
CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY



MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 4 JUNE 2010

PRESENT:

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL:-
Councillors Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Payne

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:-
Councillors Brunton, Clark, Morby, Porley, Rogers

REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:-
Councillors Abbott, Briggs, Cooney, Dunning, Forster, Ovens

STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:-
Councillors Kirton, Lewis, O'Donnell, Salt, Woodhead

AUTHORISED OFFICERS:-
Legal Adviser, Treasurer, Chief Fire Officer, Director of Corporate Services

FIRE BRIGADE OFFICER:-
Head of Corporate Support

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillor Thompson (Middlesbrough Council)
Councillor Patterson (Stockton on Tees Borough Council)
Councillor Stoker (Stockton on Tees Borough Council)

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Director of Corporate Services sought nominations for the position of Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for 2010/2011. Councillor Jean O'Donnell was subsequently proposed and seconded whereupon nominations were closed.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Jean O'Donnell be appointed Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

Councillor O'Donnell in the Chair.

The Chair thanked Members for their nominations and stated that she was looking forward to continuing to work with Members and Officers on the challenges facing the Authority in the coming year. The Chair thanked Councillor Peter Porley, who had successfully chaired the Authority over the past two years. Councillor Porley thanked Councillor O'Donnell, Members, Officers and staff for the support given to him during his period of office.

The Chair also extended, the Authority's thanks to Councillors Beall, Brash, Cherrett, Lilley and McTigue for the support that they gave during their time as Members of Cleveland Fire Authority.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR (CONT)

The Chair also welcomed Councillors Stephen Akers-Belcher and Reuben Atkinson from Hartlepool Borough Council, Councillor Kevin Morby from Middlesbrough Council and Councillors Paul Kirton and Alan Lewis from Stockton on Tees Borough Council to the Authority.

2. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

It was noted that no declarations of interest were submitted to the meeting.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

The Chair sought nominations for the position of Vice Chair to Cleveland Fire Authority for 2010/2011. Both Councillors Payne and Cooney were proposed and seconded for the position of Vice Chair, Councillor Payne received 12 votes and Councillor Cooney confirmed that she did not wish to proceed with a vote. Councillor Payne was appointed as Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor Payne be appointed as Vice Chair of Cleveland Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Meeting held on 26 March 2010 be confirmed.

5. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 7 May 2010 and the Policy Committee held on 7 May 2010 be confirmed.

6. REPORT OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

6.1 Business Report 2010/11

The Legal Adviser sought Members views regarding principles of the Corporate Governance Framework, outlined at paragraph 3.

The Legal Adviser asked Members to consider the Constitution and Governance arrangements including:

- CFA Membership 2010/11
- Calendar of Meetings 2010/11
- Terms of Reference
- Committee Structure
- Delegation Scheme – which has been reviewed and revised by the Authority's Legal Adviser and Monitoring Officer in conjunction with the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Director of Corporate Services

6.1 Business Report 2010/11 (cont)

- Financial Procedure Rules – which have been updated to reflect the recent organisational changes and some financial limits increased
- Standing Orders in Respect of Proceedings – which have been reviewed and updated
- Contract Procedure Rules – which are currently being reviewed to reflect best practice

He advised Members that the Standing Orders are subject to the appropriate variation under Standing Order No 28, any motion to add to, vary or revoke these standing orders other than for purposes of compliance with any statutory requirement shall when proposed and seconded stand adjourned, without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.

The Legal Adviser sought nominations for appointments to Committees, Member Champions, Community Leaders and Outside Bodies as outlined in Appendix 1. The Legal Adviser also advised Members regarding the Roles of Members and the Ethical Governance Framework, which included:

- The Anti Fraud and Anti Corruption Strategy
- Standards and Partners
- Member Code of Conduct
- Register of Members Interests
- Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality
- Hearing Procedures for Standards Committee
- Complaints Procedure for dealing with allegations of breach of the Members Code of Conduct

RESOLVED-

- (i) that the Corporate Governance Framework principles as outlined in paragraph 3 be approved.**
- (ii) That the Constitution and Governance arrangements outlined in paragraph 4 and Appendix A be approved. That the Standing Orders at paragraph 4.5 stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.**
- (iii) that Members appointments to Committees, Outside Bodies, Member Champions and Community Leaders as outlined in Appendix A, B and C be approved. A copy of Members appointments are appended to these Minutes.**
- (iv) that the role of CFA Members as outlined at paragraph 6 and Appendix D be approved.**
- (v) that the Ethical Governance Framework of the Authority as outlined at paragraph 7 and Appendix E be endorsed and complied with.**

7. REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

7.1 PFI Update

The Director of Corporate Services informed Members that the PFI Update would be discussed under Agenda Item 17.1

7.2 Select Committee Fire Control Project

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that on 1 April 2010 CLG had published a Select Committee report regarding the national FiReControl Project. He advised Members of the key findings and that the Select Committee had concluded that should CLG abandon the FiReControl Project now, not only would all the claimed benefits of the Project in terms of greater speed, responsiveness and efficiency be lost, but it would cost an extra £8 million more than if it were left to proceed. The Select Committee Report recommends that CLG should continue with the Project, with renewed vigour, but that this is conditional upon several recommendations.

