

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**HELD ON 4th SEPTEMBER 2014**

**Present:**

Councillor David Acton (Chairman), Councillor Tommy Judge (Vice-Chairman), Councillors John Bell (Deputy Chairman), Mohammed Ayub, Walter Brett, Basil Curley, Jim Dawson, Jim Ellis, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Daniel Hawthorne, June Hitchen, Afia Kamal, Alan Matthews, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill, Michael Smith, Stella Smith, Lisa Walker, Fred Walker, Steve Williams, Paul Wild and George Wilson

Also in Attendance: Steve McGuirk (County Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Donna Hall (Clerk to the Authority, Wigan Council), Jim Owen (Deputy County Fire Officer), Paul Argyle (Director of Emergency Response), Alyson Hall (Director of People and Organisation Development), Ged Murphy (Director of Finance and Technical Services), Peter O'Reilly (Director of Prevention and Protection), Andrew Taylor (Assistant Director of Resources, Wigan Council), Gwynne Williams (Deputy Clerk and Authority Solicitor), Shelley Wright (Director of Corporate Communications) and Donna Parker (Democratic Services Manager)

**23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lynda Byrne, Bernard Judge, Derek Heffernan, Barrie Holland, Iain Lindley, Brian Rigby and Michael Whetton.

**24. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

**26. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

There were no items of urgent business raised.

**27. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. The Chairman advised that a Member Training and Development Session on the 'Confronting the Future' Document and the 'Borough Review' would be taking place at the rise of the meeting. The Session would be hosted by the Corporate Leadership Team and all Members were encouraged to attend.

2. The Chairman requested Members who had not already done so to book their Member Personal Development Interview slots with the Democratic Services Manager. The dates available were Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September, Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September and Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014. This was part of the Authority's commitment to the North West Charter for Elected Member Development.
3. The Chairman advised that a 'Member Training Day at Leigh Technical Service Centre' would be taking place on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014 commencing at 9.30am till approx. 1.00pm. A minibus would be available from FSHQ at 8.45am to take Members to Leigh if they so wished. Members were requested to confirm their attendance.
4. The Chairman advised that the 'Halloween Spooktackular Event' at Heywood Fire Station due to take place on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014 had been cancelled this year due to industrial action. Events were organised on the good will of staff volunteering to participate and due to the 'action short of strike' arrangements there was a lack of support for these events this year.
5. The Chairman advised that the Manchester Pride Parade had taken place on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2014 in Manchester City Centre the event was a great success with an amazing turn-out from GMFRS staff including Watches from Moss Side, Cheadle and Farnworth, young people from the Princes Trust Programme, Officers from the Corporate Leadership Team and Councillor Bernard Judge. The parade also included the events pump, children's fire engine, the firefighter puppet and cracker.
6. The Chairman advised that Irlam Fire Station had now become a 'Tri Station' with Greater Manchester Police, GMFRS and North West Ambulance Service working from one location. This went live in August 2014 and was working well. The Station had been re-branded to display the logos from each of the three partners and the appliance bay doors now reflected the collaborative work taking place.
7. The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that the planning application for the DV20 Bury Operational Training Site and Community Hub had been granted by Bury Council's Planning Committee on Tuesday 2nd September 2014.
8. The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that the Emergency Services Day at the Trafford Centre had taken place on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2014. This was the third year in which this event had taken place and as always had been a great success.

## **28. QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER STANDING ORDER 7**

There were no questions submitted.

**29. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 26 JUNE 2014 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were submitted (Appendix 1).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2014, be approved.

**30. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 24 JULY 2014 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 were submitted (Appendix 2).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014, be approved.

**31. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 31 JULY 2014 OF SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 were submitted (Appendix 3).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014, be approved.

**32. TO APPOINT COUNCILLOR STEVE WILLIAMS AS A MEMBER CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE 2014/15 MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Resolved: That Councillor Steve Williams be appointed as a Member Champion for Children and Young People for the remainder of the 2014/15.

**33. COUNTY GUARD UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which detailed how GMFRS had and were responding to the industrial action called by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU); in order for the Fire and Rescue Authority to meet its statutory obligations to date. The last update on this matter was reported to the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (Minute 17 refers).

