



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

**M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**To: The Chair and Members of the Devon &
Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority**

(see below)

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
DEVON
EX3 0NW**

Your ref :
Our ref : DSFRA/MP/SY
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 2 December 2022
Please ask for : Steve Yates
Email : syates@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872329(W); 07866
189042(M)

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Monday, 12 December, 2022

A meeting of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10.00 am in the Committee Rooms, Somerset House, Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

PLEASE REFER TO THE NOTES AT THE END OF THE AGENDA LISTING SHEETS

1 Apologies

2 Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2022 attached.

3 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

PART 1 - OPEN COMMITTEE

4 Questions and Petitions from the Public

In accordance with [Standing Orders](#), to consider any questions and petitions submitted by the public. Questions must relate to matters to be considered at this meeting of the Authority. Petitions must relate to matters for which the Authority is responsible, or which affect the Authority. Neither questions nor petitions may require the disclosure of confidential or exempt information. Questions and petitions must be submitted in writing or by e-mail to the Clerk to the Authority (e-mail address: clerk@dsfire.gov.uk) **by midday on Wednesday 7 December 2022.**

5 Addresses by Representative Bodies

To receive addresses from representative bodies requested and approved in accordance with Standing Orders.

6 Questions from Members of the Authority

To receive and answer any questions submitted in accordance with Standing Orders.

7 Minutes of Committees

a People Committee (Pages 5 - 8)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Hannaford, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2022, attached.

RECOMMENDATION that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

b Community Safety Committee (Pages 9 - 16)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2022, attached.

RECOMMENDATION that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

c Resources Committee (Pages 17 - 22)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022.

RECOMMENDATION that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

d Audit & Governance Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brazil, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2022, **TO FOLLOW.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i). That the Committee recommendation that Councillor Thomas be appointed Vice-Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee (and ex-officio Authority appointee to the Devon Audit Partnership Committee) until the Authority's next annual meeting, be approved;
- (ii). That, subject to (i) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

8 Appointments to Committees 2022-23 Municipal Year (Pages 23 - 24)

Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/21) attached.

9 Appointment of Independent Members to the Audit & Governance Committee - Further Considerations (Pages 25 - 28)

Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/22) attached.

10 Members' Allowances

a Scheme of Members' Allowances - Increase in Rates for 2022-23 Financial Year (Pages 29 - 32)

Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/23) attached.

b Confirmation of Members' Allowances Scheme 2023-24 (Pages 33 - 38)

Report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/24) attached.

11 Digital Services: Strategic Outline Case - Progress Update (Pages 39 - 42)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/22/25) attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:

Councillors Randall-Johnson (Chair), Aspinall, Best, Biederman, Brazil, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Vice-Chair), Drean, Hannaford, Hendy, Kendall, Kerley, Long, McGeough, Peart, Power, Prowse, Radford, Roome, Sellis, Shayer, Sully, Thomas and Trail BEM.

NOTES

1. **Access to Information**

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact the person listed in the “Please ask for” section at the top of this agenda.

2. **Reporting of Meetings**

Any person attending a meeting may report (film, photograph or make an audio recording) on any part of the meeting which is open to the public – unless there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chair - and use any communication method, including the internet and social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.), to publish, post or otherwise share the report. The Authority accepts no liability for the content or accuracy of any such report, which should not be construed as representing the official, Authority record of the meeting. Similarly, any views expressed in such reports should not be interpreted as representing the views of the Authority.

Flash photography is not permitted and any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

3. **Declarations of Interests at meetings (Authority Members only)**

If you are present at a meeting and you are aware that you have either a disclosable pecuniary interest, personal interest or non-registerable interest in any matter being considered or to be considered at the meeting then, unless you have a current and relevant dispensation in relation to the matter, you must:

- (i) disclose at that meeting, by no later than commencement of consideration of the item in which you have the interest or, if later, the time at which the interest becomes apparent to you, the existence of and – for anything other than a “sensitive” interest – the nature of that interest; and then
- (ii) withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item in which you have the relevant interest.

If the interest is sensitive (as agreed with the Monitoring Officer), you need not disclose the nature of the interest but merely that you have an interest of a sensitive nature. You must still follow (i) and (ii) above.

Where a dispensation has been granted to you either by the Authority or its Monitoring Officer in relation to any relevant interest, then you must act in accordance with any terms and conditions associated with that dispensation.

Where you declare at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary or personal interest that you have not previously included in your Register of Interests then you must, within 28 days of the date of the meeting at which the declaration was made, ensure that your Register is updated to include details of the interest so declared.

	NOTES (Continued)
4.	<u>Part 2 Reports</u> Members are reminded that any Part 2 reports as circulated with the agenda for this meeting contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). Members are also reminded of the need to dispose of such reports carefully and are therefore invited to return them to the Committee Secretary at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.
5.	<u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u> Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Clerk (or his representative) must be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting. Members are also reminded that substitutions are not permitted for full Authority meetings.
6.	<u>Other Attendance at Committees)</u> Any Authority Member wishing to attend, in accordance with Standing Orders, a meeting of a Committee of which they are not a Member should contact the Democratic Services Officer (see “please ask for” on the front page of this agenda) in advance of the meeting.

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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

26 September 2022

Present:

Councillors Randall-Johnson (Chair), Best, Chesterton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Vice-Chair), Drean, Hannaford, Hendy, Kendall, Kerley, Long, Power, Radford, Roome, Sellis, Shayer, Sully, Thomas and Trail BEM.

Apologies:

Councillors Biederman, Brazil, Clayton, Partridge, Peart and Prowse.

DSFRA/22/14 Retiring Members' Presentation

The Authority paid tribute to former Authority Members in recognition of their service and contribution to the work of the Authority.

DSFRA/22/15 Minutes

a Annual Meeting 10 June 2022

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the annual Authority meeting held on 10 June 2022 be signed as a correct record.

b Ordinary Meeting 10 June 2022

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the ordinary Authority meeting held on 10 June 2022 be signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/22/16 Minutes of Committees

a Audit & Governance Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, Councillor Kerley **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- The proposed Authority response to the Government White Paper "Reforming our Fire and Rescue Service";
- An internal audit progress report for the first quarter of the current (2022-23) financial year;
- An assurance report on the Authority as a going concern;
- An annual review of the Authority's Standards arrangements;
- A revised forward plan for items for submission to future meetings; and
- A report on the inclusion of an appropriate entry relating to Red One Ltd. on the Authority's Corporate Risk Register.

