

**DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY**  
**(Ordinary Meeting)**

10 June 2022

Present:

Councillors Randall-Johnson (Chair), Best, Biederman, Brazil, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Vice-Chair), Drear, Hannaford, Hendy, Kendall, Long, McGeough, Partridge, Peart, Power, Radford, Roome, Sellis and Shayer.

Apologies:

Councillors Kerley, Prowse, Sully, Thomas and Trail BEM.

**DSFRA/22/7**    **Minutes of Committees**

**a**    **Audit & Governance Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brazil, **moved** the Minutes of the meetings held on 7 March and 10 May 2022, which had considered, amongst other things:

***7 March***

- the external auditor's annual report;
- the proposed 2022-23 internal audit plan;
- a report on progress against the approved 2021-22 internal audit plan as at Quarter 3; and
- an update report on the Corporate Risk Register

***10 May***

- the external audit plan for the year ending 31 March 2022;
- the draft 2021-22 Annual Statement of Assurance;
- the 2021-22 internal audit year-end report;
- the annual report on the Authority policy for the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000; and
- a report on internal audit service provision.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.  
***(See also Minute DSFRA/22/8 below).***

**b**    **People Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Hannaford, **moved** the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- an application for retirement and re-employment in accordance with the Authority's approved Pay Policy Statement;

- an update on the Service People Strategy;
- the Service Recruitment & Workforce Diversity Annual Report 2021; and
- a year-end performance monitoring report against the “people” strategic priorities approved by the Authority.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

### **c Community Safety Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, **moved** the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a performance monitoring report as at Quarter 3 against Authority-approved strategic policies 1 and 2 (prevention and protection activities; response activities);
- a report on the Service risk-based inspection programme; and
- a report on Service prevention initiatives specifically for children and young people.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

### **d Resources Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **moved** the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on the provisional financial outturn 2021-22;
- a proposed revision to the Capital Programme 2022-23 to 2024-25;
- a report on Treasury Management performance for the 2021-22 financial year; and
- a report on Red One Ltd. financial performance for the 2021-22 financial year.

**RESOLVED**

- (i). that, in relation to the recommendation at Minute RC/21/28 (Provisional Financial Outturn 2021-22):
  - (a). it be noted that, subsequent to reporting to the Resources Committee, an incorrect accountancy treatment had been identified of grants of £0.228m received in the 2021-22 financial year but which were still unapplied. The effect of correcting this was to reduce the indicative overspend (and call on the General Reserve Fund to address this) from £1.379m , as originally reported, to £1.121m. The resulting General Reserve Fund balance would then be 5.46% of the 2021-22 revenue budget (not 5.3% as originally reported);
  - (b). that, subject to (a) above, the recommendation be approved;
- (ii). that the recommendation at Minute RC/21/29 (Revision to Capital Programme 2022-23 to 2024-25) be approved; and

- (iii). that, subject to (i) and (ii) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

***(See also Minute DSFRA/22/11 below).***

**DSFRA/22/8 Internal Audit Service Provision**

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/13) on the outcome of an internal review into and options for the provision of the internal audit function for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service. Options for provision as outlined in the report included:

- co-sourcing/partial out-sourcing;
- internal sourcing;
- outsourcing;
- membership of a partnership shared-service arrangement with the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) as a non-voting partner; and
- membership of a partnership shared-service arrangement with DAP as a full partner.

Each of these had been considered with reference to quality and cost of service.

The report outlined relevant legal considerations in relation to the preferred option, as supported by the Service Executive Board, to enter into a partnership shared-service arrangement with DAP as a full partner.

An earlier iteration of this report had been considered by the Audit & Governance Committee at its meeting on 10 May 2022 which had resolved to support, in principle, membership by the Authority of DAP subject to final approval by the Authority at this meeting and to confirmatory legal advice on any terms proposed for the Deed of Variation required to join the partnership (Minute \*AGC/21/27 refers).

**RESOLVED**

- (a). that the decision of the Audit & Governance Committee on 10 May 2022 to support, in principle, Authority membership of the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) shared service agreement as a full, voting, partner be noted; and
- (b). that the Authority approves such membership, subject to confirmatory legal advice on the terms for the Deed of Variation required to facilitate membership.

***(See also Minute DSFRA/22/7(a) above).***

**DSFRA/22/9 Government White Paper "Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service"**

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/22/14) on publication of the Government White Paper "Reforming Our Fire and Rescue Service".

The White Paper proposed a number of reforms in the areas of people, professionalism and governance. It was proposed that the White Paper be discussed further at forthcoming Members' Forum meetings to inform a response for consideration and approval by the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 22 July 2022. The closing date for responses to the consultation was 26 July 2022.

**RESOLVED** that the Audit & Governance Committee be delegated authority to approve, at its meeting on 22 July 2022, a final response from this Authority to the White Paper.

**DSFRA/22/10 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public (with the exception of representatives of Red One Ltd., as indicated) be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person – including the authority holding that information.

**DSFRA/22/11 Resources Committee 18 May 2022 - Restricted Minutes**

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

(Councillors Radford and Shayer each declared a personal, non-pecuniary, interest in this item by virtue of their being Authority-appointed non-executive directors on the Board of Red One Ltd.)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **moved** the restricted Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 during which the financial performance of Red One Ltd. for the 2021-22 financial year had been discussed.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.  
**(See also Minute DSFRA/22/7(d) above).**

**DSFRA/22/12 Red One Ltd. Annual General Meeting 2022**

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public, with the exception of representatives from Red One Ltd., were excluded from the meeting).

Dr. Sian George, Red One Ltd. Board Chair, in the Chair for this item.

The Authority, in its capacity as sole shareholder, attended the Annual General Meeting of its commercial trading company, Red One Ltd., during which the following items, amongst others, were discussed:

- operations, systems and processes used by the company to ensure effective, efficient and legally compliant operation;
- reporting procedures in place for the company

- a report company activities and its accounts to the year ending 31 March 2022; and
- the business objectives and forecast for the company to 31 March 2023.

At the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting, the Authority thanked the Board of Red One Ltd. for the information presented.

**DSFRA/22/13 Red One Ltd. Governance Arrangements and Appointment of Independent Non-Executive Director (Board Chair) of Red One Ltd.**

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

(Councillors Radford and Shayer each declared a personal, non-pecuniary, interest in this item by virtue of their being Authority-appointed non-executive directors on the Board of Red One Ltd.).

The Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/22/16) on a proposed review of the governance arrangements between Red One Ltd. and the Authority and on options for the appointment of an independent non-executive director to serve as Chair of the company Board.

**RESOLVED**

- (a). that an initial review of the governance arrangements for Red One Ltd. be undertaken along the lines as indicated in paragraph 2.8 of report DSFRA/22/16;
- (b). that the current incumbent be re-appointed as the independent non-executive director Chair of the Board of Red One Ltd. for a further two-year period to 20 June 2024.