

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>REPORT REFERENCE NO.</b>                 | <b>DSFRA/24/13</b>  |
| <b>MEETING</b>                              | <b>DEVON &amp; SOMERSET FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY</b>   |
| <b>DATE OF MEETING</b>                      | <b>25 MARCH 2024</b>  |
| <b>SUBJECT OF REPORT</b>                    | <b>APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES</b>   |
| <b>LEAD OFFICER</b>                         | <b>Clerk to the Authority (&amp; Monitoring Officer)</b>  |
| <b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>                      | <p><b>(a). <i>That Councillors Biederman, Cook-Woodman, Coles, Hendy, Peart, Slade and Sully be appointed to serve on the Shareholder Committee until the Annual Meeting of the Authority in June 2024;</i></b></p> <p><b>(b). <i>that the consequential vacancies on the Audit &amp; Governance Committee left by Councillors Biederman, Coles (Chair), Slade and Sully be filled at the meeting as appropriate; and</i></b></p> <p><b>(c). <i>that the overall position on appointments to committees be reviewed at the Authority's Annual General Meeting in June 2024.</i></b></p> |
| <b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>                    | <p>On 16 February 2024, the Authority agreed the establishment of a Shareholder Committee to oversee the performance of Red One Ltd. and to provide greater transparency on all elements of the company's operations.</p> <p>This report sets out the proposed appointments to the Shareholder Committee and consequential impact on appointments to the Audit &amp; Governance Committee.</p>  |
| <b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>                | As indicated in the paper.  |
| <b>EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS</b> | An initial assessment has not identified any equality issues emanating from this report.  |
| <b>APPENDICES</b>                           | None.   |
| <b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>                    | Report DSFRA/34/7 and Minute DSFRA/23/xx refer.   |

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. At its meeting on 16 February 2024, the Authority received a report (DSFRA/24/7) on the outcome of the governance review undertaken by the Devon Audit Partnership which recommended, amongst other matters, the establishment of a Shareholder Committee.
- 1.2. The Shareholder Committee will provide the necessary oversight from a shareholder perspective and affords a formal route for the Authority and, where appropriate, Statutory Officers, to have an active, strategic role in the direction of the company and provide proportionate oversight and scrutiny of its affairs. The aim is to ensure that the objectives and policies that the Authority, as the sole shareholder, has established for the company are being adhered to. This is in addition to the Annual General Meeting which ROL hold with the Authority as its sole shareholder.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE**

- 2.1. The Authority resolved to appoint seven Members to include the Authority Chair and the Chair of Resources Committee together with five Members to be drawn from membership of the Authority, with the exception of Audit and Governance Committee which recognises their scrutiny and assurance role.
- 2.2. The Clerk to the Authority has considered the principles set out within the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (section 15) which states:
  - (a). that not all the seats are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b). that the majority of seats are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the authority’s membership;
  - (c). subject to (a) and (b) above, that the total number of all seats of the ordinary committees allocated to each particular political group reflects the group’s proportion to the membership of the authority;
  - (d). subject to (a) – (c) above, that the number of seats allocated to a particular political group reflects that group’s proportion of the membership of the authority.
- 2.3. With the inception of the new Shareholder Committee (7 Members), this will result in there being 45 places for allocation to Members (instead of 38 currently). Based on the current political balance on the Authority (Conservatives 48%, Liberal Democrats 32%, Labour 16%, Independent 4%).
- 2.4. In view of this, to conform with (a) to (d). above and taking account of existing appointments to committees, it is recommended that the allocation of places on the new Shareholder Committee should be:

|                |                    |          |               |
|----------------|--------------------|----------|---------------|
| 3 Conservative | 2 Liberal Democrat | 1 Labour | 1 Independent |
|----------------|--------------------|----------|---------------|

- 2.5. Authority Members were contacted on 1 March 2024 to seek expressions of interest for appointment to this Committee. Members were encouraged to consider their skills and experience in a commercial environment either now or previously or who have an interest in developing such skills.
- 2.6. The Clerk has received expressions of interest from the following Authority Members seeking appointment to this Committee:
- Councillor Biederman (Independent)
  - Councillor Coles (Liberal Democrat)
  - Councillor Hendy (Labour)
  - Councillor Slade (Conservative)
  - Councillor Sully (Liberal Democrat)
- 2.7. Councillors Cook-Woodman and Peart will be appointed by virtue of their roles as Authority Chair and Chair of Resources Committee respectively (both Conservative group).
- 2.8. The appointments of Councillors Biederman, Coles, Slade and Sully to the Shareholder Committee would result in vacancies on the Audit & Governance Committee. This is because there should not be any overlap in membership given the need for this Committee to provide scrutiny and oversight of all Authority functions including that of Red One Limited to accord with good governance principles. These vacancies will also need to be filled and nominations will be sought at the Authority's meeting on 25 March 2024.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1. The appointments to the Committee should conform to the requirements for political balance overall and on all committees in accordance with the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. The Clerk to the Authority will review the overall position on appointments to Committees and report back to the Authority thereon at its Annual General Meeting on 10 June 2024.

**SAMANTHA SHARMAN**  
**Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)**