RESOLVED:

- (i). That the recommendation at Minute AGC/22/8 (Corporate Risk Register – Inclusion of Red One Ltd. [Authority Trading Company]) and relating to proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference of the Committee be approved; and
- (ii). That, subject to (i) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

b People Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Hannaford, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- Publication of the report following the 2021 inspection of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services;
- Appointments to the Internal Disputes Resolution Panel for the 2022-23 municipal year;
- An update on the Service People Strategy; and
- A report on performance for the first quarter of the current (2022-23) financial year against those key performance indicators associated with the Authority-approved Strategic Policy Objectives 3a to 3c inclusive.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.
(See also Minute DSFRA/22/17 below).

c Resources Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chair, Councillor Drear (Committee Vice-Chair) **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- A report on Authority Treasury Management Performance for the first quarter of the current (2022-23) financial year;
- A report on Service financial performance (revenue and capital expenditure and use of reserves) for the first quarter of the current financial year;
- An update on progress with the Service Environmental Strategy; and
- A report on Red One Ltd. financial performance for the first quarter of the current financial year.

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

DSFRA/22/17 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 2021 Inspection Report

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/22/17) on publication by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) of its finding following its inspection of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) in 2021.

Appended to the report were action plans to address both the cause for concern and areas for improvement as identified by HMICFRS. The report also outlined the proposed arrangements to ensure appropriate scrutiny of progress against these action plans by both the full Authority and its Committees.

RESOLVED

- (a). That the proposals for reporting progress against the action plans to address the cause for concern and areas for improvement identified in the 2021 HMICFRS inspection report, as set out in Section 3 of report DSFRA/22/17, be endorsed;
- (b). That it be noted that:
 - (i). The Service grading for the Efficiency pillar of the HMICFRS inspection had improved since the last inspection from “Requires Improvement” to “Good, with the grading for the Effectiveness pillar remaining at “Good”;
 - (ii). The Service had developed action plans to address both the cause for concern and areas for improvement as identified in the HMICFRS report.

(See also Minute DSFRA22/16(b) above).

DSFRA/22/18 Firefighters Pensions Schemes Discretions Policy

(Councillor Sellis declared a pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of her partner being in receipt of a firefighters pension. Councillor Sellis took no part in the discussion or voting on this item).

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (DSFRA/22/18) to which was appended a proposed revised policy for the Authority on the exercise of discretions afforded by current Firefighters’ Pensions Schemes. The opportunity had been taken to define a clear policy to apply for each discretion to promote consistency of approach and decision making.

The proposed policy had been considered at the Authority’s Local Pensions Board meeting on 7 September 2022 and was now commended for approval.

RESOLVED

- (a). That the Firefighters’ Pensions Schemes Discretions Policy as appended to report DSFRA/22/18 be approved; and
- (b). That, in relation to exercising the discretions:
 - (i). Those discretions of a more routine, Scheme administration type, be exercised by the Chief Fire Officer; and
 - (ii). Those individualised, case-by-case discretions that could involve additional financial implications be exercised either by the Chief Fire Officer, the People Committee or the full Authority depending on the quantum of the financial implications and alignment to financial thresholds as contained in the Authority’s approved Financial Regulations.

DSFRA/22/19 Appointments to the Devon Audit Partnership Committee

(Councillor Roome declared a personal, non-pecuniary, interest in this item by virtue of his being current Chair of the Devon Audit Partnership Committee).

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/19) on the appointment of two Authority Members to sit on the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) Committee.

The Authority had previously resolved to join DAP, as a full voting partner, for the provision of internal audit services for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (Minute DSFRA/22/8 of the ordinary Authority meeting held on 10 June 2022 refers).

DAP had indicated that the appointments to the Committee would normally be the Chair and Vice-Chair of the partner's Audit Committee.

RESOLVED that the ex-officio appointment of the both the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee to the Devon Audit Partnership Committee be approved.

DSFRA/22/20 Appointment of Independent Members to the Audit & Governance Committee

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/20) on the proposed appointment of independent, co-opted members to the Audit & Governance Committee.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) had published a revised position statement in July 2022 recommending such appointments. The report identified the legal basis on which such appointments may be made and addressed the issue of remuneration for such appointees.

RESOLVED that, in accordance with the CIPFA revised position statement, two independent, co-opted members be appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee and that to facilitate this:

- (a). The Clerk be authorised to:
 - (i). Undertake a process to identify suitable candidates for appointment; and
 - (ii). Amend the Authority's currently approved Scheme of Members' Allowances to provide for annual remuneration of £1,418 to each appointee; and
- (b). Final appointment of the independent, co-opted members be delegated to the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee.

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.00 am

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

31 October 2022

Present:

Councillors Hannaford (Chair), Clayton (Vice-Chair), Cook-Woodman (vice Thomas), Kendall, Peart and Trail BEM.

Also in attendance via Teams:

Councillor Best.

Apologies:

Councillor Thomas.

* PC/22/6

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* PC/22/7

Performance Monitoring Report 2022-23: Quarter 2

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/22/7) detailing performance as at Quarter 2 of 2022-23 against those Key Performance Indicators agreed by the Committee for measuring progress against the following three strategic priorities as approved by the Authority:

- 3(a). Ensure that the workforce is highly trained and has the capability and capacity to deliver services professionally, safely and effectively;
- 3(b). Increase the diversity of the workforce to better reflect the communities we serve, promoting inclusion and developing strong and effective leaders who ensure that we have a fair place to work where our organisational values are a lived experience; and
- 3(c). Recognise and maximise the value of all employees, particularly the commitment of on-call firefighters, improving recruitment and retention.

In particular, the report provided information on performance against each of the following key measures:

- operational core competence skills (beathing apparatus; incident command; water rescue; safety when working at heights or in confined spaces; maritime; driving; and casualty care);
- workforce planning;
- health and safety (accidents [including near misses]; personal injuries; vehicle incidents; and reporting against the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR));

- sickness and absence (including mental health) for wholetime, on-call, support, Control and casual staff, by type of sickness. The report also identified health and wellbeing support offered by the Service and featured benchmarking for sickness absence against comparable, neighbouring fire and rescue services;
- fitness testing (including support offered for red and amber groups) and a review of testing to explore a more inclusive, role-related functional fitness test for operational staff;
- diversity, with a particular focus on the representation of women in the Service as requested by the Committee at its last meeting;
- promoting inclusion, developing strong leaders, living Service values and being a fair place to work;
- grievance, capability and disciplinary issues;
- recruitment and retention (including Pay for Availability benefits); and
- employee engagement.

The Committee welcomed the focus on representation of women in the Service but asked that future reports feature information on the overall picture in relation to diversity and representation within the Service.

*(See also Minute *PC/22/8 below).*

* PC/22/8

Core Competency Performance Review

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Service Delivery (PC/22/11(A)) on the outcome of the review, requested by the Committee at its last meeting, of current performance measures for operational core competency skills.

The report identified the factors impacting on these issues, including that not all operational staff required all core competencies to enable effective and efficient service delivery.

