity plan had been successful and were not effecting the safety of the communities of West Yorkshire.

Resolved

That the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Statement of Assurance 2023 - 24 be signed and approved for publication.

41. Membership of the Authority and Appointment to Committees

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report which set out recent changes to the membership of the Authority and subsequent required changes to committee appointments.

It was reported that Councillor Beverley Addy has resigned from the Authority and her replacement Cllr Aafaq Butt has been appointed with effect from 23 July 2024.

Resolved

- a) That Cllr Butt will replace Cllr Addy on the Community Safety Committee and
- b) That Cllr Butt will replace Cllr Addy as Vice-Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee.

42.His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Presentation

The Manager of the Service Improvement and Assurance Team (SIAT) gave a presentation giving headline feedback following Round 3 of the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) inspection.

Members challenged the backlog of safe and well visits but acknowledged that WYFRA undertake more complex visits than other Fire and Rescue Authorities and have excellent provision for the identification of vulnerable adults through a complex multi-agency referral system, a data led system and a direct referral system. Members were advised that HMICFRS are considering making changes to their scoring process following the report and acknowledge that the service will not attain the targets due to the methodology used, which should not be jeopardised. One Member commented that from personal experience the Safe and Well visits undertaken are of an excellent standard.

Members challenged the Head of People and Culture regarding secondary employment figures for staff and were assured that data sets were being improved and continually monitored to enable early identification of any correlation between secondary employment and increased sickness absence or accidents.

Members were interested to learn about the significant investment made in the new power app being developed to process incident data more efficiently.

Members acknowledged that WYFRS is in a strong position and passed on their thanks to the staff who deal with the inspectors, providing timely responses to their requests. Members further welcomed the improvements planned, and recognised that HMICFRS are always kept at the top of the agenda.

Resolved

That the presentation be noted.

43.Automated Fire Alarms (AFA) Update

Members considered a report of the Director of Service Delivery which gave details of the outcome of the changes made to the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) mobilising policy, which were approved by the Full Authority on 29 September 2023.

Members welcomed the successful outcome of the AFA policy changes already made and discussed the proposed changes to the domestic AFA policy and the timeline for

the changes. Members were assured that if the updates are approved and implemented, the outcome would be monitored closely and the Service would be quick to make required revisions, as soon as any are identified.

Members requested information from the report author regarding any effect on stakeholders following the changes already implemented and were assured that the consultation period had been successful and was still open for comments.

Members were advised that persistent false alarm offenders are covered by the Fire Safety Act 2021 and appropriate action can be taken.

Resolved

That the report be noted and that changes to domestic AFA policy are approved.

44. Programme of Change Update

The Director of Service Support submitted a report updating members of the progress in relation to the Programme of Change 2023-24.

Members challenged the report author on the only overdue item, Microsoft 365 Update, and were assured that the project was now back on track following the employment of agency staff

Resolved

That the report be noted.

45. Performance Management Report

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Corporate Services which advised of the Authority's performance against key performance indicators for the period 1 April 2024 to 15 September 2024.

Members noted and discussed the following:

- The significant rise in fire related fatalities, which were summarised by the report author.
- The rise in fire related injuries, which the report author advised are usually related to smoke inhalation
- Response times
- Houseboat fires
- Attacks on Fire Fighters
- Gaining entry and appropriate use of available vehicles
- Prison cell fires
- New builds and the continued use of dangerous materials
- Introduction of Building Safety Managers, which is yet to be ratified by statute

- Powers of WYFRS to issue prohibition notices and to close down existing buildings as required.

Members welcomed the effort devoted to monitoring the statistics and recognised the significance of this important work. Members were pleased to receive the positive in-depth feedback to their questions and challenges.

Finally, members expressed their gratitude to the staff involved with the Long Service Ceremony, which was a great success.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

Chair