

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
(Ordinary Meeting)

12 June 2023

Present:

Councillors Atkinson, Best, Biederman (Vice Chair), Brazil, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Chair), Fellows, Gilmour, Hendy, Kendall, Kerley, Patel, Peart, Power, Radford, Randall-Johnson, Roome, Sellis, Slade, Sully, Tolchard and Trail BEM

Apologies:

Councillor Sproston

DSFRA/23/7 Addresses by Representative Bodies

The Authority received addresses from the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) and the Fire and Rescue Services' Association (FRSA) giving an overview of their representatives and purpose for information.

DSFRA/23/8 Minutes of Committees

a **Appointments & Disciplinary Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Randall Johnson, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meetings held on 3 April and 26 May 2023, which had considered, amongst other things:

3 April 2023

- The temporary appointment of a new Chief Fire Officer;

26 May 2023

- The temporary appointment of a new Assistant Chief Fire Officer; and
- The temporary appointment of a new Assistant Director.

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

b **Audit & Governance Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brazil, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023, which had considered, amongst other things:

- The internal audit progress report for 2022-23;
- the proposed 2023-24 internal audit plan;
- an update on the progress made against His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement Action Plan; and

- the external auditor's annual report for 2021-22;

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

c **People Committee**

The Vice Chair of the Committee, Councillor Clayton, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023, which had considered, amongst other things:

- An application for retirement and/or re-employment;
- An update for quarter 4 of 2023-24 on performance against those Key Performance Indicators associated with the Authority's strategic priorities, notably 3. (a), (b), and (c);
- a report on workforce and recruitment diversity for 2022;
- a report on the work undertaken within the Service on people and culture issues; and
- an update on the progress made against His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement Action Plan areas within the remit of this Committee.

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

d **Community Safety Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2023, which had considered, amongst other things:

- An update for quarter 4 of 2023-24 on performance against those Key Performance Indicators associated with the Authority's strategic priorities, notably Priority 1 and 2; and
- an update on the progress made against His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement Action Plan within the remit of this Committee.

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

e **Resources Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2022 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on Treasury Management performance for quarter 4 of 2022-23 together with an annual report for the 2022-23 financial year;
- a report on the provisional financial outturn 2022-23;

- a proposed revision to the Capital Programme 2023-234 to 2025-26;
- a report on the proposed Reserves Strategy for 2023-24;
- an update on the progress made against His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Areas for Improvement Action Plan within the remit of this Committee; and
- a report on Red One Ltd. financial performance for the 2022-23 financial year.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the recommendation at Minute RC/23/24 (Provisional Financial Outturn 2022-23) that the provisional overspend position of £0.0947m be funded from a reduction in the Revenue Contribution to Capital; an element (£0.225m) also to be transferred to the General Reserve to ensure it was within 5% of the revenue budget for 2023-24 be approved;
- (b). that the recommendation at Minute RC/22/25 (Revision to Capital Programme 2023-24 to 2025-26) be approved;
- (c). That the recommendation at Minute RC/22/26 (Reserves Strategy) be considered in conjunction with the report at DSFRA/23/15; and
- (d). that, subject to (a). and (c). above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minute DSFRA/23/9 below).

DSFRA/23/9 Reserves Strategy 2023-24

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Finance, People & Estates (Treasurer) (DSFRA/23/15) on its Reserves Strategy which it was required from 2018 to prepare and publish in accordance with the Fire & Rescue National Framework for England. The Strategy covered the purpose of each Earmarked Reserve, an analysis of the General Reserve and the expected timing of expenditure from the Reserve.

RESOLVED that the Reserves Strategy 2023-24 be approved for publication.

(Minute DSFRA/23/8e above also refers)

DSFRA/23/10 Executive Board Pay and Associated Revised Pay Policy Statement 2023-24

The Authority considered a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer and Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/16) giving an overview of the new Executive Board structure and setting out associated proposals to increase the salary of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) to Grade 4 on the approved scale and to set the salary for the newly appointed Assistant Director of Finance & Corporate Services to Grade 1 on the approved scale.

The report also set out a revised Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24 which was required under section 38(1) of the Localism 2011 to reflect these changes should the associated salary increases be approved.

Additionally, the National Joint Council for Brigade Managers of Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services (the Gold Book) had now agreed the annual cost of living rise for both 2022 and 2023. These changes were also reflected in the revised Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix B of report DSFRA/22/16.

RESOLVED

- (a). that an increase in the salary of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) to Grade 4 within the approved pay scale at Executive Board level be approved with effect from 9 May 2023;
- (b). that the salary of the Assistant Director of Finance & Corporate Services be set at Grade 1 within the approved pay scale at Executive Board level with effect from 12 June 2023;
- (c). that the associated pay changes arising out of the Gold Book pay award for both 2022 and 2023 be noted; and
- (d). Subject to (a). to (c). above, the consequential amendments to the Pay Policy Statement for 2023-24 as attached at Appendix B of report DSFRA/23/16 be approved for publication.

DSFRA/23/11 Authority Appointed Non-Executive Director of the Board of Red One Ltd.

NB. Councillor Radford declared a personal, non pecuniary interest at this point by virtue of his being an Authority appointed Non-Executive Director on the Board of Red One Ltd. and left the meeting.

The Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/17) on the proposal to delegate authority to establish and undertake a process to appoint a suitable candidate for the vacancy of Authority Appointed Non-Executive Director on the Board of Red one Ltd. This vacancy had arisen recently due to Councillor Shayer not being re-appointed to the Authority in 2023-24.

Following a brief debate, Councillor Peart (seconded by Councillor Trail BEM) **MOVED** the recommendations as set out at (a) and (b) of report DSFRA/23/17, whereupon Councillor Roome (seconded by Councillor Patel) **MOVED** an amendment to part (b) of the recommendations (which was duly accepted by Councillor Peart):

“that the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee be delegated authority to carry out the process to identify appropriate candidates and make a recommendation thereon to the Authority”.

Upon a vote on the amendment above, the Motion was declared **LOST**.

Councillor Randall Johnson stated that the Authority needed to have confidence in the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee to make this appointment whereupon she **MOVED** an amendment (seconded by Councillor Trail BEM) that the recommendations as set out in report (DSFRA/23/17) which, upon a vote, was declared **CARRIED**.

Upon the substantive vote on the motion to approve the recommendations set out in report DSFRA/23/17, this was declared **CARRIED** whereupon it was:

RESOLVED

- (a). That, in accordance with the Articles of Association of Red One Ltd., the Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority be authorised to undertake a process to identify appropriate candidates for the vacancy of Authority Appointed Non-Executive Director on the Board of Red One Ltd.; and
- (b). the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee be delegated authority to determine the eventual appointment.

DSFRA/23/12 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/23/13 Red One Ltd. Annual General Meeting 2023

(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 on company activities and its accounts to the year ending 31 March 2023; and
- the business objectives and forecast for the company to 31 March 2024; and
- a review of the pay of the Independent Chair of the Board of Red One Ltd. in line with a recommendation made by the Board's Remuneration Committee.

NB. The Chair of the Board of Red One Ltd. left the meeting during discussion on the review of salary.

At the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting, the Authority thanked the Board of Red One Ltd. for the information presented following which it was:

RESOLVED

- (a). that the pay of the Independent Chair of the Board of Red One Ltd. be increased in line with the recommendation made by the Board's Remuneration Committee; and
- (b). subject to (a). above, the information presented during the Annual General Meeting of the Authority's commercial trading company, Red One Ltd. be noted.

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