In light of these, it was proposed to amend the competency performance thresholds to:

95% - 100% - Green;

90% - 95% - Amber; and

<90% - Red

and to apply a risk-based impact assessment on failures to meet these thresholds enabling the Committee to contextualise the performance figures in terms of actual impact on front-line services. To facilitate enhanced scrutiny, information would also be provided on any remedial actions proposed to address performance shortfalls.

RESOLVED that the proposal for assessing core competency measures, as identified in Section 3 of report PC/22/11(A) and summarised above, and reporting on this to the Committee be approved.

*(See also Minute *PC/22/7 above).*

* PC/22/9

Gender Pay Gap 2022

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (PC/22/12) to which was appended the latest Gender Pay Gap report for the Service. The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 required all local authority employers with 250 or more employees to publish, annually, statutory calculations showing the pay gap between male and female employees together with a supporting narrative on the organisation's view of the gap and what actions were proposed to address it.

The latest iteration of the Gender Pay Gap indicated that, for the fourth year in a row, the gap was decreasing. The Service recognised, however, that there were still issues to address in terms of recruitment and retention and in this respect the Service had a People Strategy to make diversity and inclusion integral to its business plan.

* PC/22/10

Apprenticeships

The Committee received for information a report of the Head of Learning, Development & Training (PC/22/13) on Service utilisation of the Apprenticeship Levy introduced in 2015.

The Service currently fully utilised apprenticeship levy funds, with a diverse mix of operational and support staff enrolled on programmes. It was anticipated that levy utilisation of £369,547 would be realised over the next twelve months, with the Service receiving income from the apprenticeship provider for the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship, thereby securing savings from using this apprenticeship rather than by using a stand-alone route.

In addition to being the first Service in the country to achieve the Operational Firefighter Apprenticeship, use of the apprenticeship programme generally had assisted the Service in reinforcing inclusive learning for those with neurodiverse needs.

* PC/22/11

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - Action Plan update

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (PC/22/14) outlining progress to date against the Action Plans developed to address both the Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement identified following the most recent Service inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

The Cause for Concern Action Plan had been submitted to HMICFRS by the deadline of 31 August 2022 and delivery of measures to address this was currently on track, as was delivery of measures to address the Areas for Improvement.

In addition to the report, the Committee received a presentation of how progress to address these matters would be monitored (using Sharpcloud software) and was advised that future reports would, in addition to reporting progress against the agreed timeline, also feature commentary on evidence gathered to ascertain effectiveness in addressing the issues identified.

*** DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.30 pm

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

11 November 2022

Present:

Councillors Chesterton (Chair), Biederman (Vice-Chair), Coles (vice Brazil), Cook-Woodman (vice Radford), McGeough, Sully, and Randall-Johnson (vice Partridge)

Apologies:

Councillors Brazil, Partridge and Radford.

* **CSC/22/1** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022 be signed as a correct record.

CSC/22/2 **Strategic Priority 1 and 2 Performance Measures:**

* **a** **Quarter 4 of 2021-22 and Quarters 1 of 2022-23**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/9) on performance by the Service in:

- Quarter 4 of the previous (2021-22) financial year; and
- Quarter 1 of the current financial year (2022-23)

against those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with the following two Strategic Priorities as approved by the Authority for 2021-22 (Minute DSFRA/21/ refers):

Strategic Priority 1: “Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and supporting the local economy”; and

Strategic Priority 2: “Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan”.

The performance status of the Service KPIs was based on the following criteria:

Succeeding	The KPI was achieving its target
Near Target	The KPI is less than 10% away from achieving its target
Needs Improvement	The KPI is at least 10% away from achieving its target

In summary, the report identified that Quarter 4 performance (2021-22) against the KPIs was:

	Succeeding	Near target	Needs improvement
Priority 1	9	8	2
Priority 2	10	4	0

There were 2 Priority 1 KPIs needing improvement in this quarter which related to:

- KPI 1.1.2.1 – the number of dwelling fire fatalities; and
- KPI 1.1.4.1 the number of home fire safety visits completed, which varied from target by 17.1% (14781 completed visits against a the target of 18000). The report identified the main factors behind the ability to deliver the expected level of productivity, together with actions intended to secure performance improvement.

In quarter 1 of 2022-23, the report identified that performance was:

	Succeeding	Near target	Needs improvement
Priority 1	10	8	1
Priority 2	7	6	1

There were 2 KPIs in this quarter needing improvement which related to:

- KPI 1.1.2.1 – the number of dwelling fire fatalities; and
- KPI 2.1.4.2. – percentage of operational risk information in date at level 4.

It was noted that there were exception reports for all 4 of the KPIs which had underperformed as included within the report circulated.

In debating the report, the following points were raised:

- that the fire fatalities in both quarters were due largely to the age and lifestyle choices made by the victims but the Service continued to target resources to individuals most in need via the Home Fire Safety visit programme;
- There was evidence to support the view that performance on fire fatalities was improving as this was based on a five year average and that the preventative work being undertaken was thus succeeding;
- despite being below target in quarter 4 of 2021-22, the number of home fire safety visit had improved as a result of efforts made to improve the productivity of the wholetime staff;
- that, in setting targets for prevention work, it was necessary to balance the quantity of visits undertaken with the quality of outcomes. In general terms, prevention activities were targeted at those groups identified as being most vulnerable;

- the underperformance in quarter 1 of 2022-23 on the percentage of operational risk information in date at level 4 was due largely to the outcome of the Covid-19 pandemic. Action had been taken to temporarily increase the number of inspectors in place following a number of retirements to assist in catching up with the visits.

The Committee commented that it would be helpful if:

- the reporting of the statistics could be consistent as there were differences in the statistics set out in the reports between quarter 4 of 2021-22 and quarter 1 of 2022-23 (such as on hospitalisation of casualties); and
- that a review of the Service’s response times was undertaken to ensure they were fit for purpose. It was noted that current response times were based on the risk to the community as set out within the Authority’s Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This risk information had been cascaded down in Local Risk Management Plans and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer undertook to present information on this to a future meeting of the Committee.

It was noted that there were separate, in depth reports elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting in respect of Home Fire Safety Visits performance and the Fatal Fire Deaths Review.

NB. Minutes CSC/22/2b, CSC/22/3, CSC/22/4 and CSC/22/6 also refer.

* b

Quarter 2 of 2022-23

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/10) on performance by the Service in Quarter 1 of the current financial year (2022-23) against those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with the following two Strategic Priorities as approved by the Authority for 2021-22 (Minute DSFRA/21/ refers):

Strategic Priority 1: “Our targeted prevention and protection activities will reduce the risks in our communities, improving health, safety and wellbeing and supporting the local economy”; and

Strategic Priority 2: “Our operational resources will provide an effective emergency response to meet the local and national risks identified in our Community Risk Management Plan”.