Members were advised that since the last update 16 further strikes had taken place over 8 days from 10<sup>th</sup> August to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and until further notice Action Short of Strike (namely a refusal to undertake voluntary overtime, non-contractual overtime or additional hours and a refusal to do voluntary 'acting-up') had been implemented by the FBU. On all strike dates a minimum of 22 fire appliances had been deployed across the strike periods and a whole range of incidents were successfully dealt with. On each period of strike

action a Resilience Pump crewed by non-striking officers was available in addition to the key station appliances. The timings of the strike action were intentionally designed to disrupt contingency arrangements and maximise inconvenience so this change of tactic was disappointing. However, the commitment of the Emergency Fire Crews (EFCs) and Emergency Fire Crew Drivers (EFCDs), as well as the non-striking personnel, had been outstanding and ensured that resilience had been maintained within Greater Manchester. No further strike dates had been announced to date.

The new Fire Minister, Penny Mordaunt MP had met with the FBU on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2014 to discuss issues concerning the pension reform programme and a further meeting took place on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2014 which allowed the FBU to feed their views back to the Fire Minister on the issues discussed at the first meeting. The Fire Minister advised that a further update on progress would be provided very soon.

Members and Officers had a detailed discussion on 'Action Short of Strike' with regards to how this affected GMFRS differently to other Fire and Rescue Services across the country and how this resulted in approximately 74 appliances being 'off the run' last month.

In addition, the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that the Government's response to Sir Ken Knight's review 'Facing the Future' that was published last year was to include a review into firefighter terms and conditions. This review would be undertaken by a HR professional from the private sector called Adrian Thomas. All Fire and Rescues Services have been consulted and the closing date for all responses was Friday 19th September 2014.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The policy decisions previously adopted and detailed in paragraph 4 of the report, be noted.
3. The activities undertaken in order to mitigate the risks associated with Industrial Action, be noted and commended.

#### **34. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2014/15 AND ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which presented the Quarter 1 performance against the development and delivery goals contained within with 2014/17 Integrated Risk Management/Corporate Plan. The report also sought approval of the Annual Report 2013/14 that would provide partners, staff and the public with an overview of the Service's achievements and performance against its plan for the preceding year as detailed at Appendix C of the report.

Members were advised that the progress against the Service's other major development projects in Quarter 1 was summarised in Appendix A of the report. These were all broadly on track with some minor slippage encountered due to the periods of industrial action which had taken place (minute 33 refers). An overview of Quarter 1 performance against the Service's key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets was provided at Appendix B of the report. A general summary of the progress against each of the measures was provided in the report. The headline news was that fires had dropped by more than 30 per cent in the last year, which was staggering and was the result of some really hard work by staff both by protecting people and carrying out substantial prevention work.

Members raised a series of questions and comments relating to this information that were answered by Officers accordingly. Councillor June Hitchen welcomed the good work of the Prince's Trust team managers and requested that future performance reports include information comparing year on year growth in both the Prince's Trust programme and the pass rate.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Annual Report 2013/14, as detailed at Appendix C of the report, be approved and its publication on GMFRS website, be supported.
3. The performance against corporate delivery goals and key performance indicators for Quarter 1 2014/17 of the Integrated Risk Management Corporate Plan 2013/16, be noted.
4. Future performance reports include information comparing year on year growth in both the Prince's Trust programme and the pass rate.

### **35. CHIEF OFFICER'S ACTIVITY REPORT QUARTER 1 (1 APRIL 2014 TO 30 JUNE 2014)**

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive presented the 'Chief Officer's Activity Report' for Quarter 1 2014/15 – 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014, for Members' information and comments.

The report provided information on the wide ranging activities which had taken place across the Boroughs during this period. The report also provided an update on the following subject matters:-

- Operational Incidents;
- Service Delivery;
- Youth Engagement;
- Prevention and Protection;
- Corporate Communications;
- General News.

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that the Tameside Borough Manager had been producing a 'Tameside Newsletter' that was circulated to all Members at Tameside Council on a quarterly basis providing information and statistics on the work GMFRS at a local level. This had been seen as good practice and it had been agreed at the Chairs and CLT Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014 that this style of newsletter would be expanded to all 10 Boroughs and circulated to each of the local Councils. This would also assist with the collaborative agenda by including in the newsletter the work of the GMFRS Collaboration and Integration Panel.

Resolved: That:

1. The 'Chief Officer's Activity Report' for Quarter 1 2014/15 – 1st April to 30th June 2014, including the comments raised, be noted.
2. All 10 Boroughs produce a 'Borough Newsletter' on a quarterly basis to be circulated to the local Councils to assist with the collaborative working agenda.

**36. LGA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 8TH-10TH JULY 2014 - FEEDBACK**

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided feedback from the LGA Annual Conference and Exhibition 2014 which took place from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at the Bournemouth International Conference Centre.

It was reported that the next Conference was due to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2015 in Harrogate.

Resolved: That the content of the report, be noted.

CHAIRMAN