

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

6 MAY 2014

MINUTES

Present: Cllr Dave Hanratty (Chair) Councillors Les Byrom, Linda Maloney, Robbie Ayres, Roy Gladden, Ted Grannell, John Kelly, Jimmy Mahon, Pat Moloney, Barbara Murray, Tony Newman, Steve Niblock, Lesley Rennie, Denise Roberts and Jean Stapleton

Also Present:

Apologies of absence were received from: Cllr Vi Bebb, Cllr Andrew Blackburn and Cllr Sharon Sullivan

1. Preliminary Matters

The Authority considered the identification of any declarations of interest, matters of urgency or items that would require the exclusion of the press and public due to the disclosure of exempt information.

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 were determined by the Chair to be considered as matters of urgency; and
- c) Appendices F and G of item 7 ***contain EXEMPT information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972*** and therefore require 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 Meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting of the Authority, which was the Authority's Budget setting meeting, held on 27th February 2014, were approved as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. Coach Safety & Prevention of Road Traffic Accidents by Councillor Dave Hanratty

Members considered the Motion, put forward by the Chair of the Authority – Cllr Dave Hanratty, concerning Coach Safety and The Prevention of Road Traffic Accidents

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority attends on average 542 Road Traffic Accidents each year, some of these accidents could be prevented through improved design technology or indeed highway works, driver awareness, increased training for younger drivers all of which the Fire Service actively promote in order to reduce Road Traffic accidents and Death on our roads.

However on Monday 10th September 2012 a coach bound for Liverpool carrying 53 people travelling back from the music festival on the Isle of Wight, left the road and crashed into a tree instantly killing Michael Molloy (18), Kerry Ogden (23) and the coach driver, Colin Daulby (63). Other passengers suffered serious life changing injuries for instance Zach Washington-Young aged just 22 at the time, had just completed a law degree but suffered spinal injuries which necessitated him being airlifted to hospital and is still receiving intensive treatment and will do for many years to come.

The cause of this tragic and fatal Road Traffic Accident was subsequently discovered that the front nearside tyre which was actually older than the coach itself at 19 years, which was responsible for the crash. The coach operator were fined just £4000, not for the state of that particular tyre but for another old tyre on the rear of the vehicle which was exhibiting wear and tear below the legal requirements for tread depth. The Coach company had their licence to practice revoked.

Unbelievably there is no law in the UK that governs the age of tyres used on either commercial or domestic vehicles despite the fact that a rubber tyre will show serious deterioration after only five years even if no wear and tears shows on the exterior of the tyre. Deterioration of a tyre commences from the date of manufacture whether it is fitted to a vehicle or not.

Frances Molloy, Michael's mother is leading a campaign for a change in UK law to ban the use of tyres older than six years on commercial vehicles. This change in law is being supported by her MP, Maria Eagle and Shadow Transport Minister, Mary Creagh, but to date, despite a meeting with Transport Minister, Patrick McLoughlin MP, and a vague promise to look at further research, the Government will not commit to a change in the law.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority therefore agrees to write to the Prime Minister, Fire Minister Brandon Lewis MP, the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Local Government Association Fire Service Management Committee urging the Government take urgent action in addressing this issue and to legislate in order to introduce safeguards so that coaches are operated safely, in that tyres older than six years cannot be used on commercial vehicles therefore going some way in preventing such fatal accidents in the future. Furthermore Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority also resolves to support this campaign until such change in the law is achieved.

The Chair advised of an amendment to the Motion, to include that the Chair write to Beverley Bell the senior traffic commissioner who's role covers Heavy Goods Vehicle / Passenger Service Vehicle (HGV/PSV) standards, and to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) in addition to the Prime Minister, Fire Minister Brandon Lewis MP, the Chief Fire Officers

Association and the Local Government Association Fire Service Management Committee.

The Motion and addition to the motion, was seconded by Cllr Mahon; and the motion, including the addition above was agreed unanimously by Members.

Members aired their views in relation to the tragic incident which had triggered this campaign, and offered support.

Resolved that:

- a) Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority write to the Prime Minister, Fire Minister Brandon Lewis MP, the Chief Fire Officers Association and the Local Government Association Fire Service Management Committee urging the Government take urgent action in addressing this issue and to legislate in order to introduce safeguards so that coaches are operated safely, in that tyres older than six years cannot be used on commercial vehicles therefore going some way in preventing such fatal accidents in the future;
- b) In addition to a) the Chair of the Authority write to Beverley Bell the senior traffic commissioner who's role covers Heavy Goods Vehicle / Passenger Service Vehicle (HGV/PSV) standards, and to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA);
- c) Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority support of the campaign for a change in UK law to ban the use of tyres older than six years on commercial vehicles, until such change in the law is achieved.