The performance status of the Service KPIs was based on the following criteria:

Succeeding	The KPI was achieving its target
Near Target	The KPI is less than 10% away from achieving its target
Needs Improvement	The KPI is at least 10% away from achieving its target

In summary, the report identified that Quarter 4 performance (2021-22) against the KPIs was:

	Succeeding	Near target	Needs improvement
Priority 1	13	7	2
Priority 2	7	6	1

There were 3 KPIs with a status of “needs improvement” which were:

- KPI 1.1.2.2 – number of dwelling fire fatalities;
- KPI 1.10.1.2. – rate of other primary fire hospitalisations per100,000 of population; and
- KPI 2.1.4.2. – percentage of operational risk information in date at level 4 tactical plans.

In terms of the areas needing improvement, the Director of Service Delivery advised that there had been two dwelling fire fatalities this quarter (KPI 1.1.2.2), both of which involved factors such as age and lifestyle choices. There had been a delay in the response to one of the fatalities due to information on a local road closure not being communicated amongst the watch but action had been taken to ensure this did not happen again. In this case, however, there was evidence to support the point that the delay did not impact on the scale of the fire nor could the fatality have been prevented.

It was noted that, despite the target for percentage of operational risk information in date at level 4 tactical plans needing improvement, there had been a significant improvement since quarter 1 of 2022-23.

In addition, there had been a significant improvement in the delivery of Fire Safety Audits and an increase in target due to the point that the new staff appointed had achieved their qualifications which meant that more detailed audits could be undertaken.

The Committee enquired as to whether there was a national database in place setting out the lessons learned from fatal fires. It was noted that the Service always picked out lessons learned from coroner’s reports and that the National Fire Chiefs’ Council was looking at the provision of a national database currently.

* **CSC/22/3**

Home Fire Safety Visits Performance

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service delivery (CSC/22/11) that set out details of the Service’s Home Fire Safety Visits performance since the previous report to the Committee in February 2022 (Minute CSC/21/14) refers). The report set out the performance in 2022-23, the actions being taken to address the improvement in performance needed and comparisons against the number of accidental dwelling fires from 2012-13 to 2021-22.

It was noted that the target for home fire safety visits in 2022-23 was 18,000 using a combination of operational crews and specialist staff. In the period 1 April 2022 to 30 July 2022, the Service had delivered 6049 home fire safety visits of which 3803 had been delivered by Home Safety Technicians and 2225 by Wholetime operational crews. It was anticipated that the Service was on track to meet the target at the year end.

An independent of Home Fire Safety Visits had been undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire & Rescue Services under prevention activities in 2021-22. There were two areas for improvement, namely:

- The Service needed to evaluate its prevention activity so it understood what worked; and
- Safeguarding training should be provided to all staff.

The Director of Service Delivery assured the Committee that this work was being addressed. The Committee enquired as to the position on data sharing with partners so that the vulnerable in the community could be targeted for home fire safety visits. The Director of Service Delivery replied that there had been some success with data sharing but acknowledged that this was challenging. Reference was also made to a difference in performance between wholetime watches and specialist technicians and the question was raised as to whether there was some resistance to this work being undertaken. The Director of Service Delivery stated that the number of visits undertaken on wholetime stations may vary due to other areas of operational response whereas the technicians were a dedicated resource. The Committee also drew attention to the position on the Equality and Risks Benefit Analysis and requested that a link was included in future reports to this so it was accessible.

Attention was drawn to the position on the Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) App as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report circulated given the high level of investment placed into Information Technology in recent years by the Authority and the point that this work was not being delivered. The Director of Service Delivery replied that there had been discussions at Executive Board level in respect of the performance of the HFSV App and a Corporate Risk had been raised. An external review had been commissioned upon the performance in respect of home fire safety visits together with consideration of the IT capacity issues, the results of which were due very shortly. The Committee requested a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority on 12 December 2022 setting out the issue in depth.

NB. Minute CSC/22/6 below also refers.

* **CSC/22/4 Fatal Fire Deaths Review**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service delivery (CSC/22/12) that set out the process behind fatal fire reviews or significant fires in order to enable the Service to learn from previous incidents and to adapt to future needs.

It was noted that the Service’s target was to reduce fatal fires within Devon & Somerset to zero. The report set out the number of fatal fires within Devon & Somerset since 2013-14 which was 12. This had decreased to 4 in 2018-19 but had since increased in 2021-22 to 6. The Service had commissioned two investigation reports into fire deaths in the South West region to understand the most likely causes and risk factors associated with accidental fire deaths. The first report covered the period 2008-2013 and the second covered 2013-17. Seven risk factors were identified from these two reports with causes of fire changing within this time period. The risk factors were as identified within paragraph 2.5 of report CSC/22/11. The Service was aware that it could not reduce fatal fire deaths without assistance from partners and it was through this avenue that it was able to target its prevention activities towards the most vulnerable in society.

* **CSC/22/5** **Fire Engine Availability**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/22/13) setting out the Service’s performance on fire engine availability covering the period December 2016 to November 2021, together with the latest seven months from December 2021 to June 2022.

The performance reports were split into 3 key areas, namely:

- Standard pump availability (112 appliances);
- Risk prioritised pump availability (56 appliances); and
- risk dependent availability (11 appliances).

The targets set were:

- standard pump availability - a minimum of 85% availability;
- risk prioritised availability - a minimum of 98% availability; and.
- risk dependent availability - to achieve a minimum of 85% availability.

The performance for standard pump availability over the five years from December 2016 to November 2021 with update to June 2022 was:

	Dec-16 to Nov-17	Dec-17 to Nov-18	Dec-18 to Nov-19	Dec-19 to Nov-20	Dec-20 to Nov-21	Dec-21 to Jun-22
First appliance availability	95%	91%	91%	94%	91%	90%
Second appliance availability	71%	65%	65%	73%	76%	70%
Third appliance availability	54%	45%	69%	87%	79%	NA
Overall appliance availability	87%	82%	83%	88%	87%	85%

The table above showed that overall pump availability had now recovered to the level of 5 years ago following a decline through 2017 to 2019. The much improved performance in 2020 reflected the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown periods which enabled many staff to declare availability at time they would not normally have been free.

The Director of Service Delivery advised the Committee that there was a huge programme of work ongoing to increase the recruitment and retention of staff in order to bolster appliance availability. He was confident that any decline in performance had been stabilised and that the work on prioritising recruitment and retention was starting to plug any gaps in availability. Performance had also been impacted in the past by the change in legislation surrounding driving qualifications but work had been instigated to ensure that the required training was available now. It was noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee addressing the Service's risk critical plans in accordance with the CRMP and expectations of HMICFRS.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted as suitable evidence supporting scrutiny of strategic objectives 2a s agreed by the Authority namely:
 - To provide response resources at times and in locations relevant to identified risks of fires and other emergencies;
- (b) That a follow up paper be submitted to the Committee within the next 12 months as part of the forward agenda.

