



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

E. Jackman
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/EJ/SY
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 15 September 2023
Please ask for : Steve Yates
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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

Monday, 25th September, 2023

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, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Exeter** to consider the following matters.

E. Jackman
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

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

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes**
 - a Annual General Meeting - 12 June 2023** (Pages 1 - 6)
Attached.
 - b Ordinary Meeting - 12 June 2023** (Pages 7 - 12)
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 20 September 2023.**

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 Audit & Governance Committee (Pages 13 - 18)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Coles, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2023.

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

b People Committee (Pages 19 - 24)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Clayton, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2023.

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

c Resources Committee (Pages 25 - 30)

The Vice Chair of the Committee, Councillor Best, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2023.

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

d Community Safety Committee (Pages 31 - 36)

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Hendy, to **MOVE** the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2023.

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

8 Appointment of Monitoring Officer (Pages 37 - 46)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/23/19) attached.

9 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies (Pages 47 - 48)

Report of the Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/20) attached.

10 Extraordinary Authority Meeting to Consider the DELT Shared Services Business Case (Pages 49 - 52)

Report of the Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/21) attached.

11 His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection:

a Action Plan Update (Pages 53 - 60)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/23/22) attached.

b Culture Recommendations - Update (Pages 61 - 66)

Report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/23/23) attached.

12 Exclusion of the Press and Public

RECOMMENDATION that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following Paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act:

- Paragraph 3 (information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person – including the authority holding that information);

13 Restricted Minutes of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Ordinary Meeting held on 12 June 2023 (Pages 67 - 68)

Attached.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Cook-Woodman (Chair), Biederman (Vice Chair), Atkinson, Best, Brazil, Chesterton, Clayton, Coles, Fellows, Gilmour, Hendy, Kendall, Kerley, Patel, Peart, Power, Radford, Randall-Johnson, Roome, Sellis, Slade, Sproston, Sully, Tolchard 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.	<p><u>Part 2 Reports</u></p> <p>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.</p>
5.	<p><u>Substitute Members (Committee Meetings only)</u></p> <p>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.</p>
6.	<p><u>Other Attendance at Committees)</u></p> <p>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.</p>

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DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

(Annual General Meeting)

12 June 2023

Present:

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

Apologies:

Councillor Sproston

DSFRA/23/1 Election of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor Cook-Woodman be elected Chair of the Authority until its next annual meeting in 2024.

DSFRA/23/2 Election of Vice Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor Biederman be elected Vice Chair of the Authority until its next annual meeting in 2024.

DSFRA/23/3 Minutes

a **Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Minutes (Budget Meeting) held on 15 February 2023 (attached)**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Budget meeting held on 15 February 2023 be signed as a correct record.

b **Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (Extraordinary Meeting) held on 19 April 2023 (attached)**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 19 April 2023 be signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/23/4 Review of Constitutional Governance Framework

The Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/12) on the latest review of the Authority's constitutional governance framework documents. The report identified each of the documents (e.g., Standing Orders; Financial Regulations; Scheme of Delegations) comprising the framework. While all the documents had been subject to review to correct any minor, inconsequential amendments, more substantial revisions had been made to some of the documents as identified in the appendices to the report.

During the discussion on this item, Councillor Atkinson **MOVED** (seconded by Councillor Coles):

“that all constitutional documents should use gender neutral terminology and specifically the term “Chair” and Vice Chair” of the Authority”.

Upon a vote, this motion was declared **CARRIED**.

RESOLVED

- (a). that the following be approved:
 - (i). those changes to the Financial Regulations as highlighted in Appendix A to the report, subject to amendment of:
 - A. paragraph B.1 on page 36 to take out “Fire and Rescue Plan” from the list of bullet points”; and
 - B. paragraph C.7 on page 40 to update the title of “Secretary of State for the Environment” to the correct title; and
 - (ii). Those changes to the Scheme of Delegations highlighted at Appendix B of the report, subject to amendment of:
 - A. “Somerset County Council” to “Somerset Council” in the third paragraph on page 50; and
 - B. the term “IRMP” to “CRMP” wherever needed in the document to be consistent with new terminology.
 - (iii). Those changes to the Committee Terms of Reference as highlighted at Appendix C to the report; and
 - (iv). The use in all constitutional documents of gender neutral terminology and specifically the term “Chair” and Vice Chair” of the Authority;
- (b). that the Clerk be authorised to publish all revised constitutional governance framework documents on the website; and

DSFRA/23/5 Schedule of Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

The Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/13) to which was appended a schedule of proposed Authority appointments to committees etc. and outside bodies for the 2023-24 municipal year (i.e. until the next Authority annual meeting).

RESOLVED

- (a). that the following appointments be made to Authority Committees etc. and outside bodies, the term of office to be until the Authority’s next annual meeting unless otherwise indicated:

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (9 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Cook Woodman	Sully	Gilmour	
Power	Coles		
Slade	Roome		
Sellis			
Fellows			

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Chesterton	Kerley	Hendy	
Pat Patel	Brazil		
Power			
Radford			

PEOPLE COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Clayton	Kendall	Atkinson	Biederman
Peart			
Tolchard			
Trail BEM			

RESOURCES COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Power	Sully	Gilmour	
Slade	Best		
Peart (Chair)			
Fellows			

APPOINTMENTS & DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE (4 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Randall-Johnson	Best	Hendy	
Cook-Woodman			

APPEALS COMMITTEE (4 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Power	Roome	Sproston	Biederman

(NB. Membership must differ from that of the Appointments & Disciplinary Committee)

SCHEME MANAGER APPOINTMENTS TO LOCAL PENSIONS BOARD

Councillor Trail BEM

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MEMBER CHAMPION

Councillor Trail BEM

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY MEMBER CHAMPION

Councillor Kendall

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA)

(a) Fire Commission

Councillors Cook-Woodman and Coles

(b) General Assembly

Councillor Cook-Woodman

SOUTH WEST COUNCILS

Councillor Cook-Woodman

SOUTH WEST PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Councillor Clayton

- (a). that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the following appointments be made to Committee Chair and Vice Chair positions until the Authority's next annual meeting in 2024:

Audit & Governance Committee

Chair Councillor Coles

Vice-Chair Councillor Slade

Community Safety Committee

Chair Councillor Hendy

Vice-Chair Councillor Chesterton

People Committee

Chair Councillor Clayton

Vice-Chair Councillor Trail BEM

Resources Committee

Chair Councillor Peart

Vice-Chair Councillor Best

Appointments & Disciplinary Committee

Chair Authority Chair

Vice-Chair – appointment not made

Appeals Committee

Chair – appointment not made

DSFRA/23/6 Draft Calendar of Meetings 2023-24

The Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/23/14) to which was appended a draft Authority Calendar of Meetings for the 2023-24 municipal year.

RESOLVED that the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2023-24 be approved.

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

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.35 am

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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 Act 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**

The Meeting started at 11.35 am and finished at 1.35 pm

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

21 July 2023

Present:

Councillors Coles (Chair), Cook-Woodman, Fellows, Sellis, Slade (Vice-Chair), Sproston (vice Gilmour) and Sully,

Independent, Co-opted Members:

Messrs. Perks and Turkington

Apologies:

Councillors Power and Roome

* **AGC/23/1** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 be signed as a correct record.

* **AGC/23/2** **External Audit Progress and Sector Update**

The Committee received, for information, an external audit progress report and sector update from Grant Thornton (the Authority's external auditor) covering, amongst other areas:

- A summary of emerging national and sector issues and developments relevant to the fire & rescue service;
- An update on progress made up to July 2023;
- The audit deliverables for 2022-23; and
- The 2022-23 audit fees.

Barrie Morris, representing Grant Thornton, advised the Committee that the Audit Plan would normally have been submitted to the Committee at this stage but audit work had been delayed and thus, this would be submitted to the September 2023 meeting. It was anticipated that the audit opinion would now be submitted to the Committee by the end of February 2024. The Clerk advised that she was liaising with the external auditor in respect of the potential need to re-arrange the date of the January 2024 meeting of the Committee in light of this information.

It was noted that representations had been made to Parliament in respect of the backlog in external audit of local authority financial statements and that the publication of a disclaimer was under consideration. Given this was the last of the five years of the PSAA contract, Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority would move to a new external auditor for the 2023-24 financial statements.

The external auditor further advised of a change in the published fee for the 2022-23 audit which would be reduced by £5,000 to £52,380.

Mr Perks, Independent Co-opted member of the Committee asked the Treasurer how confident he was in ensuring the delivery of the financial statements for auditing by the deadline of the end of July 2023 given there was a small Finance Team in place. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) reassured the Committee that the Finance Team had to cope with the consolidation of accounts of Red One Ltd. for the first time in 2021-22 which had been challenging and lessons had been learned but he was more confident with production in the second round.

Mr Perks further questioned how the Treasurer would achieve segregation of his roles given his newly extended remit. The Treasurer replied that he had the benefit of a deputy now with the appointment of Maria Phillips as Assistant Director of Corporate Services picking up Risk and the Portfolio Office with Andrew Furbear as Head of Finance. The governance at local authority level lay with the Service's Directors and it was usual for those Directors to be appointed as statutory officers in addition to their day-to-day role such as the Treasurer and Monitoring Officer.

* **AGC/23/3** **Annual Internal Audit Report 2022-23**

The Committee received for information an annual report of the Head of the Devon Audit Partnership (AGC/23/9) for 2022-23, a new responsibility which had been introduced under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended 2021). The report set out the background to audit service provision, any updates to the agreed 2022-23 plan, a review of the work undertaken in 2022-23 and an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's Internal Control Environment.

