

# **MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**18 MAY 2023**

## **MINUTES**

**Present:** Cllr Leslie T. Byrom CBE (Chair) Councillors Gillian Wood, Edna Finneran, Linda Maloney, Lynne Thompson, Janet Grace, Brian Kenny, Lesley Rennie, James Roberts, Paul Tweed, Andrew Makinson, Harry Gorman and Dave Hanratty

**Also Present:** Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, Deputy Fire Officer, Nick Searle, Director for Finance and Procurement, Ian Cummins and Monitoring Officer, Ria Groves.

**Apologies of absence were received from:** Cllr Gorst, Emily Spurrell PCC and Cllr Tracy Dickinson

### **1. Preliminary Matters**

The Chair noted that due to the recent local elections, there had been some changes to the Membership of the Authority and he welcomed back all those Members who had been successful in the election.

Members considered the identification of declarations of interest, any urgent additional items, and any business that may require the exclusion of the press and public.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) no declarations of interest were made by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda
- b) no additional items of business to be considered as matters of urgency were determined by the Chair; and
- c) no items of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

### **2. Minutes of the Previous Budget Authority**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

### **3. Minutes of Previous Meeting - Appointments Committee**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **4. Corporate Risk Register Oct to March 2023 Update**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, presented the current risk register to the Members, which included the status of current risks, associated control measures and any updates from October 2022 to March 2023.

Councillor Andrew Makinson noted that 90% of the recommendations from the Grenfell report had been implemented and he queried the schedule for completion for the remaining recommendations. It was explained that the Authority had completed 43 of the 46 recommendations in the report and that the remaining three were delayed by third parties. Members were assured that the Authority's arrangements were up to date and could be adapted if there were further legislative changes.

**RESOLVED** that the updated Corporate Risk Register for 2022/23 which incorporates the current status of those risks to March 2023 be approved.

#### **5. British Firefighter Challenge 2024**

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, presented the proposal for Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service to host the British Firefighter Challenge 2024. The event provided an opportunity to champion staff wellbeing and to bring firefighters and their families together from all around the world with an estimated 250 firefighters to attend.

The event was scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of July and it was noted that this would align with the city's Pride celebrations, providing an opportunity to create a fully inclusive event.

It was explained that sponsorship was being sought to fund the event and that the organisers were confident it would be secured given the events success in previous years.

Councillor Brian Kenny supported the recommendations in the report and asked for further detail on how the event would run alongside the Pride celebrations. Paul Kay, Group Manager, reported that the Authority had met with the Andy Herring, the Lead for Pride, as part of the planning process. The British Firefighter Challenge would take place in Water Street and the main celebration for Pride would be at the Pier Head with 25,000 people speculated to attend.

With regards to partnership working, Members were advised that there were Joint Action Groups established across the City Region including with city planners, the NHS and the Police.

Members queried if the event would use learning from the 2008 World Firefighter Games, which had been a big success in terms of selling Merseyside. The Chief agreed and noted how successfully the city had hosted Eurovision, explaining that learning from similar events would be

utilised to ensure that the event showcased the Authority, and the city, in the best possible way.

Councillor Wood asked if there was a Comms strategy in place to highlight the strengths of the Authority and the opportunities resulting from the event. It was explained that there were plans to highlight the role of the firefighter and the diversity of the workforce as part of the Comms plan. It was agreed that this would be communicated out to Local Authorities so that they could advertise the event on their websites.

The Chair welcomed the proposal and thanked the Chief for providing reassurance around the sponsorship element of the report. It was suggested that the Authority could consider ways of working with the Ukrainian fire service at the event to highlight their ongoing struggle.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the proposal for the Authority to host the British Firefighter Challenge in 2024 be approved; and
- b) the establishment of a £50,000 reserve as outlined in the report, to cover any costs not funded from sponsorship be approved

## **6. Prevention Fire Standard Implementation**

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report, which provided Members with an update on the implementation of Fire Standards across the UK, noting that the Service had previously been defined as outstanding in this area.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of this report and its appendices be noted

## **7. Award of Contract for a Business Travel Services Provider**

Members considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer on the award of a contract for managing business travel for the Authority as the current contract was due to expire in July 2023.