NB. Minute CSC/22/8 below also refers.

* **CSC/22/6**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas For Improvement Action Plan Update

The Committee received for information a report of the Deputy Chief Fire officer (CSC/22/14) setting out the progress that had been made against the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement as set out in the Action Plan appended to the report.

There were two actions directly related to the work of this Committee together with the progress made to date which were set out below, namely:

- HMI-1.-2-202203 – the Service should evaluate its prevention activity so it understands what works – this was in progress; and
- HMI – 1.2-202204 – safeguarding training should be provided to all staff – this had not been started as yet.

NB. Minute CSC/22/3 above also refers.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.57 pm

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RESOURCES COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

23 November 2022

Present:

Councillors Peart (Chair), Drean (Vice-Chair), Long, Sellis and Trail BEM (vice Power).

Apologies:

Councillors Coles and Power.

In attendance:

Councillor McGeough (attended virtually).

* **RC/22/8** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2022 be signed as a correct record.

* **RC/22/9** **Treasury Management Performance 2022-23: Quarter 2**

NB. Adam Burleton, representing Link Asset Services - the Authority's treasury management adviser – was present for this item of business.

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (Treasurer) (RC/22/16) that set out the Authority's performance relating to the second quarter of 2022-23 (to September 2022) in accordance with the Treasury Management in Public Service Code of Practice (published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy {CIPFA}) and the CIPFA Prudential Code. The report set out how this Authority was demonstrating best practice in accordance with these Codes.

During consideration of this item, the following points were noted:

- There had been a further rise in inflation since quarter 1 of 2022-23 which was squeezing economic growth. Inflation was at 11.1% currently and would have been higher but for the action taken by the Government to limit the impact of the rise in energy costs;
- The UK bank base rate rose by over 100 basic points in quarter 2 to 2.25%, rising again on 2 November 2022 to 3%. Further interest rate rises were forecast in December 2022 (3.5%), January 2023 (4%) and expected to peak now at around 4.5% in June 2023 due to the monetary policy instigated. All of the world economies were tightening interest rates in a bid to control spending;
- The situation in China with Covid was impacting supply chains;
- The squeeze on income as a result of the high level of inflation was slowing the economy into recession in 2023 which was likely to last for four quarters;

- Unemployment had fallen from 3.8% in June 2022 to a 48 year low of 3.6% in quarter 2 of 2022-23 with the number of vacancies levelling off from recent record highs. There was little sign of a slowing in the upward trend in wage growth, however, which had risen to 5.5% in July 2022;
- the annual treasury management strategy had continued on a prudent approach, underpinned by investment priorities based on security of capital, liquidity and yield.
- Investment income had improved due to the interest rate rises with an increase to £0.086m (2.35%) generated in quarter 2 of 2022-23, outperforming the new 3-month SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index) benchmark of 1.50% by 0.85bph. SONIA had replaced LIBID at the end of December 2022 and tended to trade at a higher average so it was anticipated that investment returns would outperform the investment target at the year-end;
- None of the Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) had been breached in quarter 2 with external borrowing at 30 September 2022 being £24.711m, forecast to reduce to £24.264m by the end of the financial year with no new borrowing undertaken.

It was noted that the Treasurer had looked at opportunities to review the Authority's early repayment of external borrowing with the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB), however, the early repayment rates and new rates meant there was no financial benefit to be achieved currently. The Service was looking closely at its investments in future and would be bringing forward a strategy to the Committee which may have a more ethical outlook for consideration in due course.

* **RC/22/10** **Financial Performance Report 2022-23: Quarter 2**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (Treasurer) (RC/22/17) that provided the Committee with details of the second quarter performance (to September 2022) against the agreed financial targets for 2022-23.

The Director of Finance, People & Estates (Treasurer) advised that, at this stage in the financial year, it was projected that spending would be £2.442m more than the budget of £77.289m at £79.371m, representing an overspend of 3.16% of total budget. He added that this overspend was lower than anticipated due to the measures implemented by the Executive Board already which included tightening spending against the agreed budget and seeking savings wherever possible.

The drivers for this forecast overspend were largely due (amongst others) to:

- Wholtime pay - as a result of the anticipated pay award for Grey Book staff from 1 July 2022 with 2% budgeted and 5% expected - £0.896m;
- On Call Pay – budget assumptions regarding pension costs, national insurance and holiday pay were understated combined with the impact of a pay award at 5% - £1.876m;

- Professional & technical staff pay – there had been savings generated due to the action taken by Executive Board to freeze vacancies resulting in an underspend of £0.167m initially but this position had moved to a forecast overspend due to the impact of the Green Book pay award - £0.154m;
- Energy costs – overspend of £0.335m;
- Communications equipment - £0.257m - of which £0.118m was because of unfunded increases in Airwave (the national blue light radio scheme) and £0.095m relating to alerter transmitters slippage from 2021/22.

This was offset by underspends in the following areas (amongst others):

- Training - £0.273m;
- Transport, repair and maintenance costs - £0.265m;
- Equipment and furniture - £0.442m.

The Committee noted that it would be asked to consider how it was going to bridge the gap to ensure a balanced budget at the end of the 2022-23 financial year. This was likely to include a recommendation to use the budget smoothing reserve (£0.674m) and pausing the in-year contribution to capital (£1.200m), together with the repurposing of other ring fenced reserves (£0.568m) if the gap was not closed further in the meantime.

The Treasurer advised that the Authority was within its prudential limits for external borrowing with the outstanding debt at £24.711m forecast to reduce to £24.264m as at 31 March 2023. The capital programme was progressing well although there was a forecast overspend of £0.092m largely due to timing differences. The total debtor invoices outstanding at quarter 2 totalled £0.801m of which £0.464m related to Red One Ltd.

The Committee expressed concern at the impact of the £0.118m unfunded increases in Airwave (the national blue light radio scheme) costs (9.5% increase when budgeted for 1.47%) and the associated reduction in Firelink grant which was being phased out over 5 years starting in 2022-23. It was suggested that Government should be lobbied on the reduction in grant whereupon:

Councillor Sellis **MOVED** (seconded by Councillor Peart):

“that the Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee of the Local Government Association be requested to lobby the Government on the reduction in grant for Airwave costs”.

Upon a vote, this was **CARRIED** unanimously.