The Head of the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) referred to the point that the DAP had only commenced the internal audit function for the Authority from October 2022 which was part way through the financial year which had caused some difficulties. The overall opinion given in this annual report was "limited assurance". Whilst there may be audits where an assessment of limited assurance had been given, the Head of the DAP advised that there was assurance to be taken and progress was being made.

Mr Perks referred to conflicts in the terminology used within the report and specifically the difference in context between "significant gaps" which appeared, in his opinion, to be "important but not significant". He asked the Head of the DAP to consider this in future reports. The Head of the DAP replied that this was a good challenge but this was based on the CIPFA definition of "significant". Mr Perks added that this would need to be reconciled with the terminology in the report on Going Concern (Minute AGC/23/2 below refers). The Treasurer clarified that the Going Concern report reflected his professional assessment of the Authority's ability to continue operating for the foreseeable future. Whilst he gave due regard to the Internal Audit Report, alignment of terminology was not to be assumed or expected. The Treasurer further stated that it would be difficult to move away from the CIPFA definition, but he acknowledged the point made.

Mr Perks suggested there was a need for the Committee to receive an overarching report at each meeting on all management actions and overdue recommendations together with an explanation as to the reasons why. The Treasurer stated he could see the benefit of doing and the Service could bring together all the various actions which were underway and cross reference them to the risk register.

* **AGC/23/4** **Internal Audit Interim Progress Report 2023-24**

The Committee received for information a report of the Head of the Devon Audit Partnership (DAP) upon the progress made against the approved Internal Audit Plan for 2023-24.

The Head of the DAP advised that it was still relatively early in the financial year and thus, only one audit had been completed which was the Medium-Term Financial Plan which had been given reasonable assurance. 3 audits were in progress with a further 10 planned.

Mr Perks commented that it would be good to map the Corporate Risk Register number against each audit.

* **AGC/23/5** **Draft Annual Statement of Assurance 2022-23**

The Committee considered a report of the Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (AGC/23/11) to which was appended the draft Annual Statement of Assurance for 2022-23.

The Statement had been prepared to comply with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the latest edition of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The Statement examined and provided commentary on organisational systems of internal financial control, corporate governance and operational assurance.

In debating the report, the following points were made:

- that the Committee should see an overview of what the Service's insurance cover was in place so that any gaps could be identified and risk mitigated;
- that the Committee should be apprised of any complaints made that involved financial impropriety or governance issues; and
- that the management actions should be annotated with the quarter and year in the status column in future.

RESOLVED that, subject to inclusion of the amendments as indicated, the draft Annual Statement of Assurance 2022-23 as appended to report AGC/23/11 be approved in principle and submitted to the External Auditor alongside the draft financial statements for the same financial year.

* **AGC/23/6** **Corporate Risk Register**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (AGC/23/11) that provided an update on the Corporate Risk Register. The Corporate Risk Register captured and described the most significant risks, both internally and externally, facing the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (“the Service”), with a focus on cross-cutting risks and major projects and was reported to the Committee on a bi-yearly basis.

The risk management process included the identification, assessment and recording of risks together with mitigating activities. The Service’s Risk Manager presented the Corporate Risk Register at the meeting via SharpCloud, the tool used to visualise the risks in place. She advised that there were currently 16 risks entered on the Corporate Risk Register with 4 risks escalated from the local risk register, 2 de-escalated to local and thematic risk and no risks closed. Of the 16 risks, 7 were high risk and 9 were medium. In terms of the risks escalated, these were:

- CR050b - Failure to agree actions to set a balanced budget in future years, further exacerbated by reduced council tax and business rates and inflation. Agreed to combine risk into existing corporate risk CR050;
- CR082 - Inability to maintain Academy training facilities. Agreed to add risk to Academy risk register;
- CR083 - Failure to operate Safeguarding effectively. Agreed to add risk to Community Safety risk register;
- CR084 - Digital capability at risk due to lack of clarity of future Digital direction. Agreed to add risk to corporate risk register.

The Service’s Executive Board agreed to amend the following risks on the corporate risk register:

- CR077 - Industrial action, including withdrawal from voluntary arrangements to do non contractual working, December 2022 increased likelihood score from 3 to 4 due to FBU ballot 5 December 2022; and
- CR050 - Failure to agree actions to set a balanced budget in future years, further exacerbated by reduced council tax and business rates and inflation; impact score increased from 3 to 5 thereby increasing risk level from medium to high due to budget pressures associated with 2024/25 financial year and beyond.

In terms of risk CR050, the Committee asked to receive a monthly, informal update on the position on progress made towards closing the financial gap identified with the Authority’s Medium Term Financial Plan. The Treasurer undertook to put this into place.

* **AGC/23/7** **Going Concern Review**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (AGC/23/13) that provided a formal response from management to the external auditor (Grant Thornton) on the Authority as a going concern.

The report contained a review of the financial position as at 31 March 2023 alongside an assessment of the ability of the Authority to continue operating for the foreseeable future. The report confirmed that the Authority was operating within a robust control environment which was evidenced through appropriate assurance, financial and operational monitoring reports both to management and the Authority.

During the debate on this item, the following points were raised:

- That the forecast budget deficit in 2024-25 and future years as set out within the Medium-Term Financial Plan was a challenge but the Service had plans in place to address this and the Authority would be kept informed of progress;
- That treasury management and investment returns in 2023-24 were a key revenue consideration albeit that the current, high returns were unlikely to be sustained in the longer term;
- That the level of Council Tax set for 2024-25 was crucial and the Treasurer would be setting out options for consideration by the Authority once information in respect of the Revenue Support Grant settlement and precept boundaries were established later in 2023-24.

* **AGC/23/8** **Annual Review of Authority Standards Arrangements**

The Committee received for information a report (AGC/23/14) that identified the Standards arrangements adopted by the Authority to secure compliance with the legislative provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and associated Regulations. The report also provided an overview of operation of the regime during the 2022-23 financial year.

* **AGC/23/9** **His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Action Plan Update**

The Committee received for information a report of the Chief Fire officer (AGC/23/15) setting out the progress that had been made against 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 four actions directly related to the work of this Committee together with the progress made to date which were set out below, namely:

- HMI-1.-2-202202 – the Service should make sure its integrated risk management plan included clear outcomes that showed the public how it was currently mitigating risk;

- HMI-1-3-202205 – the Service should make sure that it had an effective quality assurance process so staff carry out audits and fire safety checks to an appropriate standard;
- HMI-2-2-202207a – Prevention and Protection – the Service should be aware of and invest in developments in technology and future innovation to help improve and sustain operational efficiency and effectiveness; and
- HMI – 2.2-202207b – Response – the Service should be aware of and invest in developments in technology and future innovation to help improve and sustain operational efficiency and effectiveness.

It was noted that there were 19 individual actions sitting beneath these of which 5 were in progress (on track), 7 had been completed, 6 had not been started and 1 was in progress but off track.

In terms of Area for Improvement, HMI-2.2-202207b (Response – Technology and Future Innovation) this was currently recorded as ‘In Progress – Off Track’. This was because action 07b.03 ‘Investigate which systems involving response activity are currently paper based and make recommendations for improvements’ had not been completed in the required timeframe.

* **AGC/23/10** **Management Responses to the improvement Recommendations Identified within the External Auditor's Annual Report 2021-22**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (AGC/23/16) that set out the management responses to the external auditor’s improvement recommendations identified within their Annual Report for 2021-22.

The Treasurer drew attention to the point that there was an updated response on the improvement recommendation related to the Medium-Term Financial Plan, amongst others, which had not been reflected in the version of the paper circulated with the agenda and papers. He advised that the Medium-Term Financial Plan was being considered on a monthly basis by the Executive Board as a result of this recommendation and quarterly by the Authority. It was noted that the revised responses to the improvement recommendations would be circulated to the Committee.

NB. Minute AGC/23/7 also refers.

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

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

28 July 2023

Present:

Councillors Clayton (Chair), Coles (vice Kendall), Peart, Tolchard and Trail BEM (Vice-Chair)

In attendance:

Councillors Biederman (via Teams), Cook-Woodman and Randall Johnson (via Teams)

* **PC/23/1** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 be signed as a correct record.

* **PC/23/2** **Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24: Quarter 1**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (PC/23/8) detailing performance as at Quarter 1 of 2023-24 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);
- health and safety (a general overview of the work undertaken on station audits and the risk from contaminants, accidents [including near misses]; personal injuries; vehicle incidents (together with the correlation to appliance mobilisation) 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, types of sickness absence, details of the health and wellbeing support offered by the Service. The report also provided comparisons with national fire service data and featured benchmarking for sickness absence against comparable, neighbouring fire and rescue services;
- fitness testing (including support offered for red and amber groups);
- diversity, with a particular emphasis on the work being undertaken on promoting inclusion and developing strong leaders within the organisation;
- strategic workforce planning including details of staff turnover in all categories of the workforce;
- employee engagement (reported elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting at item PC/23/9); and
- an overview of the People Services Systems project.

