

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

12 December 2022

Present:

Councillors Randall-Johnson (Chair), Brazil, Chesterton, Coles, Cook-Woodman (Vice-Chair), Drear, Hannaford, Kendall, Kerley, Long, Peart, Prowse, Shayer, Sully, Thomas and Trail BEM.

Apologies:

Councillors Aspinall, Best, Biederman, Clayton, Hendy, Power, Radford, Roome and Sellis.

DSFRA/22/21 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2022 be signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/22/22 Minutes of Committees

a People Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Hannaford, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2022 which had considered, among other things:

- A performance monitoring report against Authority-approved Strategic Priority 3 for the second quarter of 2022-23;
- A report on the outcome of a review for measuring core competencies;
- The Gender Pay Gap report 2022;
- Use by the Service of the Apprenticeship Levy; and
- An update on progress with the Action Plan to address the Cause for Concern and Areas for Improvement identified by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) following its inspection of the Service in 2021.

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

b Community Safety Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Chesterton, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2022 which had considered, among other things:

- Reports on performance against Authority-approved Strategic Priorities 1 and 2 for quarter 4 of 2021-22 and quarter 1 of 2022-23;
- A report on Home Fire Safety Visits performance;
- A report on the review process following a fatal fire death;
- A report on fire engine availability for the period December 2016 to November 2021, together with the latest seven months from December 2021 to June 2022; and

- A report on progress against the Action Plan to address those Areas for Improvement falling within the remit of the Committee and raised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HIMCFRS) following its last inspection of the Service in 2021.

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

c Resources Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Peart, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2022 which had considered, among other things:

- A report on Treasury Management Performance at Quarter 2 of 2022-23;
- A report on Service Financial Performance at Quarter 2 of 2022-23; and
- A report on Red One Ltd. Financial Performance at Quarter 2 of 2022-23.

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

d Audit & Governance Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brazil, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2022 which had considered, among other things:

- An urgent item on appointment of a Vice-Chair to the Committee following a recent vacancy to this post;
- A report on progress against the approved internal audit plan for 2022-23;
- An update report on the Service Corporate Risk Register;
- A report on progress with the Action Plan to address those Areas for Improvement falling within the remit of the Committee and raised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services following its last inspection of the Service in 2021; and
- The 2021-22 Annual Report of the Authority's Local Pensions Board for firefighter pension schemes.

RESOLVED

- (i). That, as recommended by the Committee, Councillor Thomas be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee (and ex-officio appointee to the Devon Audit Partnership Committee) until the Authority's next Annual Meeting;
- (ii). That, subject to (i) above, the Minutes be adopted in accordance with Standing Orders.

(See also Minute DSFRA/22/23 below)

DSFRA/22/23 Appointments to Committees 2022-23 Municipal Year

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/21) inviting the Authority to appoint, in accordance with Standing Orders, to vacancies on the Audit & Governance and Community Safety Committees arising from a change in representation by Plymouth City Council on the Authority.

RESOLVED that:

- (a). Councillor Aspinall be appointed to the Resources Committee (in place of Councillor McGeough);
- (b). Councillor McGeough be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Audit & Governance Committee; and
- (c). Councillor Drear be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Community Safety Committee

in each case, the appointments to be until the next Authority annual meeting.

(See also Minute DSFRA/22/22(d) above)

DSFRA/22/24 Appointment of Independent Members to the Audit & Governance Committee - Further Considerations

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/22) on further considerations for the appointment of two independent, co-opted members to serve on the Audit & Governance Committee, as recommended in the 2022 CIPFA Position Statement “Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police” and approved by the Authority at its last meeting (Minute DSFRA/22/20 refers).

The report identified, at Section 2, the proposed Term of Office for the appointees together with a mechanism for re-appointment (at the Authority annual meeting each year, with effect from 2024) and provisions for both the Authority and appointee to terminate the appointment.

RESOLVED that the Term of Office and appointment provisions for independent, co-opted members of the Audit & Governance Committee, as set out in Section 2 of report DSFRA/22/22, be approved.

DSFRA/22/25 Members' Allowances

a Scheme of Members' Allowances - Increase in Rates for 2022-23 Financial Year

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/23) on an increase in Members' Allowances for the current (2022-23) financial year.

The Approved Scheme of Members' Allowances provided for allowances to be increased in line the increase approved by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the “Green Book”). For 2022-23, however, rather than a percentage increase, the approved increase was for a flat-rate of £1,925 across all NJC spinal column points.

The report identified the implications of this both for employees of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service and in relation to the current rates of Members' allowances.

Having debated the report, Councillor Thomas suggested that Members Allowances be increased by a percentage representing the mid-point of the range of percentage increases for Service Green book staff and **MOVED** (with Councillor Peart seconding):

“that Members allowances for the 2022-23 financial year be increased by 6.5%, with effect from 1 April 2022”

The Motion was put to the vote whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- (a). that Members allowances for the 2022-23 financial year be increased by 6.5%, with effect from 1 April 2022; and
- (b). that the Clerk be authorised to amend the published Scheme of Allowances to reflect the new rates.

(See also Minute DSFRA/22/25(b) below)

b Confirmation of Members' Allowances Scheme 2023-24

The Authority considered a report of the Director of Governance & Digital Services (DSFRA/22/24) on the Scheme of Members' Allowances to operate for the 2023-24 financial year. Regulations required the Authority to approve its Scheme of Allowances prior to the start of each financial year and to publish details of the Scheme so approved in the area of the Authority.

The report also identified that, although not required by the Regulations to have its own Independent Remunerations Panel, the Authority had historically commissioned an independent review of its Allowances Scheme every four years.

Having debated the report, Councillor Chesterton **MOVED**, with Councillor Hannaford seconding:

- (a). That the Scheme of Members' Allowances to operate for the 2023-24 financial year be as set out in Table 1 of report DSFRA/22/24, uprated to reflect the earlier decision of the Authority on the increase in allowances payable during 2022-23;
- (b). That, in the event of a flat-rate increase arising from the Green Book pay award in any future year, the automatic uprating applied should be the percentage increase on the overall Green Book staffing budget resulting from the pay award; and
- (c). That the rates for reimbursement of travel and subsistence to operate for the 2023-24 financial year be as set out in Tables 2 and 3 respectively of the report.

The Motion was put to the vote whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- (a). That the Scheme of Members' Allowances to operate for the 2023-24 financial year be as set out in Table 1 of report DSFRA/22/24, uprated to reflect the earlier decision of the Authority on the increase in allowances payable during 2022-23;
- (b). That, in the event of a flat-rate increase arising from the Green Book pay award in any future year, the automatic uprating applied should be the percentage increase on the overall Green Book staffing budget resulting from the pay award;
- (c). That the rates for reimbursement of travel and subsistence to operate for the 2023-24 financial year be as set out in Tables 2 and 3 respectively of the report; and
- (d). That the Clerk be authorised:
 - (i). to amend the Scheme of Members' Allowances accordingly and to publicise details of the Scheme in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority; and
 - (ii). to commission an independent review of the Members' Allowance Scheme to inform a decision on the Scheme to apply from the 2024-25 financial year.

(See also Minute DSFRA/22/25(a) above)

DSFRA/22/26 Digital Services: Strategic Outline Case - Progress Update

The Authority received, for information, a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/22/25) on progress in developing a Target Operating Model for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service and specifically on options for digital transformation within the Service, which would be a key enabler for the Target Operating Model, to maximise technological advances within available resources.

The Meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.25 am

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