The Chief Fire Officer stated that information regarding the Fire Control Project is still awaited from the new Government but he confirmed that in order to ensure that Member's statutory duty to provide emergency response was met; a contingency plan was in place. He explained that the Brigade is currently trialling a new system (SEED) to enhance the Remsdaq system. We are the first authority to trial this new SEED system and the FBU and Staff are supportive of the trial.

Councillor Payne asked how much the refurbishment of the existing 49 Fire Control Rooms would have cost compared to the 9 new regional FireControl Centres. The Chief Fire Officer stated that at onset, the Project was sold as a money saving project, however as time has passed and costs have risen the driver is now increased resilience and firefighter safety. He added that it is difficult to estimate the difference in costing refurbishment opposed to the new centres.

Councillor Dunning raised a concern, following £6.2 billion of cuts from public spending announced by the Government, that the FireControl Project would be further delayed. Councillor Ovens asked how resilience to terrorist attacks would be affected if the Project was restricted to four centres. The Chief Fire Officer commented that if restricted, the four centres would be located around the country with the centres being interlinked.

RESOLVED:- that the CLG Select Committee report conclusions and recommendations on the national FiReControl Project be noted.

7.3 Chief Fire Officer's Information Pack – June 2010

- 7.3.1 Fire and Rescue Service Circulars
- 7.3.2 Employer Circulars
- 7.3.3 National Joint Circulars

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

8. REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

8.1 Member Development Plan 2010/11

The Director of Corporate Services sought Members views regarding the Member Development Plan for 2010/11, which incorporates:

- Training & Development
- Induction
- Mentoring
- Member Development Plans
- A Guide to Members Roles
- Resources
- Assessment

RESOLVED – that the Member Development Plan for 2010/11 be approved.

8.2 Member Attendance at Conferences

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that this report was for information only as Members had approved The Delegation Scheme which delegated the power to agree Member attendances at Conferences to the Director of Corporate Services.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

8.3 Corporate Governance Information Pack

- 8.3.1 Standards Committee
- 8.3.2 Fire Improvement Group

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

9. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

9.1 Members Allowance Scheme

The Treasurer presented the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) who had undertaken a review of the Member Allowances Scheme. The current Members Allowance Scheme had been approved by the Authority on 5 June 2009 and continues to operate until any amendments to the scheme are approved.

The Treasurer informed Members the IRP had considered the current level of allowances, roles, duties and responsibilities, and the views of Members given via a questionnaire which had achieved a response rate of 61%. The IRP reviewed the role and responsibility of all CFA Members under the Governance arrangements, and had also considered the allowances paid by other Fire Authorities.

9.1 Members Allowance Scheme (cont)

The IRP considered the involvement of the four Members from Cleveland Fire Brigade in LACC. It was noted that the other three authorities were not minded to consider the award of a Special Responsibility Allowance for these roles at this time.

The Treasurer informed Members that the IRP had recommended no increase to current allowances.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that Members agreed with the recommendations of the IRP that there be no increase to Members Allowances.**
- (ii) that the updated Members Allowance scheme be approved.**

10. VERBAL BRIEFING ON THE NE FIRE CONTROL COMPANY BOARD

Councillor Forster provided Members with an update regarding the NE Fire Control Company Limited. The LACC Board met on 27 May when they noted several policies which have been agreed with the FBU and ratified through the JCC. Further meetings of the JCC Review Group have taken place throughout April and May and a number of principles have now been agreed regarding RCC shift patterns and a framework for shift working has been formulated upon which the FBU are now consulting their members. Proposals for role allocation at the RCC have also been finalised and released to the FBU through the JCC as part of formal consultation.

CLG had confirmed their intent to release the full suite of documents that will constitute the formal contracts between the LACC and central government and between the LACC and FRA's. The timing of this is now impacted by the review being undertaken by the new Fire Minister. Contacts have been drafted by CLG's Legal Advisers supported by the FireControl Project Legal Working Group. Whilst regions are represented in this forum through their regional legal adviser, this does not constitute any formal approval of the contracts or representation of the FRA's view. A series of briefing sessions will be organised for a range of stakeholders in the North East including financial and legal advisers along with Principal Officers and LACC representatives once CLG confirm the timescales for releasing the contacts.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

11. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

11.1 Information Pack

- 11.1.1 Audit Commission
- 11.1.2 Organisational Performance Report 2009/10
- 11.1.3 Area Performance Report 2009/10
- 11.1.4 Target Setting 2010/11
- 11.1.5 Improvement Action Plans 2009/10
- 11.1.6 Operational Assessment Action Plan 2009/10
- 11.1.7 Efficiency Strategy Year 1 Update

11.1 Information Pack (cont)

- 11.1.8 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Audit
- 11.1.9 Internal Audit Outturn Report 2009/10
- 11.1.10 Review of the Authority's Annual Governance Statement

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) (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 the paragraphs below of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006”.