Attention was drawn at the meeting to the following points:

- There was an error in the competence rating of Red Amber Green (RAG) for Working at Height and in Confined spaces (SHACS) which was showing as green in the report but this should be at amber; There was only one area at amber which was SHACS (92%). The Director of Service Delivery Support stated that she had asked for further information as to why this was still at 92% but initial indications were that this was due largely to competencies going out of date and being unable to catch up although she was happy with the tolerance on this matter;
- Reference was made to fitness and the point that testing had commenced again for revalidation with 1538 staff tested to date. 2% of staff were in the red or amber category as requiring further support of whom 2 staff had failed to meet the required fitness.
- Attention was drawn to paragraphs 2.4 and 2.6 of the report and some of the positive work undertaken particularly on station audits. 93 premises had been audited in 2022-23 looking at the management of Personal Protective Equipment, fire safety, machinery and equipment and breathing apparatus cleaning areas, amongst others. The findings were generally positive and the actions had been fed into specific targeted action plans for locations;
- Accidents - the trend line had reached a plateau over the previous 12 months (2022-23) at 24 per month although quarter 1 of 2023-24 showed an increase of 12 over the previous quarter on 2022-23. The Organisational Road Risk Group was meeting monthly now and looking closely at the statistics to try to work out the reasons behind this increase.

- Near misses – there were 28 near misses in quarter 1 of 2022-23, a 33% increase on reporting in the previous quarter of 2022-23 (7 events) largely due to mirrors folding in on the Medium Rescue Pumps when travelling at speeds beyond 56mph which needed to be addressed;
- Personal injuries – there had been a small increase in quarter 1 of 2023- 24 with 1 injury but a spike in May 2023 although there was no definitive trend to be identified;
- Vehicle accidents – there had been a 38% increase (14 incidents) with a spike in May 2023 to 25 but this did not correlate to incident response.
- RIDDOR – there had been 2 reports this quarter (2023-24).

The Committee debated the position on vehicle incidents which it was thought was largely due to low-speed manoeuvring. The absence of hedge cutting was believed to be a notable contributor to vehicle incidents as hedges were generally only cut twice per year and as the year went by the incidents increased in tight, rural lanes. The Committee suggested there was a need to make the local authorities aware of this as this was a safety issue and local authorities were allowed to cut back the hedges.

The Health and Safety Manager further advised that the Service provided additional training for staff where it was recognised that multiple accidents had occurred or other trends. Appropriate controls were also in place to provide support not punishment to drivers. The Service was also looking at a fair wear and tear policy to determine the correct tolerable and this was being reviewed by the Fleet Manager. There was also a cost implication so the Treasurer suggested they be aligned to identify budget impact.

It was noted that total sickness had decreased marginally in the last quarter of 2022-23 due to the efforts of staff in monitoring sickness and work on getting staff back to work quicker. Total sickness was 2.07 days/shifts lost in the first quarter of 2023-24 as opposed to 2.5 days at the same quarter in 2022-23 so good news. National data showed Devon & Somerset at 10.02 days/shifts lost in 2022-23 as opposed to the average (27 eligible services) of 9.41 days lost. The Service was slightly above the average currently but it was confident that this number would decrease given the work that was being undertaken on health and wellbeing issues.

The Committee made reference to the point that musculoskeletal injuries were still high but not as high as mental health but these were the main causes of absence. The Committee was advised that mental health was not always caused by work related issues but personal matters and there had been spikes in this area although the Service offered support. The Treasurer added that this was a complex area with more than one driver but the staff survey had given an indication that the cost of living crisis was impacting people at all levels. The Service was acutely aware of this and was trying to find the right balance to assist staff; looking at where it could provide guidance on financial support for staff in and signposting.

The Treasurer highlighted the efficiencies being undertaken to address the revenue budget gap in 2024-25 but he emphasised that this did not include redundancy as there were known reductions in 2024-25 which meant the efficiencies could be made as a result of natural attrition.

The Committee was apprised of the excellent work being undertaken to address inclusion issues including (but not limited to) the Speak Up Guardian scheme which was a positive step forward. The Committee asked if there was a way of measuring success in respect of inclusion and wellbeing issues. The Treasurer replied that this was a good point as there was a report on grievances and he could take this away and look at a way of measuring the action/interventions for either positive or negative impact.

Reference was made to the monthly meetings held to monitor workforce planning and the point that this was improving the levels of engagement. The Service was looking closely at P4A and factors influencing recruitment and retention such as training which was a huge commitment for both the individual and the Service due to the time involved and costs incurred when attrition remained high. It was recognised that reduced capacity within the Service was a factor in staff wellbeing and that work may have to be dropped in some areas as a result. The cost of recruitment was around £20k for each On Call firefighter and recruitment and selection processes had been redesigned to address the issues that the Service was aware of. An expressions of interest section was now on the website.

The Treasurer drew attention to the excellent work being undertaken by Zoe Smyth and her team for on the People Services project which was a huge undertaking for the Service and staff involved.

NB. Minute PC/23/3 below also refers.

* **PC/23/3** **2023 People Survey Results Overview**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (PC/23/9) setting out the purpose, methodology and high level findings of the people survey undertaken earlier in 2023 together with a presentation on the results at the meeting.

It was noted that the Service had received 813 responses to the survey representing 44% of the workforce which was above the industry recognised confidence level of 95. From the survey findings, five key focus areas had emerged which were:

- Inclusion of thought;
- Bullying and harassment and the reporting of this;
- Trust in leadership;
- Support staff – differences in responses between operational opportunities and those available for support staff; and
- Working together well (high negative).

It was highlighted that 58% of people felt they were happy in their work and would recommend the Service as an employer. This was the first time this question had been included in this survey and would provide a benchmark against which future responses could be measured. In response to a question, the Treasurer indicated that he was not content with this level of contentment and that the Service recognised there was a lot of work to do to improve in this area.

NB. Minute PC/23/2 above also refers.

* **PC/23/4**

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Cause of Concern and Areas for Improvement Action Plan

The Committee received for information a report of the Chief Fire Officer (PC/23/10) 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).

In terms of the Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement identified by HMICFRS, 8 had been linked to the People Committee for tracking.

Two of the actions within the Cause of Concern Action Plan were recorded currently as "In Progress – Off Track" due to:

- 01a.07: Expectations documents (charters). The toolkit for team charters (internal, staff to staff) had now been developed by the Organisational Development Team. This will be reviewed and then distributed across the Service by 31 August 2023. The customer charter had now gone through final testing. Feedback will be incorporated into the final document ahead of sign off from the Senior Leadership Team. The HMI Team were awaiting an update on the trainee/ trainer charter. This action was off track as the target completion date (28 February 2023) had now passed; and
- 01b.09: All recruitment and selection processes will include elements to assess applicants' cultural awareness and how this linked to the Service Values. There was no update on progress against this action.

It was noted that one action within the Areas for Improvement action plan HMI-3.4-202215 (High Potential Staff), had been paused since March 2023 due to dependencies on the Area for Improvement around the selection and promotions process (HMI-3.4-202213).

The Committee sought clarification as to when the Cause of Concern on people and Culture would be removed and it was noted that HMICFRS would look at discharging this at the next inspection.

NB. Minute PC/23/5 below also refers.

People & Culture Update

The Committee received for information a report of the Chief Fire Officer (PC/23/11) setting out the progress made against the 35 recommendations in His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published report into values and culture in the fire and rescue service. 19 of these recommendations were specific to the fire and rescue service and 15 required action at national level.

Two recommendations remain 'In Progress' despite the recommendation deadline (01 June 2023) now having passed. This is due to the following factors:

- The Head of Organisational Assurance will speak to the Chief Fire Officer around the expectations and considerations required to determine whether the Service should create a professional standards function. The action will remain marked as 'In Progress' until these conversations had taken place (Recommendation 04).
- Recommendation 32 (Diversity in succession planning) has not been fully addressed by the Service, therefore this recommendation will remain 'In Progress'.

9 recommendations had been closed following review by the HMICFRS Governance Board and the Service's Executive Board with 7 in progress and on track and 2 in progress but the recommendation deadline had not been met.

NB. Minute PC/23/4 above also refers.

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

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at Time Not Specified

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

5 September 2023

Present:

Councillors Peart (Chair), Best (Vice-Chair), Coles (vice Fellows), Sully and Cook-Woodman (vice Power).

Apologies:

Councillors Gilmour and Slade

* **RC/23/1**

Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2023 be signed as a correct record.

* **RC/23/2**

Treasury Management Performance 2023-24: Quarter 1

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (RC/23/12) that set out the Authority's performance relating to the first quarter of 2023-24 (to June 2023) 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 key points were noted:

- The United Kingdom (UK) economy had fared better than anticipated and avoided a recession with small growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 0.2% month on month. As interest rates bore down on the economy, the UK may fall into recession over the next 6 months, however;
- Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) had fallen from 10.1% to 8.7% in April 2023 but was static thereafter. This was the highest reading of G7 countries but was expected to continue on a downward trajectory;
- interest rates had increased by 75bp to June 2023 taking the bank base rate to 5%. Since June 2023, the base rate had been increased again to 5.25% and was expect to rise to circa 6% in the next two quarters;
- the Authority had benefitted from the recent rises in interest rates with an increased return on investments at a yield of over 5%. The forecast return on investment at year end was now over £1m;

- 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 of £0.028m (4.87%) had been generated in quarter 1 of 2023-24 against the new 3-month SONIA (Sterling Overnight Index) benchmark of 4.38%;
- none of the Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) had been breached in quarter 1 with external borrowing at 30 June 2023 being £24.264m, forecast to reduce to £23.771 by the end of the financial year with no new borrowing undertaken; and
- There were no plans to borrow any further funds in the immediate future.