Attention was drawn to the point that there may be a need to increase the number of counselling sessions paid for by the Service which was currently limited to 6 in order to encourage an early return to work for staff with mental health issues. The Treasurer replied that 6 sessions had been agreed with the Occupational Health provider as the number in which it was reasonably expected that such issues could be resolved. The Service could request extensions in individual cases but urged caution on extending this as a blanket approach. The Chief Fire Officer added that this was an issue for the People Committee to consider and he indicated he would refer the matter accordingly.

Reference was also made to the position on the cap on increases in Council Tax in 2023-34 announced in the recent mini Budget. The Chief Fire Officer reported that it was understood that the cap had been increased to 3% for the 2023-24 budget but this would only amount to approximately £0.500m of extra funding for the Fire & Rescue Authority which was insufficient to bridge the expected budget deficit. He added that, with pay increases circa 5% expected in future years, action was being taken to lobby local Members of Parliament for the flexibility to increase the council tax beyond 3%. The Treasurer added that this was critical when combined with the high levels of inflation and associated price increases on energy and vehicle leasing costs currently being experienced.

The Committee welcomed the action being taken by the Service to manage the budget deficit on the 2022-23 revenue budget and expressed thanks to everyone involved.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the Chair of the Fire Services Management Committee of the Local Government Association be requested to lobby the Government on the reduction in grant for Airwave costs;
- (b). Subject to (a) above, the report be noted.

* RC/22/11

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.) be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved 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.

* **RC/22/12** **Red One Limited Financial Performance 2022-23: Quarter 2**

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).

The Committee received for information a report of the Co-Chief Executives and the Finance Director of Red One Ltd. (RC/22/18) on the financial performance of the company during quarter two of the 2022-23 financial year.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.25 pm

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Agenda Item 8

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/21
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES 2022-23 MUNICIPAL YEAR
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the Authority determines appointments committees, the Term of Office to be until the Authority annual meeting in 2023</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	This report advises a change in appointees to the Authority from Plymouth City Council and invites the Authority to determine appointments to its committees so as to maintain political proportionality across all committees.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Nil.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUE

- 1.1. The Authority has been advised by Plymouth City Council that, to address political proportionality issues for that Council, Councillor Philip Partridge (Conservative) has been replaced on the Authority by Councillor Mary Aspinall (Labour) with effect from 21 November 2022. This has resulted in a vacancy on both the Audit & Governance and Community Safety Committees.
- 1.2. Standing Order 30(1) provides that, in filling Committee vacancies, the Authority will take account of the political proportionality principles as set out in Section 15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Simply appointing Councillor Aspinall to the committee places previously held by Councillor Partridge would alter the political balance on the two committees to the extent that the balance would not reflect the political balance on the Authority.
- 1.3. The Authority is therefore asked to determine changes to appointments to its committees for the remainder of the current municipal year to fill the two vacancies and reflect political proportionality across the committees. To assist the Authority, the following is advanced as one way of achieving this.
- a. an existing Conservative place (Councillor McGeough) on the Resources Committee is taken by Councillor Aspinall;
 - b. Councillor McGeough fills the vacancy on the Audit & Governance Committee; and
 - c. Councillor Drean (Con) fills the vacancy on the Community Safety Committee.
- 1.4. It is understood that Councillors McGeough and Drean have indicated their agreement to these changes.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services

Agenda Item 9

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/22
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS TO THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the Authority approves the proposed Term of Office as set out in Section 2 of this report for independent co-opted members appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>At its meeting on 26 September 2022, the Authority was advised of the recommendation in the CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 that the membership of audit committees of relevant authorities (including combined fire and rescue authorities) should include at least two independent co-opted members. The Authority was also advised of its legal powers to appoint co-opted members to Committees or Sub-Committees, subject to such co-opted members not exercising a vote (Report DSFRA/22/20 refers).</p> <p>The Authority resolved, amongst other things, to authorise the Clerk to undertake an appropriate process to identify suitable candidates, with the actual appointment delegated to the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee (Minute DSFRA/22/20 refers).</p> <p>This paper sets out other considerations relating to these appointments, in particular the term of office to be served.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Not applicable.
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Report DSFRA/22/20 (Appointment of Independent Members to the Audit & Governance Committee) to the Authority meeting on 26 September 2022 (and the Minutes of that meeting).</p> <p>The UK Corporate Governance Code</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. At its last meeting the Authority was advised of the recommendation in the CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 that the membership of audit committees of relevant authorities (including combined fire and rescue authorities) should include at least two independent co-opted members. The Authority was also advised of its legal powers to appoint co-opted members to Committees or Sub-Committees, subject to such co-opted members not exercising a vote (Report DSFRA/22/20 refers).
- 1.2. The Authority resolved, amongst other things, to authorise the Clerk to undertake an appropriate process to identify suitable candidates, with the actual appointment delegated to the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee (Minute DSFRA/22/20 refers).
- 1.3. This paper sets out other considerations relating to these appointments, in particular the term of office to be served.

2. PROPOSED TERM OF OFFICE FOR INDEPENDENT CO-OPTED MEMBERS ON THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- 2.1. While legislation allows for the Authority to appoint co-opted members to its Committees or Sub-Committees (subject to such co-opted members not exercising a vote), neither the legislation nor the CIPFA Position Statement (dealing specifically with the appointment of independent, co-opted members to audit committees) is prescriptive as to the term of office for such appointments. Consequently, it is suggested that this is a matter for the appointing authority to determine.
- 2.2. In determining the term of office, there are a number of factors that should be considered – in particular, issues relating to when someone may no longer be considered “independent” in terms of exercising their role together with practical considerations linked to seeking new or re-appointments.
- 2.3. To assist with this, consideration has been given to guidance contained in the UK Corporate Governance Code (the Code) produced by the Financial Reporting Council in relation to the appointment and term of office for non-executive directors. This Code provides that non-executive directors should, amongst other things, provide challenge and hold management to account. This is consistent with the requirements for the independent co-opted member role on audit committees as envisaged in the CIPFA Position Statement.
- 2.4. In terms of maintaining independence, the Code recommends that non-executive directors should serve for a maximum of nine years from the date of initial appointment, with re-appointment confirmed each year at the company annual general meeting.
- 2.5. Applying this to the appointment of two independent, co-opted Members to the Authority’s Audit & Governance Committee:

- The Authority has already resolved that the initial appointment be delegated to the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee;
- It is now proposed that:
 - the maximum term of office should be nine years; and
 - following initial appointment, re-appointment should be confirmed at each subsequent Authority annual meeting (subject to the maximum term of office).

2.6. Given that the initial appointments have yet to be made, it is also proposed that the first re-appointment should be confirmed by the Authority annual meeting in 2024.