Minute No 13 – paragraphs 1 and 3

Minute No 14 – paragraph 3

Minute No 15 – paragraph 1

Paragraph 1 – namely information relating to any individual

Paragraph 3 – namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

13. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority meeting held on 26 March 2010 be confirmed.

14. JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER

14.1 PFI Update

The Chief Fire Officer provided Members with an update of the PFI Project.

The Chief Fire Officer and Director of Corporate Services left the meeting.

15. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 7 May 2010 be confirmed.

**COUNCILLOR JEAN O'DONNELL
CHAIR**

APPENDIX 1

APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (4:1:1:1)

HARTLEPOOL :- Councillor Payne
MIDDLESBROUGH :- Councillor Porley
REDCAR & CLEVELAND :- Councillors Forster, Ovens
STOCKTON ON TEES :- Councillors O'Donnell, Patterson, Woodhead

TENDERS COMMITTEE (2:1)

Councillor O'Donnell
Councillor Payne
Councillor Woodhead

STANDARDS COMMITTEE (2:1:1) plus 3 independent persons

MIDDLESBROUGH Councillors Clark, Rogers
REDCAR & CLEVELAND Councillor Briggs
STOCKTON Councillors Lewis

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (4:1:1:1)

(Chair to be a Member of a Non Controlling Group)

HARTLEPOOL Councillor Akers-Belcher
MIDDLESBROUGH Councillors Brunton, Clark, Morby
REDCAR & CLEVELAND Councillors Cooney, Dunning
STOCKTON ON TEES Councillor Lewis

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (4:1:1:1)

(Controlling Group Chair)

HARTLEPOOL Councillor Atkinson
MIDDLESBROUGH Councillor Thompson
REDCAR & CLEVELAND- Councillors Abbott, Briggs
STOCKTON ON TEES Councillors Kirton, Salt, Stoker

APPEALS COMMITTEE (4:1:1:1)

HARTLEPOOL Councillors Akers-Belcher, Flintoff
MIDDLESBROUGH Councillors Clark, Morby, Rogers
REDCAR & CLEVELAND Councillor Briggs
STOCKTON ON TEES Councillor Kirton

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (4:1:1:1)

HARTLEPOOL Councillors Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Flintoff, Payne
REDCAR & CLEVELAND Councillor Forster
STOCKTON ON TEES Councillors O'Donnell, Salt

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP (4:1:1:1)

HARTLEPOOL Councillors Atkinson, Payne
MIDDLESBROUGH Councillors Porley, Rogers
REDCAR & CLEVELAND Councillor Forster
STOCKTON ON TEES Councillors Lewis, O'Donnell

3. OUTSIDE BODIES

Local Government Association Fire Forum Councillor Forster

Regional Management Board

One Labour Member	Councillor Forster
One Labour Member	Councillor O'Donnell
One Labour Member substitute	Councillor Briggs
One Labour Member substitute	Councillor Kirton
One Conservative Member	Councillor Cooney
One Conservative Member substitute	Councillor Woodhead
One Liberal Democrat Member	Councillor Lewis
One Liberal Democrat Member substitute	Councillor Ovens

Safer Partnership Forums

Hartlepool Safer Partnership representative	Councillor Akers-Belcher
Middlesbrough Safer Partnership representative	Councillor Brunton
Redcar & Cleveland Safer Partnership representative	Councillor Briggs
Stockton Safer Partnership representative	Councillor Kirton

Local Strategic Partnerships Board (or equivalent)

Hartlepool – One Member representative required	Councillor Payne
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I&DeA

NE Improvement and Efficiency Partnership) Community Engagement and Empowerment) Programme Member Sounding Board)	Councillor Forster
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4. MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Hartlepool Community Leadership Champion	Councillor Payne
Middlesbrough Community Leadership Champion	Councillor Porley
Redcar & Cleveland Com Leadership Champion	Councillor Forster
Stockton Community Leadership Champion	Councillor O'Donnell
Safer Communities (includes Health and Safety) Children and Young People	Councillor Akers-Belcher
Healthier Communities	Councillor Kirton
Neighbourhoods (Environment, Asset Management)	Councillor Brunton
Employer of Choice (includes Standards and Ethics)	Councillor Forster
Community Engagement Partnerships	Councillor Porley
Diversity (includes equality and diversity)	Councillor Payne
Improvement and Value for Money (Efficiency, Risk and Performance Management)	Councillor Forster
	Councillor O'Donnell