* RC/23/3

Financial Performance Report 2023-24: Quarter 1

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (RC/23/13) that provided the Committee with details of the first quarter performance (to June 2023) against the agreed financial targets for 2023-24.

The Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) advised that, at this stage in the financial year, it was projected that spending would be £0.053m less than the budget of £85.411m at £85.360m representing an underspend of 0.1% of total budget. He drew attention to the point that the reserve of £2.8m to cover pay awards was included within these figures albeit that only £1.173m of this reserve was forecast to be utilised to close the budget gap as a result of better than expected in year financial performance. The Executive Board continued to bear down on costs across the Service as it was reflecting a much larger budgetary gap to be bridged in 2025-26 and 2026-27 as outlined within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and needed to keep this in sight.

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

- Wholetime pay – £0.520m or 1.4% of budget - driven by vacancies primarily. The Service had a window of retirements coming shortly so was holding vacancies in light of the knowledge that it would be looking at the workforce in due course.
- Professional and Technical staff spend - £0.220k underspend or 1.3% of budget – the Service continued to hold vacancies and maintain spending control. A complete review of zero hours contracts had also undertaken to ensure everything was fit for purpose and the Service was getting Value for Money;
- Transport costs - £0.096k underspend – largely due to the drop in fuel costs;
- Travel and subsistence - £0.139m or 8.6% of budget due largely to savings on vehicle rental costs and slippage on delivery and also pursuing the environmental agenda with new, electric vehicles. Line 13. Telematics also added to vehicles so seeing a change in driver behaviour as well which made vehicles more efficient;

- Support services contracts - £0.139m or 12.7% of budget – due to a new contract achieving better value for money and closer management of the provision; and
- Investment income - £0.807m or 153.7% of budget – due to increased interest rates seeing a much higher rate of return being achieved.

The Committee asked about potential spikes in pension costs in future years and how the Service was going to deal with this. The Treasurer confirmed that events had moved forward and Government had addressed historical issues surrounding pension detriment. The Service had paused processing immediate detriment claims pending the receipt of appropriate advice but this had resumed now with guidance from the Treasury in place. Fewer staff than anticipated had applied for retirement in 2023-24 with under 10 requests to date. Anecdotal evidence suggested that the recent Grey Book pay awards may have impacted upon such decisions but once the year end was reached, it was thought that staff would come forward with applications for retirement. The Chief Fire Officer indicated that much work was being undertaken to predict this through workforce planning but it was felt that any spikes may be seen in 2026-27 now. The Service was looking at high potential schemes and career pathways not only for operational but non-operational staff as well. The Treasurer added that the Service was also looking at the apprenticeship programme as well so Professional and Technical staff could see a route in for career progression.

In terms of Capital, it was noted that there would be a thorough review of the Capital Programme undertaken in the next 2 months. There was slippage of £1.7m due timing differences largely on Camels Head rebuild.

The Treasurer made reference to the reporting of the MTFP in line with the recommendation made by the external auditor for transparency. There was a gap in 2024-25 of around £3m but the Executive Board had set a target of £4m to find to address this next year. Reference was made to the need for additional grant funding and the Committee asked for a crib sheet setting out the picture on rurality as it was considered this was not recognised within the funding received from Government and needed to be addressed via lobbying as appropriate.

The Treasurer referred to the point that Government was going to gradually reduce the Revenue Support Grant funding for Airwave so this was an extra cost that Servies had to bear. The Committee commented that it seemed the only way to raise revenue was to increase Council Tax every year in future although fire and rescue services had not seen the same level of increase as other blue light emergency services. It was considered that there was now a strong argument for this to be achieved as it would be difficult to maintain services in future without the requisite level of funding in place.

* **RC/23/4**

Environmental Strategy Update

The Committee received for information a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Director of Service Delivery (RC/23/14) that detailed progress on the Environmental Strategy and Action Plan.

It was noted that a Strategic Environmental Board had been implemented to develop, deliver and oversee progress of the Environmental Strategy and action plan. The action plan was aligned to the goals and targets to be carbon net zero by 2030 and on delivery of the recommendations in the initial Environmental Review (IER). The work had been focussed on the following areas:

- Environmental policy and procedures;
- Environmental aspects, legislative registers annual review;
- Action planning aligned to ISO1400 standard annual review;
- UK climate risk assessment (2023) review;
- Implementation of the electric vehicle (EV) charging points and electric vehicles in Service;
- Undertaking an energy efficiency review across 10 sites and implementing activities;
- Establishing an environmental protection group (operations);
- National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC) sustainability and environmental toolkit and group support;
- Small reductions in the fleet and estate;
- Introducing the fleet to the latest European standards;
- Implementing an electric vehicle salary sacrifice scheme; and
- delivering environmental awareness training to all staff via eLearning.

The Committee was advised that good progress had been made against the Action Plan which was indicated above. There had also been success with the award of £0.095m of grant funding and efforts were being made to secure further funding to support work on the Service's environmental strategy.

The Committee commented that electric vehicles and charging required appropriate infrastructure to cope with this. Local planning authorities were indicating that all new properties should have charging points installed but infrastructure had to be able to cope with this and the Government needed to focus in this area. Further, if the Service was buying EV instead of leasing vehicles, it needed to address the costs of replacement batteries which could be up to £0.005m each. The Treasurer acknowledged this point.

* RC/23/5

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 Chief Fire Officer (RC/23/15) upon the progress made by the Service in addressing the 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs) identified by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) and associated actions, of which two were linked to the Resources Committee, including:

- HMI-2.2-202206a - The Service needs to make sure that its fleet strategy is regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiency; and

- HMI-2.2-202206b – The Service needs to ensure that its estate strategy is regularly reviewed and evaluated to maximise potential efficiency.

The Committee noted that action AFI-2.2-202206a had been closed. AFI-2.2-202206b was “in progress off track” currently but it was acknowledged that this was due largely to ensuring that the Estates Strategy aligned to work that was being undertaken on the Service’s Target Operating Model. The Committee asked if the Service was confident that it could achieve the revised target of February 2024. The Chief Fire Officer replied that the Executive Board was meeting on 6 September 2023 to discuss the measures to be taken and was confident by January 2024 it would be able to report the position to the Authority.

* **RC/23/6** **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 Officers 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/23/7** **Red One Ltd. Financial Performance 2023-24: Quarter 1**

(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 Officers of Red One Ltd.) were excluded from the meeting.

The Committee received for information a report of the Co- Chief Executives and Finance Director of Red One Ltd. (RC/23/16) together with a supplementary report of the Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Treasurer) (RC/23/16(a)) setting out the financial performance of Red One Ltd. in quarter 1 of the 2023-24 financial year.

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

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.15 pm

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COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE
(Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority)

8 September 2023

Present:

Councillors Hendy (Chair), Brazil, Coles (vice Power) and Kerley

Apologies:

Councillors Chesterton and Radford

* **CSC/23/1** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2023 be signed as a correct record.

* **CSC/23/2** **Strategic Priority 1 and 2 Performance Measures: Quarter 1 2023-24**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of Service Delivery (CSC/23/8) on performance by the Service in Quarter 1 of the 2023-24 financial year against those Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) associated with the following two Strategic Priorities:

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

Performance in Quarter 1 of 2023-24 was as summarised below:

	Succeeding	Near target	Needs improvement
Priority 1	13	5	1
Priority 2	7	6	1

The KPIs with a status of “needs improvement” were:

- KPI 1.2.2.2 – Number of non-domestic fire fatalities; and

- KPI 2.1.4.2 – Percentage of operational risk information in date - level 4 tactical plans.

The report identified the main factors behind the ability to deliver the expected level of performance together with actions intended to secure improvement in both areas. Exception reports were also included within the appendix to report CSC/23/8.

In debating the report, the following points were raised:

- KPI 1.2.2.2. - fire fatality non-domestic – this involved a fire in outbuildings so it was classed as non-domestic but it was an unusual situation;
- KPI 2.1.4.2. – it was noted that this was a legacy situation arising from the Covid. Pandemic but that good progress was being made to bring this back on target;
- The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery – would be submitting details of revised KPIs that had been discussed recently by the Executive Board to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee enquired as to whether there was a full list of KPIs available. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery - stated there were additional KPIs not listed in this report. As indicated above, a full list of the revised KPIs would be submitted to the Committee at the next meeting.

Reference was made to the targets for Emergency Response (ERS) times and whether issues such as rurality had been factored in. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery - responded that there used to be national standards for response times which changed in 2005 when such matters were devolved locally for consideration in accordance with risk factors. The University of Exeter had undertaken research on behalf of Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service some years back which indicated that a 10-minute response for urban areas and 15 minutes for rural areas was appropriate. This was being reviewed, however, and the Committee would be apprised of the revised measures being considered. The Committee welcomed the work being undertaken on a review of the ERS. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery - stated that he hoped to elicit more root level data to inform the response as a result of the work being undertaken that would then be utilised to improve performance. The Committee asked if there could be a comparison with similar rural fire and rescue services when considering response standards. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Delivery - advised that this work had been undertaken and would be shared with the Committee in due course.

RESOLVED

- (a). That the work on Emergency Response Standards be considered at a future meeting of the Committee;
- (b). That a report on the revised Key Performance Indicators be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (c). Subject to (a). and (b). above, the report be noted.

* **CSC/23/3** **Planning and the Role of the Fire & Rescue Service**

The Committee received for information a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Service Delivery (CSC/23/9) on the work that was being undertaken within the Service on Planning and the Role of the Fire & Rescue Service.

