

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROTECTION COMMITTEE

6 APRIL 2023

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Brian Kenny (Chair) Councillors Lynnie Hinnigan, Paul Tweed, Janet Grace, Lynne Thompson and Lesley Rennie

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllr Linda Maloney and Cllr Edna Finneran

1. Preliminary matters

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) the following item of business required the exclusion of the press and public during consideration thereof, due to the possible disclosure of exempt information:

- **ITEM 10 APPENDIX G - I**

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 31st January were approved as an accurate record.

3. Protection Fire Standard

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented the report which related to the implementation of standards as prescribed by the National Fire Chiefs Council and Fire Standards Board for all Fire and Rescue Services in England. Members were advised that there were currently 16 standards and that this report dealt specifically with those relating to Protection.

Members noted that further reports pertaining to the implementation of the fire standards across the Authority would be submitted to Members in due course.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

4. National Fire Standards Update 2022/23

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented an update on the implementation of National Fire Standards and provided Members with an overview of how compliance would be monitored.

Councillor Les Byrom queried if the inspectors would be considering compliance with these standards as part of the next inspection. Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan advised that how the Service responds to and adopts the Code of Ethics would be reviewed but that progression against the National Fire Standards would not form part of this inspection.

Members noted that 'Leading and Developing People' and 'Leading the Service' were newly released standards and as such did not have RAG ratings at this juncture.

RESOLVED that the progress against achieving compliance with the National Fire Standards and the work being undertaken within Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) to implement and ensure compliance with the National Fire Standards be noted.

5. Supply of Firecoats and Overtrousers

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented the report on supply of firecoats and overtrousers for the Authority and other Authorities across the North West as part of a consortium procurement.

Members were advised that the kit had been tested to ensure it was fit for purpose from a fire fighting perspective and to ensure that the kit reflected the diversity of the workforce.

Councillor Janet Grace queried the life span of a firecoat and it was explained that it was dependent on the extent of use and how challenging the environment was as the number of washes predicated the life span. As an estimate, coats were expected to last between three to five years but it was noted that technological advancements could lead to the replacement of kit before it reached that point. The Chief Fire Officer suggested that a further report be submitted to a future meeting on cleaning and contamination of fire kit.

Councillor Byrom noted that each piece of kit had a barcode so that its lifespan could be monitored and to ensure it provided the level of protection that the firefighters needed.

RESOLVED that the award of a call-off contract to Ballyclare Limited for the supply of firecoats and overtrousers for a period of 4 years, with an option to extend for up a further of 12 months subject to satisfactory performance be approved.

6. Menopause Policy

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented the report, which sought to further improve the support offered to staff during the menopause.

Members discussed the language in the report and suggested that the terminology be amended to refer to 'staff' or 'individuals'.

Councillor Lynne Thompson noted that 22% of people said they would never discuss the menopause with their employer, and so asked what MFRA were doing to support managers and staff in having that conversation. Members were advised that a nurse was available through Occupational Health to talk to staff about the menopause and a staff ran menopause lounge was available for staff to use.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the existing support offered to menopausal women including specific guidance documents, the Menopause Lounge support network, and the ability for staff to reclaim Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) prescription costs be noted and;
- b) the newly created attached Menopause Policy which captures both existing support and new proposals developed following extensive consultation with staff be approved

7. Staff Survey Results 2022

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented the results of the 2022 Staff Survey noting the positive response and engagement score highlighted in the report.

Members noted the positive feedback from People Insight in relation to the level of engagement, especially given the current economic climate.

Councillor Les Byrom welcomed the results and thanked those Members of staff who had taken part. The Chief Fire Officer noted the importance of conducting the survey and acting on the feedback provided, highlighting the Action Plan that would be brought back to the Authority.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be considered, and the survey outcomes be noted.

8. Succession Planning

Chief Fire Officer, Phil Garrigan presented the Succession Planning policy noting the importance of ensuring the succession planning arrangements are resolute given the issues around retention in the public sector.

Councillor Les Byrom noted that recruitment and retention were very important, as were career development and promotion for existing staff. Councillor Jan Grace agreed, noting the potential disruption that could be caused when knowledge and experience were lost.

RESOLVED that

- a) the revised and updated succession planning framework be noted and;
- b) the draft Succession Planning policy subject to any significant changes resulting from the consultation being reported back to Authority as necessary be approved

9. Domestic Violence Policy

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented the Domestic Violence Policy report including the significant changes which were required, noting that the Authority had first implemented this policy in 2008.

Councillor Lynn Hinnigan queried if there would be training available for staff to help them to recognise domestic violence and the steps involved in making a referral and whether the local support agencies were in every district across Merseyside. Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan advised that staff were trained in safeguarding and that there was engagement with local support agencies with every district and he suggested the policy be amended to include the relevant details for the area of Sefton too.

Councillor Lynne Thompson asked if the service still worked with children who were affected by domestic violence. Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan explained that the Service was currently working with a school situated in a challenging area and discussed how the 'Beacon' course was helping to provide support and positive role models to those children. Members were also informed of recent instances where vulnerable young people had come to Fire Stations for support, highlighting the importance of the relationship that the Authority has with the community.

RESOLVED that the revised Domestic Violence Policy be approved

10. Proposed Refurbishment of Speke & Garston and Old Swan Fire Stations

Monitoring Officer Ria Groves advised that appendices G – I were exempt and as such advised Members that if they wished to discuss those appendices, the meeting would have to close.

Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigan presented the report and added that the Authority would continue to invest into the facilities to make sure that they were accessible and met the needs of the diverse workforce.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the contents of this report be noted
- b) the outcome of the formal tender process within appendix G be noted
- c) the contracts to Red Tree Building Contractors be awarded at the values given below:
 - £691,330.46 for Old Swan Community Fire Station and;
 - £693,507.27 for Speke & Garston Community Fire Station

Close

Date of next meeting Thursday, 7 September 2023