2.7. It is also proposed that, in addition to the requirement for annual re-appointment, there should also be flexibility either for the Authority or post-holder to terminate the appointment at any time on providing one month's written notice.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1. The Authority has previously approved the appointment of two independent co-opted members to serve on its Audit & Governance Committee, in accordance with the recommendation recommendation in the CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022.

3.2. The paper identifies other considerations in relation to these appointments, particularly in regard to the term of office of the appointees.

3.3. The Authority is asked to consider this report with a view to approving the term of office for independent co-opted members of the Audit & Governance Committee, as set out in Section 2.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/23
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – INCREASE IN RATES FOR 2022-23 FINANCIAL YEAR
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the contents of this report be considered and the increase to be applied to Members' Allowances for the current (2022-23) financial year determined.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>At its meeting on 10 November 2021, the Authority approved the Scheme of Members' Allowances to apply for the current (2022-23) financial year (Minute DSFRA/21/30 refers). In addition to setting the rate for the basic and special responsibility allowances, the Scheme also provided for these rates to be increased in line with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the "Green Book").</p> <p>This report identifies the Green Book pay award for 2022-23 and sets out the factual implications of this in relation to any increase in Members' Allowances.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	As set out in Section 3 of this report.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	None
BACKGROUND PAPERS	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003

1. **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) provide, among other things, that the Authority must, for each financial year, approve a Scheme of Allowances specifying:
- (a) the rate of basic allowance payable to all Members;
 - (b) the rate of any special responsibility allowance (SRA) as may have been approved by the Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations; and
- 1.2. The Regulations also provide that the rates of basic and special responsibility allowance may be adjusted annually by reference to an index as approved by the Authority.
- 1.3. The current scheme of Members' Allowances provides that both basic and special responsibility allowances should be updated annually in line with pay increases agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (the "Green Book").
- 1.4. A 2% increase was assumed for the NJC Green Book pay award when setting the 2022-23 budget.

2. **CURRENT ALLOWANCE RATES**

- 2.1. The rates of allowance currently payable are shown in the following table:

Annual Allowance	£
Basic Allowance	2,835
<i>Special Responsibility Allowances</i>	
- Authority Chair (5 x basic)	14,175
- Authority Vice-Chair	7,036
- Committee Chair	4,172
- Authority-appointed non-executive director to the Board of Red One Ltd.	6,415
- Member of Local Pensions Board (0.15 x basic)	425
<i>Co-optees Allowances</i>	
- Independent Employer Representative appointed to Local Pensions Board	508.75
- Independent Person as per Localism Act 2011 (note: allowance payable for each standards issue dealt with)	101.75
- Independent co-opted member appointed to Audit & Governance Committee (0.5 x basic)	1,417.50

3. **NJC PAY AWARD 2022-23**

- 3.1. The agreed Green Book pay award for the current (2022-23) financial year is for a flat-rate of £1,925 on all national NJC spinal column pay points. For the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service), this equates to:
- a 10% increase for employees on national NJC spinal column point 4 – the lowest spinal column point for Grades currently used by the Service;

- a 4.04% increase for employees on the top spinal column point (point 43) of the national NJC scale; and
- a 3.087% increase for employees on the top of the Service scale (spinal column point 55).

3.2. The agreed Green Book pay award is backdated to 1 April 2022.

3.3. In relation to approved 2022-23 Members' allowances budget:

- application of the flat-rate increase of £1,925 to the current basic Members' allowance would represent an increase of 67.9%;
- a 10% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £9,810;
- a 4.04% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £2,338; and
- a 3.087% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £1,143.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Regulations provide for the Authority to approve a Scheme of Members' Allowances to apply in each financial year. The Authority's current approved Scheme of Members' Allowances provides for an automatic annual uprating in line with the Green Book pay award.

4.2 The Green Book pay award for 2022-23 and implications of application of this to Members' Allowances are identified in Section 3 above.

4.3 The Authority is asked to consider the contents of this report and determine what increase it would wish to apply in relation to allowances payable in the current (2022-23) financial year.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/24
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2023-24
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>(a). <i>that the Authority confirms its Scheme of Allowances to operate for the 2023-24 financial year, including the rates of basic and special responsibility allowances as set out in Table 1 of Section 2 of this report (amended as necessary to reflect any decisions on increases to basic, special and co-optees allowances payable in 2022-23) and the rates for reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenditure as indicated in Tables 2 and 3;</i></p> <p>(b). <i>that it be noted that the Scheme provides for annual uprating of allowances in accordance with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the "Green Book"); and</i></p> <p>(c). <i>that the Clerk to the Authority be authorised to publicise details of the Scheme so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Regulations require the Authority to have in place its own Scheme for the payment of a basic allowance to each of its Members. The Authority may also provide for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances and reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenditure.</p> <p>The Regulations also require the details of any such Schemes to be confirmed and published by the Authority for each financial year in question.</p> <p>Elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting is a report addressing increases to the rates of allowances approved for 2022-23.</p> <p>This report details allowances currently payable (subject to any increases as may be agreed) and invites the Authority to confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2023-24 financial year.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	<p>Provision will be made within the Revenue Budget 2023-24 for the payment of allowances at the rates approved, together with any percentage increase based on the anticipated pay award for staff conditioned to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services ("the Green Book").</p>

EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	<u>The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003</u>

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) provide, among other things, that the Authority must, for each financial year, approve a Scheme of Allowances specifying:
 - (a). the rate of basic allowance payable to all Members;
 - (b). the rate of any special responsibility allowance (SRA) as may have been approved by the Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations; and
 - (c). the rates of travel and subsistence reimbursements as may have been approved by the Authority.
- 1.2. The Regulations also provide that the rates of basic and special responsibility allowance may be adjusted annually by reference to an index as approved by the Authority, subject to this indexing applying for a maximum of four years before seeking a further recommendation for an independent remuneration panel.
- 1.3. Unlike principal authorities (e.g. county and district councils), this Authority is not required to have its own independent remuneration panel but instead is required, when approving its Scheme, to have regard to any recommendations as may be made by the independent remuneration panels of its constituent authorities in relation to allowances payable by those authorities.
- 1.4. In practice, this Authority has commissioned, every four years, an independent review of its Scheme of Allowances. This review takes account of any recommendations made by the independent remuneration panels of the constituent authorities together with allowances paid by other combined fire and rescue authorities.
- 1.5. The last review was undertaken in late 2019 to inform allowances payable up to and including the 2023-24 financial year. The Authority approved the recommendation of that review that both basic and special responsibility allowances be uprated annually in line with pay increases agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, but that this uprating should only be applied from 1 April 2021 (Minute DSFRA/40(h), budget meeting held on 18 February 2020 refers). The Authority subsequently resolved that this annual uprating should also apply to any co-optee allowances payable under the Scheme (Minute DSFRA/64(d), Authority meeting 16 December 2020 refers).