The Area Manager – Prevention and Protection - advised the Committee that the Service was not a statutory consultee for planning applications but did provide advice as and when requested. The Service's main concerns on planning applications were access and water supplies on new development. There were mitigations that could be considered though as, in areas where access may be difficult, measures such as the use of domestic sprinklers could be installed in new properties.

The Chair drew attention to the point that developers may agree to install fire safety measures on initial planning applications but may change their agreement at a later stage which could cause fire safety issues. The Area Manager – Protection and Prevention – advised the Committee that the Service was consulted on Building Regulations with 15 days to respond and officers suitably qualified as fire engineers were able to respond and advise on matters pertaining to fire safety. Approximately 1300 consultations were received each year by the Service on Building Regulations applications. Once a property was signed off for Building Regulations and completed, responsibility for fire safety passed to the Service. Any subsequent issues could be pursued under the Fire Safety (Regulatory Reform Order) 2005.

The Committee referred to the large-scale domestic developments being built as extensions to large urban areas in Devon and Somerset together with major commercial developments and he asked how the Service was going to cope with this. The Area Manager – Protection and Prevention – replied that engagement was being undertaken by Assistant Chief Fire Officer Nicky Bottomley to look at new developments and where they were located so opportunities were not missed for new fire stations and associated funding where needed. The Committee welcomed feedback to constituent authorities from the Service on the planning process in place. The Area Manager – Protection and Prevention – responded that local engagement was found to be of assistance in many cases.

* **CSC/23/4** **Partnerships**

The Committee received for information a report of the Assistant Chief Fire Officer - Service Delivery (CSC/23/10) setting out how the Service's Protection and Prevention teams worked with partner agencies to target individuals in high risk groups with fire safety checks.

It was noted that the groups at highest risk of having a fire included households with factors such as age, limited mobility, living alone, disability, now working smoke alarm and alcohol/drugs (amongst others).

The Committee sought clarification on how the Service was able to increase the number of referrals so that more basic fire safety checks could be undertaken. The Area Manager – Prevention and Protection - stated that the Service was not short of referrals from partners and had to prioritise the most vulnerable people for fire safety visits. Those classed as being of medium risk could undertake an online fire safety assessment. It was added that the Service also accessed those communities who may not necessarily engage with the Service such as those whose first language was not English.

The Committee sought an assurance that partners were assisting the Service as much as possible given the capacity issues identified. The Area Manager – Protection and Prevention – responded that the Service did as much as possible to educate and train other partners to assist in the fire safety process without a need for a referral to reduce the workload as much as possible.

In response to a question, it was noted that the Service undertook 18,000 home fire safety visits a year currently based on capacity to deliver. More work was required, however, to understand demand in areas such as an increasing, ageing population which may lead to an increase in the number of high risk individuals.

* **CSC/23/5** **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 Chief Fire Officer (CSC/23/11) on progress against action plans to address Areas for Improvement within the remit of this Committee and stemming from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) 2022 inspection report of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service).

Action plans had been developed to address the following two Areas for Improvement which were specifically related to the remit of this Committee:

- HMI-1.2-202203 - The Service should evaluate its prevention activity so it understands what works; and
- HMI-1.2-202204 - Safeguarding training should be provided to all staff.

It was noted that the action under HMI-1.2-202203 - The Service should evaluate its prevention activity so it understands what works – was no longer required. This was due to the point that the Service should evaluate its prevention activity so that it understood what worked but there was no requirement to align to ISO accreditation.

The Committee enquired as to the position overall on the 14 areas for improvement. The Committee was advised that there was good progress being made. The next inspection was now scheduled for April 2024 with HMICFRS requesting documentation to support any evidence in March 2024.

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

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Agenda Item 8

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/23/19
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 SEPTEMBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER AND CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>(a) <i>That the Authority determines the appointment of a relevant officer to serve as its Monitoring Officer from 25 September 2023;</i></p> <p>(b) <i>That the Authority determines the appointment of a Clerk to the Authority with effect from 25 September 2023;</i></p> <p>(c) <i>That the Clerk be authorised to make any consequential changes to Authority Constitutional Governance Framework documents (Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegations etc.) as may be necessitated by the decision of the Authority in relation to the discharge of the roles of Monitoring Officer and Clerk.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The current Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority has advised that she has left the employment of Plymouth City Council and thus, the Authority is asked to determine a replacement.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	The cost of an external Monitoring Officer arrangement can be contained within existing budget provision.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	None identified.
APPENDICES	<p>A. Statutory Duties of Monitoring Officer and Authority</p> <p>B. Extract from Authority Scheme of Delegations – Section 6 (Matters Delegated to the Monitoring Officer)</p> <p>C. Extract from Authority Scheme of Delegations – Section 5 (Matters Delegated to the Clerk)</p>
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (Section 5)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority is a “relevant authority” for the purposes of Section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (the Act). This requires the Authority to designate one of its officers as Monitoring Officer.
- 1.2. This designation must be undertaken by the full Authority – it is not a matter that can be delegated.
- 1.3. The roles of Monitoring Officer and Clerk were being discharged externally by the Head of Legal Services at Plymouth City Council in accordance with the decision taken by the Authority at its meeting on 19 April 2023 (Minute DSFR/22/37 refers).
- 1.4. The Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority, Emma Jackman, secured a new post and left the employment of Plymouth City Council on 31 July 2023. Her appointment, however, continued with the Authority via a temporary arrangement with her new local government employer. This arrangement ends at the end of this sitting of the Authority (i.e. 25 September 2023).
- 1.5. While the formal role of Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority is held by Emma Jackman, in practice, it has been largely delivered by the current Deputy Monitoring Officer, Samantha Sharman (Democratic Services Manager) with Emma’s oversight. Additionally, this has seen Samantha attend formal meetings of the Service’s Extended Leadership Team and play an active role in the decision-making processes, ensuring the interests of the Authority are represented.
- 1.6. The appointment of Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority is for a named officer (in accordance with Section 5 (as amended) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989) – paragraph 2.1 (1) (a) refers - and thus, the role of Monitoring Officer and Clerk needs to be filled to provide ongoing assurance and probity to the Authority.

2. LEGISLATION REQUIREMENT AND DUTIES OF MONITORING OFFICER

- 2.1. Section 5 (as amended) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (the Act) provides:
 - (1) It shall be the duty of every relevant authority—
 - (a) to designate one of their officers (to be known as “the monitoring officer”) as the officer responsible for performing the duties imposed by this section ; and
 - (b) to provide that officer with such staff, accommodation and other resources as are, in his opinion, sufficient to allow those duties to be performed.

- 2.2. Additionally, by virtue of Section 5(1), the officer so designated as the Monitoring Officer cannot be the chief finance officer. For combined fire and rescue authorities such as this Authority, the Head of Paid Service could be designated as the Monitoring Officer but this would not be best practice and would not be recommended as – for probity purposes – it is best to retain a clear separation between the roles of what is commonly referred to as the “Golden Triangle” of Statutory officers i.e.
- the Head of Paid Service (for this Authority, this role is discharged by the Chief Fire Officer;
 - the Monitoring Officer; and
 - the Chief Financial Officer (for this Authority, this role is discharged by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services).
- 2.3. Sections 5(2) and 5(5) of the Act specify, respectively, the duties of both the Monitoring Officer and the Authority (in the event that the Monitoring Officer exercises their duties). These duties are set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 2.4. Unlike the Chief Financial Officer, there is no legislative requirement for the Monitoring Officer to hold a relevant qualification (e.g. solicitor) but clearly a good working knowledge of applicable legislation (e.g. Local Government Act 1972; Local Government & Housing Act 1989; Localism Act 2011) would be advantageous.
- 2.5. Finally, Section 5(7) allows the Monitoring Officer to nominate a deputy, who may only discharge the Monitoring Officer duties in the event of the Monitoring Officer being unable to act owing to absence or illness.

3. AUTHORITY MATTERS DELEGATED TO MONITORING OFFICER

- 3.1. While Section 5(2) sets out the legislative function of the Monitoring Officer, in practice the Monitoring Officer has also exercised a number of other functions, as delegated by the Authority and which are commensurate with the role of Monitoring Officer. These functions are currently contained in the Section 6 of Authority’s approved Scheme of Delegations and attached at Appendix B to this report, for ease of reference.
- 3.2. Each of these functions could, though, be exercised by another officer of the Authority as appropriate.

4. CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

- 4.1. “Clerk” is a term more usually associated with both Town and Parish Councils, where the individual concerned exercises a number of functions that in essence relate to meeting administration together being the responsible financial officer and ensuring the council runs its business lawfully.

- 4.2. In relation to this Authority, the role of “Clerk” is more concerned with ensuring effective meeting administration (despatch of agendas etc.). There are a number of functions currently delegated by the Authority to the Clerk. These are set out in Section 5 of the approved Scheme of Delegations and attached at Appendix C to this report, for ease of reference.
- 4.3. At present, the role of Clerk is currently discharged by the Director of Governance & Digital Services.
- 4.4. Each of the functions identified at Appendix C could, though, be exercised by another officer of the Authority as appropriate.

5. OPTIONS FOR MONITORING OFFICER AND CLERK MOVING FORWARDS

- 5.1. There are options proposed to the Authority in filling this role which include:
- Appointing an alternative officer at Plymouth City Council (such as the interim Head of Legal Services); and
 - Revisiting the option to appoint Devon County Council (or another constituent authority); and
 - Appointing an in-house officer.
- 5.2. If an external authority (other than Plymouth City Council) is to be appointed, it is recommended that the Authority considers re-tendering for the role of Monitoring Officer for the twelve months period up to September 2024. Somerset Council was not in a position to tender for this role earlier in the year due to constraints with setting up the new Unitary Authority but may be in a position to do so now.

6. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Option 1 – retain the services of Plymouth City Council and appoint a new, named Monitoring Officer

- 6.1. The appointment of an external Monitoring Officer has achieved cost savings to the Authority since the previous postholder (Director of Governance & Digital Services) retired and the post was removed from the Executive Board structure.
- 6.2. The ongoing cost of the external appointment of a Monitoring Officer within Plymouth City Council is £0.025m per annum and continuing this arrangement would see Alison Critchfield (interim Head of Legal Services) appointed as Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority.
- 6.3. The advantages of having an external Monitoring Officer are:
- Support from a larger organisation with legal resources at hand;
 - Cost savings estimated to be in the region of c.£25k.

- 6.4. The disadvantages of having an externally appointed Monitoring Officer are:
- Ability to access advice at short notice is limited due to the workloads of the postholder;
 - Attendance at Authority and Committee meetings is limited to the agreed number with additional cost implications should any protracted issue arise;
 - Day to day contact and relationship with the Executive Board has been limited thus the knowledge of Service activities and thinking is restricted. The Monitoring Officer has not been in a position to attend Executive Board meetings due to capacity issues; and
 - Depending on the geographic location of the postholder, distance for attendance at Authority meetings may also be a factor.

Option 2 – consider approaching Devon County Council

- 6.5. The second option considered previously was to make an external appointment with Devon County Council who expressed an interest in taking on this responsibility. This option was previously discounted on the basis that it was substantially more expensive than that of the offer from Plymouth City Council. There remains the option to explore this again but, given the Authority's budgetary constraints in 2024-25, the cost of this provision will need to be considered. This arrangement is likely to bring many of the advantages and disadvantages outlined in paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4., however.
- 6.6. Should this option be determined as the preferred way forward, the Deputy Monitoring Officer would temporarily take on the role of Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority until such time as a named individual within Devon County Council along with the terms of their engagement could be recommended to the Authority for approval.

Option 3 – internal appointment with External Contingent Support

- 6.7. The Democratic Services Manager, namely Samantha Sharman, has been deputising for the current Monitoring Officer since mid-April 2023 so a third option for consideration is to make the appointment of Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority part of this role.
- 6.8. The advantages of having an internally appointed Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority are:
- This would give the Authority and Service direct support on a day-to-day basis from a member of staff with extensive knowledge of the statutory framework in which the Fire & Rescue Authority operates together with the Service's governance arrangements;
 - There would be a cost reduction (c.£20k per annum) on the basis that the Democratic Services Officer role would be removed, and the current role of Democratic Services Manager expanded to encompass the Statutory role of Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority. This additional responsibility would likely see this role attract remuneration equivalent to that of a Grade 11 on the NJC scale but would be formally confirmed through job evaluation;

- Building on the existing relationships with our constituent Authorities and Cornwall Council, we would look to formalise an arrangement which would allow the Monitoring Officer to obtain specialist legal advice as needed. Contingency arrangements in respect to the Deputy Monitoring Officer role are already in place via a zero-hour contract with the previous Democratic Services Manager; and
- The Authority and Executive Board has formed a relationship with the postholder so there is confidence that this is a viable option.

6.9. A potential disadvantage of an internal appointment at this level would be:

- resilience issues with annual leave, sickness etc., however, as outlined above, there are existing contingency arrangements in place through the previous post holder who is retained by the Service for this purpose.

6.10. There is no requirement for the Monitoring Officer to be legally qualified (indeed the previous postholder was not legally qualified) and there is already access in place for legal advice to be sought from either Plymouth City Council or Cornwall County Council as required under a Service Level Agreement. That said, the present incumbent has expressed interest (to which we would fully support) in developing their specialist knowledge further in this area and would look to undertake further development plan as appropriate.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1. All three options outlined above would provide a credible way forward for the provision of a Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority. It is, however, the view of the three Statutory Officers (Treasurer, Monitoring Officer/ Clerk to the Authority and Chief Fire Officer), that an internal appointment would, on balance, be in the best interest of the Authority.

7.2. Once the Authority has determined this matter, the contractual basis for this arrangement will be drawn up in accordance with the information provided in this report. The appointment to these role is with effect from 25 September 2023.

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer

APPENDIX A TO REPORT DSFRA/23/19

Duties of Monitoring Officer (Section 5, Local Government & Housing Act 1989)

- (2) It shall be the duty of a relevant authority's monitoring officer, if it at any time appears to him that any proposal, decision or omission by the authority, by any committee, or sub-committee of the authority, by any person holding any office or employment under the authority or by any joint committee on which the authority are represented constitutes, has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to—
- (a) a contravention by the authority, by any committee, or sub-committee of the authority, by any person holding any office or employment under the authority or by any such joint committee, of any enactment or rule of law or of any code of practice made or approved by or under any enactment; or
 - (b) any such maladministration or failure as is mentioned in Part 3 of the Local Government Act 1974 (Local Commissioners)
- to prepare a report to the authority with respect to that proposal, decision or omission.
- (3) It shall be the duty of a relevant authority's Monitoring Officer...in preparing a report under this section to consult so far as practicable with...the person who is for the time being designated as the head of the authority's paid service and with their chief finance officer.

Duties of the Authority (Section 5(5), Local Government & Housing Act 1989)

It shall be the duty of a relevant authority—

- (a) to consider any report under this section by a monitoring officer or his deputy...in the case of a fire and rescue authority created by an order under section 4A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, no later than...twenty one days after copies of the report are first sent to members of the authority; and
- (b) without prejudice to any duty imposed by virtue of section 115 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (duties in respect of conduct involving contraventions of financial obligations) or otherwise, to ensure that no step is taken for giving effect to any proposal or decision to which such a report relates at any time while the implementation of the proposal or decision is suspended in consequence of the report;

and nothing in section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (delegation) shall apply to the duty imposed by virtue of paragraph (a) above.

6. MATTERS DELEGATED TO THE MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1. To maintain a Register of Interests for Members and Co-opted Members in accordance with Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 and to ensure that:
 - (a). the Register is available for public inspection at all reasonable hours; and
 - (b). the Register is published on the Authority's website.
- 6.2. In accordance with Section 33(2)(a) of the Localism Act 2011, to grant a dispensation from the restriction either not to participate in discussion of, or participate in discussion of and vote on, any matter in which a Member or Co-opted Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest only in instances where, without the dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the relevant body as to impede transaction of the business.
- 6.3. In relation to the Members Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with Section 27(2) of the Localism Act 2011, to:
 - (a). receive any allegations of breaches of the Code and determine, in consultation with the "independent person" whether or not any such allegation should be investigated; and
 - (b). to arrange for the undertaking of any investigations as required and report as required on the outcomes of such investigations to the Standards Committee or Hearing Panel thereof.
- 6.4. To maintain a register of interests in contracts declared by Officers of the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority in accordance with Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- 6.5. "Proper Officer" for the purposes of Part VA (sections 100A to 100K)(as inserted by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985) of the Local Government Act 1972, specifically as the officer who:
 - (a). shall determine whether to exclude reports from agendas and connected reports of meetings of the Authority (or its committees or sub-committees) made available to public inspection on the grounds that the excluded report may, in his opinion, be considered by the meeting in the absence of the public;
 - (b). shall make a written summary (without disclosing exempt information) of the proceedings of any part of any meeting during which the public were excluded where the minute(s) of those proceedings does not provide the public with a reasonably fair and coherent record of the proceedings; and
 - (c). shall compile, and determine the contents of, lists of background papers used in the drafting of reports which are open to inspection by the public.

- 6.6. In accordance with Standing Orders, to institute, defend or settle legal proceedings (either in the name of the Authority or an individual officer of the Authority) at common law or under any enactment, statutory instruments order or bye law conferring functions upon the Authority (or in respect of functions undertaken by it) and to lodge an appeal in respect of any such proceedings. For the avoidance of doubt, this delegation shall extend to the taking of all procedural steps including service of notices - statutory or otherwise - counter-notices, the Laying of Informations and to any proceedings which the Monitoring Officer considers expedient to take for the protection of the interests of the inhabitants of the Authority's area. (NOTE: this function may also be exercised by the Chief Fire Officer).
- 6.7. In accordance with Standing Orders, to sign on behalf of the Authority any document necessary to any legal procedure or proceedings unless:
 - (a). another person is required by law (e.g. Act of Parliament) to sign such a document; or
 - (b). the Authority has specifically authorised another officer to sign the document in question.
- 6.8. To receive, return (if appropriate) and open tenders in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.
- 6.9. Following consultation with the Authority Chair, to suspend the Chief Fire Officer immediately in an emergency or if an exceptional situation arises whereby allegations of misconduct by the Chief Fire Officer are such that their continued presence at work poses a serious risk to the health and safety of others or to the resources, information or reputation of the Authority.