4. Lead Member Feedback 2013/14

(CFO/042/14)

Members considered Report CFO/042/14 of the Deputy Chief Executive, concerning feedback of work undertaken by the appointed Lead Members during 2013/14.

Cllr Niblock – Lead Member for Environment, Health & Safety, provided verbal feedback to the Authority, concerning his role. This included an overview of the various networks and Committees attended as part of his role; and explained various reports which have been submitted to the Authority in relation to both Health & Safety and Environmental issues.

Resolved that:

- a) The feedback provided by the Lead Members for 2013/14, as attached as to the report, be noted.
- b) The continuation of Lead Member Roles for the Municipal Year 2014/15, be approved.

- c) The Democratic Services Manager, be instructed to liaise with the Chair of the Authority, to conduct a review of the Roles of Lead Members in line with the Authority's Scrutiny Forward Work Plan for the coming Municipal year, and report this back to the Annual Meeting, for consideration and appointments to be made.

5. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority Members Equality and Diversity Monitoring

(CFO/043/14)

Members considered Report CFO/043/14 of the Deputy Chief Executive, concerning the introduction of formal Equality and Diversity monitoring of all Members appointed to Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

Discussion took place around the content of the form, and it was requested that the form be simplified for the benefit of New Members appointed to the Authority.

Resolved that:

- a) The Form (attached at Appendix 1 to the Report) be revised for the benefit of New Members, by removing:
 - i. Date joined the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority; and
 - ii. Role /capacity appointed to.
- b) With the above changes included, the introduction of the formal equality and diversity monitoring form for all Members appointed to the Authority, be approved.
- c) All Members be issued with the forms with their Annual Meeting Agenda Packs, for completion and return to the Democratic Services Manager at the Annual Meeting.

6. Firefighters' Pension Scheme - New Governance Requirements

(CFO/045/14)

Members considered Report CFO/045/14 of the Deputy Chief Executive, concerning the requirements of the Public Pensions Act 2013.

Significant debate took place around the requirements of the Act, with the Authority expressing concerns regarding additional costs and the administrative burden of complying with the requirements.

All Members acknowledged that the establishment of a Regional Pension Board would be a sensible approach.

Councillor Hanratty advised Members that with effect from their last meeting the 'North West Partnership Board' (NWPB) has disbanded, and superseded by a

new 'North West Fire and Rescue Forum' (NWF&RF), to which he has been appointed as Chair.

Councillor Hanratty advised that the subject of a Regional Pension Board be included on the agenda for the NWF&RF meeting.

Resolved that:

- a) The contents of the report be noted.
- b) The exploration of the delivery of a Pension Board at a regional level, be approved.
- c) Congratulations be recorded to Councillor Hanratty for his appointment as Chair of the North West Fire and Rescue Forum, and the inclusion for exploration of a Regional Pension Board on the Agenda for the next Forum meeting be welcomed.

7. Disposal Of Combined Pump Platform, MAN And Mercedes Vario Fire Appliances

(CFO/050/14)

Members considered Report CFO/050/14 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the disposal of the Combined Pump Platform (CPP), MAN and Mercedes Vario fire appliances at specialist auction in order to realise a capital receipt.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members of the rationale behind the disposal of the vehicles.

Councillor Murray requested that Members be informed of the Reserve Prices.

Resolved that:

- a) The disposal of the CPP, MAN and Mercedes Vario fire appliances at specialist auction in order to realise a capital receipt, be noted.
- b) Reserve prices for appliances be confirmed to Members.

8. PROPOSED STATION MERGER OF HUYTON AND WHISTON

(CFO/044/14)

Appendices F and G to this Report, contain EXEMPT information by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members considered Report CFO/044/14 of the Chief Fire Officer, concerning the merger of Huyton and Whiston fire stations at a new site on Manchester Road, Prescot subject to a 12 week period of public consultation to commence with effect from 6th May 2014 and reaching an agreement with the owners of the site, Knowsley Council, for a lease of the new site.

Resolved that:

- a) The merger of Huyton and Whiston fire stations at a new site on Manchester Road, Prescott subject to a 12 week period of public consultation to commence with effect from 7th May 2014, be approved.
- b) A report be submitted to the Authority detailing the outcomes of this consultation. This report will contain any operational implications of the merger including details of Section 13/16 mutual aid arrangements with Cheshire FRS for the coverage of Cronton.

The Chair advised the Authority that Councillor Bebb was retiring and wished to place his thanks on record for her services on the Authority.

The Chair expressed his best wishes to Authority Members up for Election, and requested that Members remained following the close of the meeting for a verbal Industrial Relations update from the Chief Fire Officer.

Close

Date of next meeting:

Annual General Meeting, Thursday 26 June 2014, to be held at Belle Vale Community Fire Station.

Signed: _____

Date: _____