Councillor Harry Gorman asked what environmental considerations had been taken into account in the procurement process and the Members were assured that when making travel arrangements, Officers were mindful of the potential environmental impact and as such tried to utilise meeting technology to avoid any unnecessary journeys.

**RESOLVED** that the award of a travel management services contract to Click Travel be approved

## **8. Detection, Identification and Monitoring Equipment - uplift**

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Nick Searle, provided Members with an overview of the process to procure Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) equipment for

National Resilience as part of a programme refresh of all National Resilience assets over the next six years.

It was explained that MFRA was the lead Authority for National Resilience and as such would be carrying out similar procurement exercises in the future. It was reported that the refresh programme would cost the Home Office an estimated £9million with no direct cost for MFRA.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) that the creation of a framework agreement and subsequent call-off contracts for the purposes of national resilience be approved;
- b) Lot 1 and Lot 5 (as outlined in paragraph 12) to Hazmat LINK Ltd be approved;
- c) Lot 2, 6, and 7 (as outlined in paragraph 12) to Southern Scientific Limited be approved;
- d) Lot 3 (as outlined in paragraph 12) to CBRNeregetics Limited be approved;
- e) Lot 4 (as outlined in paragraph 12) to Metrohm UK be approved; and
- f) Lot 9 (as outlined in paragraph 12) to Amatekbe approved.

## **9. Pathway to Net Zero**

Date of Members considered the report, presented by the Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan, which detailed the interventions required to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 in line with the ambitions of the Liverpool City Region as approved by the Members.

It was explained that the Authority had worked with a consulting company to look at current arrangements and to provide support to ensure that the route map was robust and suitably ambitious. Cross organisation involvement would be key to delivering change and the report provided a list of next steps that the Authority needed to undertake.

Councillor Makinson noted that there was an opportunity to introduce solar panels on buildings across the MFRA estate and asked the Chief to confirm that charging points for electric vehicles would be available as part of the plan. Members were advised that the Authority would seek to utilise solar more effectively in the future and that formed part of the plan detailed in the report. With regards to electric vehicles, the Chief explained that the Authority was in the process of changing its estate infrastructure to support the utilisation of electric vehicles as well as considering the future of its fleet.

Members were advised that although there were some examples of electric fire engines in the UK, the Authority required more assurance on the pump capability

and the performance in terms of response times before it would be able to consider moving to a fully electric fleet.

Councillor Wood suggested working with SPEN on a campaign highlighting safety risks to the public and it was agreed that the responsible officer Group Manager John O'Boyle would ensure that action was undertaken.

The Members discussed electric vehicles and the risks associated with the new technology. Incidents with lithium batteries were becoming more common with a recent fatality resulting from domestic charging of an electric vehicle. The risk was a national issue being explored by the Fire Chief Council to better understand how to manage lithium battery fires. In addition, the Chair advised that this had been on the agenda at the Fire Conference and Members were lobbying to regulate the technology and legislate on the potential dangers of this emerging technology. Members requested an engagement session on emerging technologies in the new municipal year.

The Chief advised that there would be a press release about the route map and that updates would be made available for Members regularly.

Councillor Harry Gorman noted that staff commuting had not been accounted for in the plan and asked why that decision had been taken. The Chief agreed to investigate further and alerted Members to the introduction of hybrid working arrangements which were introduced to limit the cost of living impact on staff and provide more flexible ways of working whilst reducing journeys into work.

Members queried the cycle scheme, which encourages staff to cycle to work and asked whether fire kit prevented any officers from utilising the scheme. It was explained that the majority of kit could be stored at stations and staff were issued with multiple sets of uniform. The Authority supported the initiative and felt it was inclusive for all staff to use.

**RESOLVED** that

- a) the contents of the Net Zero route map be noted; and
- b) note the governance structure including the appointment of the deputy Chief Fire Officer as the senior project executive, be noted

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

The Chair advised that next meeting of the Authority would be the Annual General Meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> June. The Members wished to place on record their thanks to the fantastic firefighters and officers for all of their hard work and commitment to the residents of Merseyside.

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 8 June 2023

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_