5. MATTERS DELEGATED TO THE CLERK

- 5.1. In accordance with the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority (Combination Scheme) Order 2006 (as amended), to calculate annually the apportionment of places on the Authority to constituent authorities, using the most up-to-date local government electoral roll statistics available on the Office for National Statistics website, and to notify constituent authorities of the outcome of this in sufficient time to enable relevant appointments to be made at their annual meetings.
- 5.2. To receive and/or publish notices in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders
- 5.3. In accordance with Standing Orders, to call an extraordinary meeting of the Authority if so required.
- 5.4. In accordance with Standing Orders and following consultation with either the Authority or relevant Committee Chair (as the case may be), to establish any Working Party or “task and finish” group as considered conducive and timely to the work of the Authority (NOTE: this delegation may also be exercised by the Chief Fire Officer).
- 5.5. “Proper Officer” for the purposes of Regulations 13 and 14 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- 5.6. To approve and grant any dispensation to exempt a Member from the requirement in Standing Orders to attend at least one Authority meeting within a six month consecutive period, subject to the dispensation being approved and granted either prior to, or before the end of, the six month consecutive period concerned. For clarity, Authority meeting also includes Committee meetings of the Authority or any joint committee to which a Member has been appointed by the Authority.
- 5.7. In accordance with Standing Orders, to affix (and attest the affixing of) the Seal of the Authority to any relevant document.

Agenda Item 9

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/23/20
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 SEPTEMBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES & OUTSIDE BODIES
LEAD OFFICER	Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Authority
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>That the following appointments be made until the Authority's annual meeting in 2024:</i></p> <p>(a). Audit & Governance Committee – Councillors Clayton and Sproston to replace Councillors Power and Gilmour respectively;</p> <p>(b). Local Pension Board - Councillor Trail BEM to step down and a replacement be appointed to this vacancy at the meeting;</p> <p>(c). DELT Working Group – Councillor Cook-Woodman to be appointed to the vacancy left by Councillor Thomas; and</p> <p>(d). Local Pension Board – Maria Phillips to be appointed to the Scheme Manager vacancy.</p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>At its annual meeting on 12 June 2023, the Authority made appointments to its committees and outside bodies until the Authority's next annual meeting in 2024 (Minute DSFRA/23/5 refers).</p> <p>Since the annual meeting, the Democratic Services Manager has been notified of requests to change some of these appointments, specifically on Audit & Governance Committee and the Local Pension Board as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit & Governance Committee – Councillors Clayton and Sproston to replace Councillors Power and Gilmour respectively; • Local Pension Board - Councillor Trail BEM to step down and this vacancy be filled at the meeting; <p>There is a vacancy on the DELT Working Group to replace Councillor Thomas who was not re-appointed in June 2023. Councillor Cook-Woodman has expressed an interest in this vacancy which is felt to be appropriate given his role as Chair of the Authority.</p> <p>There is also a vacancy for a Scheme Manager appointment on the Local Pension Board as a result of the retirement of the former Director of Governance & Digital Services. It is recommended that this vacancy be filled by the Assistant Director, Corporate Services – Maria Phillips.</p>

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Not applicable
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Report DSFRA/23/11 to the Authority's annual meeting on 12 June 2023 (and the Minutes of that meeting).

EMMA JACKMAN
Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority

Agenda Item 10

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/23/21
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 SEPTEMBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	EXTRAORDINARY AUTHORITY MEETING TO CONSIDER THE DELT SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE
LEAD OFFICER	Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That an Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority be scheduled for Tuesday 31 October 2023 at 10:00hours to consider and determine the DELT Shared Services business case.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	It is proposed to hold the extraordinary meeting of the Authority on Tuesday 31 October 2023 at 10:00hours. This date has been checked against constituent authority calendars and no clashes have been identified.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Nil.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On 19 April 2023, the Authority considered a report on a proposal for “in principle” agreement to sign up to Delt Shared Services as a shareholder (Minute DSFRA/22/38 refers).
- 1.2. This built on the report submitted to the Authority at its meeting on 12 December 2022 (Minute DSFRA/22/26 refers) which had set out options for digital transformation within the Service to facilitate progression of the Service’s Target Operating Model being developed currently to ensure:
 - the Service was affordable both now and in the future;
 - the provision of core service delivery functions effectively; and
 - that communities were kept safe.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The Authority resolved on 19 April 2023 to:
 - (a). approve, in principle, becoming a shareholder in DELT Shared Services Ltd. to facilitate ICT/Digital Services provision to the Service from DELT;
 - (b). establish a Member Working Party to work alongside Officers to oversee development of the Business Case for the DELT Shared Services option, membership to include Councillors Coles, Hendy, Peart, Randall Johnson and Thomas; and
 - (c). relevant Officers being delegated authority to implement, on behalf of the Authority, this in principle agreement, subject to the production of, and approval by the Executive Board, of a satisfactory full Business Case identifying all relevant risks, costs and benefits to the Service.
- 2.2. Work has been progressing since the meeting on 19 April 2023 on pulling together the requisite business case.
- 2.3. In conjunction with this, the Executive Board has been developing a target operating model for the whole organisation to ensure that it is effective, efficient, and economically sustainable for the future. Delivery of this target operating model is critically dependent on a well-functioning ICT capability. Process changes enabled by ICT are a key enabler for improved efficiency throughout the Service. The Service’s ambition to become a data-led, risk-based, intelligent organisation depends upon high quality, timely and efficient ICT delivery.

3. DELT BUSINESS CASE

- 3.1. Whilst work has been progressing on the business case, this is a matter that requires the utmost due diligence. The Executive Board needs to ensure that the correct information is presented which is factually accurate, identifies all risks and benefits and which includes detailed costings so that an informed decision can be taken on the business case presented in due course.

- 3.2. Further to this, whilst the resolution made by the Authority on 19 April 2023 seems to indicate at part (c). above that this matter was delegated to the Executive Board to determine, there has been further debate on this matter. Given that this is an important strategic decision which will have huge impact on staff, it is felt appropriate to refer this matter to the Authority for the final decision based on the Executive Board's recommendation.
- 3.3. Taking account of these issues and having consulted with the Chair of the Authority, it is proposed that submission of the final business case to the Authority be delayed until late October 2023 and that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority be set up to consider this matter.
- 3.4. It is proposed to hold the Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority on Tuesday 31 October 2023 at 10:00hours. This date has been checked against constituent authority calendars and no clashes have been identified.

EMMA JACKMAN
Monitoring Officer & Clerk to the Authority

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/23/22
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 SEPTEMBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On Wednesday 27 July 2022, HMICFRS published the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (DSFRS) 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs). Progress against these is monitored by the Authority's committees with a full update against the action plan presented to the Authority twice per year.</p> <p>This report outlines the progress that has been made against the HMICFRS Areas for Improvement action plan to date. The key highlights are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One action within the Cause of Concern action plan is currently recorded as 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is due to the following factor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The trainee/ trainer charter will be presented for feedback at the next Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission (scheduled October 2023). A further update will be provided once this has taken place. The customer charter will be shared with the extended leadership team by 15/09/2023 and then published to the wider organisation. • 3 Areas for Improvement are currently recorded as 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dependencies associated with the Target Operating Model (HMI-2.2-202206b: Estates Strategy). - Once action which has not been completed in the required timeframe due to cross-department dependencies (HMI-2.2-202207b: Response - Technology and Innovation). - Delays in the development of a revised recruitment policy, to include a process for monitoring temporary promotions (HMI-3.2-202210: Temporary Promotions).

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On Wednesday 27th July 2022 HMICFRS published the DSFRS 2022 inspection report. The inspection report identified one Cause of Concern and 14 Areas for Improvement (AFIs).
- 1.2. This report provides an update on the Cause of Concern and Areas For Improvement action plan that has been produced following the inspection, which concluded in October 2021.

2. CAUSE OF CONCERN ACTION COMPLETION STATUS

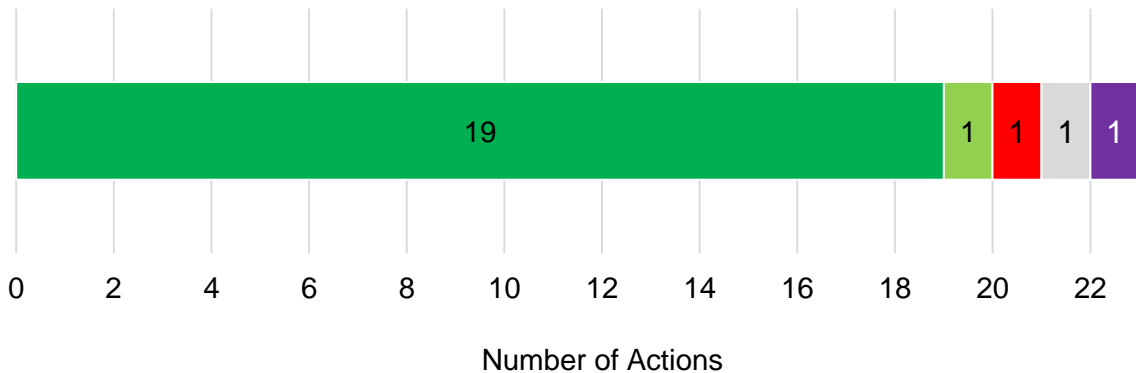
2.1. The Cause of Concern is as follows:

“The service has shown a clear intent from the executive board to improve the culture of the service. However, more needs to be done throughout the organisation. We have found evidence of poor behaviours that are not in line with service values. Some staff didn’t have the confidence to report these issues. By 31st August 2022, the service should develop an action plan to:

- Make sure that its values and behaviours are understood and demonstrated at all levels of the organisation.
- Make sure that staff are trained and supported to identify and challenge inappropriate behaviour when identified and that they have clear mechanisms in place to raise their concerns.”