2. CURRENT ALLOWANCE RATES

- 2.1. The rates of allowance currently payable are shown in Table 1 overleaf:

Annual Allowance	£
Basic Allowance	2,835
Special Responsibility Allowances	
- Authority Chair (5 x basic)	14,175
- Authority Vice-Chair	7,036
- Committee Chair	4,172
- Authority-appointed non-executive director to the Board of Red One Ltd.	6,415
- Member of Local Pensions Board (0.15 x basic)	425
Co-optees Allowances	
- Independent Person as per Localism Act 2011 (note: allowance payable for each standards issue dealt with)	101.75
- Independent Employer Representative appointed to Local Pensions Board	508.75
- Independent co-opted member appointed to Audit & Governance Committee (0.5 x basic)	1,417.50

- 2.2. It should also be noted that, under the Scheme, only one SRA is payable (at the highest rate), irrespective of how many qualifying posts an individual Member may hold.
- 2.3. As previously referenced, the Scheme also provides that the rates as set out in Table 1 above should be uprated automatically in accordance with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the “Green Book”). Elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting is a report addressing proposed increases to the approved 2022-23 scheme stemming from the approved Green Book pay award for that financial year.
- 2.4. The Authority is asked to confirm the rates of basic and special responsibility allowances to be payable in 2023-24 as set out in Table 1 and amended as necessary to reflect any previous decision relating to increases stemming from the approved 2022-23 Green Book pay award.

3. REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES

- 3.1. The Allowances Scheme also provides for the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses as shown in Tables 2 and 3 overleaf.

Table 2 - Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

	<i>Rate per mile</i>	
	<i>First 10,000 miles</i>	<i>Above 10,000 miles</i>
Cars	45p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p

- 5p per passenger per mile (up to 4 passengers);
- 20p per mile bicycle allowance

- 3.2. The annual uprating mechanism for reimbursement of travel expenses is by reference to rates published by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC). It should be noted that “home-to-Service Headquarters” journeys are classified by HMRC as taxable, with any tax element being deducted at source.

Table 3 - Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Subsistence Expenses

Breakfast	£7.00
Lunch	£10.00
Tea	£4.00
Evening meal - if returning home after 8.00pm	£12.00
Evening meal - if staying overnight	£22.00

- 3.3. The rates payable for subsistence expenses are referenced to the rates and conditions on reimbursement of expenses as per Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service employees in force at the time.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1. The Authority Scheme was last subject to a major review in 2019 to inform the Scheme to operate for the financial years up to and including 2023-24. The next major review should take place in 2023 to allow sufficient time to inform the 2024-25 budget setting process.
- 4.2. The Authority is asked to consider this report and in accordance with the relevant Regulations to:
- (a). confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2023-24 financial year;
 - (b). authorise the Clerk to the Authority to publish the rates so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/25
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	DIGITAL SERVICES: STRATEGIC OUTLINE CASE – PROGRESS UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>that the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The paper advises the Authority on progress in developing a Target Operating Model and specifically on options for digital transformation which will be a key enabler to maximise technological advances within available resources.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	To be determined as part of the Outline Business Case discussions.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	To be determined as part of the Outline Business Case discussions.
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service) is not immune to the increased pressures on the public sector. There is uncertainty as to future Government Grant settlement and forecasted rates of inflation will create additional pressures. Therefore, it is prudent for the Service to review how it operates to ensure it is prepared for a funding gap on a scale not seen in recent years.
- 1.2. Following a commission by the Executive Board, the Service Leadership Team is developing a target operating model to ensure the Service is effective, efficient, and economically sustainable for the future. This work includes consideration of alternative service delivery vehicles (ASDV) for some elements of professional services. The digital services function is one of those areas being considered. At its core, the Service needs to ensure it has an operating model that:
- Is affordable both now and in the future;
 - Provides the core services of Service Delivery effectively; and
 - Keeps communities safe.

2. KEY OBJECTIVES AND FACTORS FOR SUCCESS

- 2.1. The key objective of the Strategic Outline Case is to determine the options for transformation of digital services provision for the Service. The options are being appraised against the following critical business factors:
- Time to achieve the desired state** - The Service is expecting a significant funding gap in its budget next year. It is imperative that any decisions to transform services are taken at the earliest opportunity to ensure good planning and benefits realisation can be achieved, therefore time of delivery is a key consideration in the decision-making process.
- Quality of Service** – The ability of digital services function to maintain quality products and services against organisational requirements is a key driver for success.
- Efficiency and Economic** – A future model must be both effective and efficient as the Service needs to have financial viability for the longer term.
- 2.2. The functions in scope for consideration are:
- Digital strategic leadership
 - Data Management (architecture and exploitation)
 - Information Governance
 - Application development and management
 - Infrastructure and hardware

3. STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND CASE FOR CHANGE

- 3.1. In addition to the difficult national financial situation, the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) identifies the services that must be delivered to keep communities safe. The Service must ensure it is agile enough to respond to these changes.
- 3.2. The Authority has been advised that the Executive Board (the most senior team within the Service) has initiated work to determine a Target Operating Model for the future. This model is specifically focused how the Service will, through professional and technical services, maximise Service Delivery effort (prevention, protection, response and resilience) to best protect the public. Digital transformation will be a key enabler in this process to maximise technological advances within available resources.
- 3.3. It should be noted that this Target Operating Model does not include changes to the number of fire stations or fire engines - that is a matter for consideration within the Community Risk Management Plan process and is subject to public consultation as and when changes are proposed.
- 3.4. In determining the future Target Operating Model, the Service is acutely aware of the financial resources likely to be available and the need to focus time, effort and resource in areas of greatest need.
- 3.5. The Service also has a change and improvement agenda, informed by, amongst other things, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS). This change agenda will remain at the forefront of Service improvement objectives. As such, there may be significant changes that are presented, some of which will require Authority consideration.
- 3.6. A number of functions are being reviewed including the digital services function to ensure that the strategy, activity and delivery elements are within the financial affordability envelope and meet the requirements of the organisation.
- 3.7. Using the HM Treasury 5 Case Model, a Strategic Outline Case is being developed which considers a number of options: do nothing; internal transformation; partnership/shared service models and full outsourcing. The options will address some of the recent findings into the review of the Home Fire Safety Visits App, which has been subject to Member scrutiny through the Community Safety Committee.
- 3.8. A subsequent report will be provided in early 2023 which will inform, and be informed by, the future financial context that will become clearer at that stage.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. From the options in the Strategic Outline Case, a shortlist of options will be worked up in detail to inform an Outline Business Case. This will be completed by 31 January 2023 and presented to the Authority as soon as is practicable.

LEE HOWELL
Chief Fire Officer

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