2.2. 23 actions have been established to address the Cause of Concern. Figure 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions.

Figure 1: Cause of Concern Action Status - September 2023



- Completed
- In Progress - On Track
- In Progress - Off Track
- Not Started - On Track (Evidence and Assurance)
- No Longer Required

2.3. Table 1 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 1: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Cause of Concern – Values and Behaviours						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	No Longer Required
1 *	0	1	1	19	0	1

* Please note that the action which has not yet started is the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

2.4. The overall status of the Cause of Concern is currently 'In Progress – Off Track'. This is due to one action around expectations documents (charters) being off track for a target completion date of 28/02/2023. A progress update and factors impacting delivery are outlined in table 2 below:

Table 2:

Ref.	Description	Progress Update	Target Completion
01a.07	Expectations documents x3 (charters) between: a. Trainers and recruits, b. Staff and clients/ customers/ partners (external), c. Staff and staff (internal)	<p>Information to support departments creating team charters has been published on the intranet. This element of the action will be marked as completed.</p> <p>The trainee/ trainer charter will be presented for feedback at the next Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission (scheduled October 2023). A further update will be provided once this has taken place.</p> <p>The customer charter will be circulated to the extended leadership team by 15/09/2023 and will be published in Shout Out week commencing 18/09/2023.</p>	28/02/2023

3. **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN COMPLETION STATUS**

3.1. Table 3 below lists the Areas For Improvement and their individual implementation status.

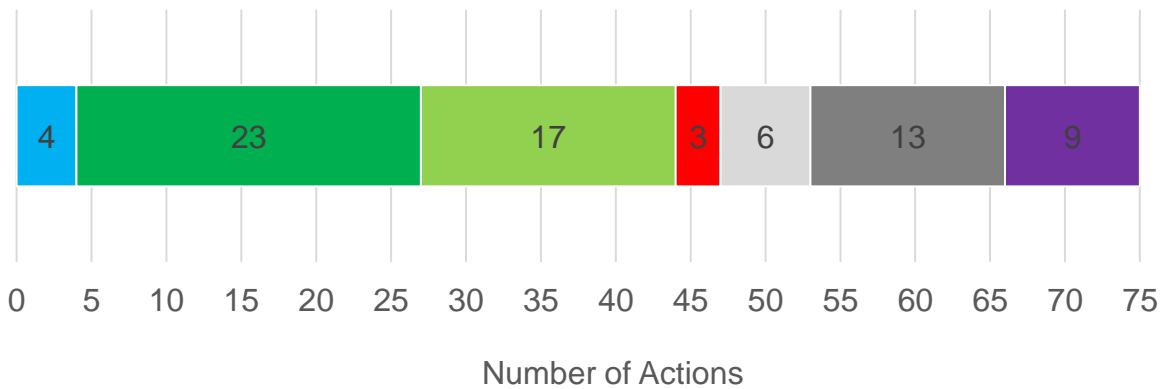
Table 3:

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-1.1-202202	IRMP Mitigating Risk	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-1.2-202203	Prevention Activity	29/02/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-1.2-202204	Safeguarding Training	30/04/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-1.3-202205	QA Audits and FSCs	30/11/2023	In Progress – On Track
HMI-2.2-202206a	Fleet Strategy	31/01/2024	Closed
HMI-2.2-202206b	Estates Strategy	31/01/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-2.2-202207a	Prevention and Protection - Technology and Innovation	30/04/2025	In Progress – On Track
HMI-2.2-202207b	Response - Technology and Innovation	31/07/2024	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.1-202208	Secondary Contracts	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202209	Workforce Planning	30/09/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.2-202210	Temporary Promotions	31/12/2023	In Progress – Off Track
HMI-3.3-202211	Grievance Procedures	31/01/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.3-202212	Positive Action	30/09/2023	Completed
HMI-3.4-202213	Selection and Promotions Process	31/01/2025	In Progress – On Track

Reference	Description	Target Completion	Status
HMI-3.4-202214	PDR Process	30/06/2024	In Progress – On Track
HMI-3.4-202215	High-Potential Staff	N/A	Paused

3.2. Figure 2 below outlines the completion status of all actions designed to address the Areas For Improvement outlined above.

Figure 2: Areas for Improvement Action Status - September 2023



- Closed
- Completed
- In Progress - On Track
- In Progress - Off Track
- Not Started - On Track
- Not Started - On Track (Evidence and Assurance)
- No Longer Required/ Paused

3.3. Table 4 below outlines the completion status of these actions in table view.

Table 4: Summary of progress against the individual actions						
Areas for Improvement						
Not started (on track)	Not started (off track)	In progress (on track)	In progress (off track)	Completed	Closed	Paused/ No Longer Required
19 *	0	17	3	23	4	9

* Please note that 6 of the actions which have not yet started are the evidence and assurance required once all other actions have been completed.

4. AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT WHICH ARE ‘OFF-TRACK’

4.1. The tables below outline the Areas for Improvement which are currently marked as ‘In Progress – Off Track’ and the factors impacting delivery.

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-2.2-202206b – Estates Strategy	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
The Estates strategy has been drafted and the Head of Estates is currently in discussion with the Chief Fire Officer and Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Director of Service Delivery Support) on how to progress this moving forward, aligned to the Target Operating Model.	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-2.2-202207b – Response - Technology and Innovation	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
Paper based systems have been identified and action is now being taken to review these with the relevant departments and make recommendations for improvements. This action will remain as ‘In Progress – Off Track’ as the target completion date has now passed and the action has not been completed within the required timeframe.	

Improvement Area	Status
HMI-3.2-202210 – Temporary Promotions	In Progress – Off Track
Factors impacting delivery	
The HR team are currently working on a revised recruitment policy, to include a process to continually monitor temporary promotion positions to understand why they are being offered to individuals. This action will remain as ‘In Progress – Off Track’ until the new policy and process have been implemented.	

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer

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REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/23/23
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	25 SEPTEMBER 2023
SUBJECT OF REPORT	HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY & FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS) CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Fire Officer
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the committee notes the content of the paper.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>On Friday 31 March 2023, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary & Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 20 which are specific for fire and rescue services.</p> <p>This report outlines the progress that has been made against these recommendations since the report was published in March 2023.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three recommendations remain 'In Progress' despite the recommendation deadlines now having passed. This is due to the following factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Head of Organisational Assurance is currently producing a paper to outline a proposed structure for a professional standards function. Once this has been considered by the Executive Board, the action status will be reviewed. The action will remain marked as 'In Progress' until this has taken place. The action will remain marked as 'In Progress' until these conversations have taken place (Recommendation 04). - Recommendations 32 (Diversity in succession planning) and 33 (progression of non-operational staff) have not been fully addressed by the Service, therefore will remain 'In Progress'.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Considered within the Action Plan where appropriate.
APPENDICES	None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS	HMICFRS Report – Values and Culture in Fire and Rescue Services
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. On Friday 31 March 2023, HMICFRS published a report into the values and culture in fire and rescue services. The report contains 35 recommendations, 1 specific for the police, 14 which require action at a national level and 20 which are specific for fire and rescue services.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on the action plan to address these recommendations.

2. CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS COMPLETION STATUS

- 2.1. An update has been provided to HMICFRS, via their online document sharing platform, detailing the actions the Service has taken against each of the 20 recommendations for the fire and rescue sector.
- 2.2. Figure 1 overleaf outlines current progress against addressing these recommendations (as at 13/09/2023), as reported to HMICFRS, with the colour coding as follows:
 - Blue (B): Closed (evidence has been reviewed by the HMICFRS Governance Board and the Executive Board has approved the closure)
 - Dark Green (DG): Completed (awaiting approval from the Executive Board for closure)
 - Green (G): In Progress On-Track
 - Amber (A): In Progress (recommendation deadline not met)
 - Grey (GY): Not Started On-Track

Figure 1: HMICFRS Culture Recommendations Completion Status



3. CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH ARE ‘IN PROGRESS’ (DEADLINE NOT MET)

3.1. Table 1 below outlines the recommendations which are currently marked as ‘In Progress’ where the recommendation deadline has not been met. Factors impacting the delivery of actions to address these recommendations are detailed in Table 2.

Table 1:

DSFRS Ref.	Description	Deadline	Status
REC04	Handling of raised concerns	01/06/2023	In Progress
REC32	Diversity in succession planning	01/06/2023	In Progress
REC33	Progression of non-operational staff	01/08/2023	In Progress

4. CULTURE RECOMMENDATION ACTIONS WHICH ARE ‘OFF TRACK’

4.1. Table 2 below outlines the individual actions within the culture recommendations action plan that are marked as ‘In Progress – Off Track’ and directly impact the completion of a recommendation.

Table 2:

Action Ref.	Description	Factors impacting action delivery
REC04.02	REC04 Evidence and Assurance (Handling of raised concerns)	The Head of Organisational Assurance is currently producing a paper to outline a proposed structure for a professional standards function. Once this has been considered by the Executive Board, the action status will be reviewed. The action will remain marked as 'In Progress' until this has taken place.
REC32.02	REC32 Evidence and Assurance (Diversity in succession planning)	Evidence and assurance is off track as actions to address the recommendation have not been completed in line with the deadline of 01/06/2023.
REC33.01	REC33 Evidence and Assurance (Progression of non-operational staff)	Evidence and assurance is off track as actions to address the recommendation have not been completed in line with the deadline of 01/08/2023.

GAVIN ELLIS
Chief Fire Officer

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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