

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

26 SEPTEMBER 2006

2.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr W F Gillespie, Chair presiding
Mr C Lammey, Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
Mrs B Gilliland
Mr J Beattie
Mr P Bradley
Mr J Campbell
Mr K Harper
Mr G A Hatch
Mr D McKay
Mr J McKeever

APOLOGIES: Mrs P Tally
Mr R Pollock

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr L Jones, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Mr P Craig, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Development)
Mr T Wright, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Technical Development)
Ms A Conley, Director of Human Resources
Dr D Michail, Director of Planning & Corporate Affairs
Mr T McGonigal, Director of Finance & Performance Management
Mrs I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary

1 Apologies

Apologies were noted.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 July 2006, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, on the motion of Mr McKeever, seconded by Mrs Gilliland.

Arising from the Minutes:

Appointment of Temporary Discipline Committee

The Chair sought an update on progress with respect to the establishment of a temporary Discipline Committee to deal with a case outstanding under the old Fire Service (Discipline) Regulations Northern Ireland 1985.

The Director of Human Resources outlined the current position and explained that it was hoped to set a date in November. She referred to former Members of the Fire Authority's Discipline Committee who were trained and suggested that they be approached regarding the establishment of the temporary Discipline Committee. Members agreed.

Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (NI) Order 2006

Members noted NIFRS draft response to the Draft Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (NI) Order 2006 which had been prepared by the Chief Fire Officer and circulated to Members for consideration.

The Board, on the motion of Mrs Gilliland, seconded by Mr Campbell, unanimously –

Resolved: “to approve NIFRS response to the Draft Fire & Rescue Services (Emergencies) (NI) Order 2006”.

The Chair reminded Members that there was also an opportunity to make a response to the consultation document individually.

3 Draft Standing Orders

Members noted the draft Standing Orders incorporating suggestions for improvement made at the Away Day.

Referring to the Discussion Workshop held prior to the Board Meeting, the Chair reminded Members that agreement had been reached with regard to the draft Standing Orders with the exception of the Committee structure and some minor amendments.

Mr McKay proposed that the draft Standing Orders be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. Following discussion as to whether it was necessary to equality screen the draft Standing Orders, **it was agreed that advice should be sought from the Equality Commission on the matter. It was also agreed that should the Equality Commission indicate that equality screening was necessary, an Equality Impact Assessment would be progressed.**

The Chair referred Members to the Committee Structure proposed within the draft Standing Orders and also the alternative Committee Structures proposed by Mr Bradley and Mr Harper.

Following discussion and a vote, the Board, on the motion of Mr Hatch, seconded by Mr Campbell unanimously agreed that the Committee Structure contained within the draft Standing Orders should be adopted.

Mr Hatch suggested that consideration be given to increasing the Committee membership to allow for an overlap especially in respect of the Service Delivery and Service Support Committees. Members unanimously agreed that the Audit Committee should consist of 4 Board Members while the Service Support and Service Delivery Committees should consist of 6 Board Members in addition to the 2 ex-officio Members.

Subsequently the Board, on the motion of Mr Harper, seconded by Mr Campbell, unanimously –

Resolved: **“to adopt the draft Standing Orders subject to the agreed minor amendments”.**

Scheme of Delegation

Members noted the Scheme of Delegation which had been considered at the Discussion Workshop prior to the Board Meeting.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Bradley, seconded by Mr McKeever, unanimously –

Resolved: **“to approve the Scheme of Delegation subject to the agreed minor amendments”.**

Procurement Policy

Members noted the Procurement Policy which had been considered at the Discussion Workshop prior to the Board Meeting.

Mr McKay proposed that the Policy be Equality Impact Assessed. Members agreed.

The Board, on the motion of Mrs Gilliland, seconded by Mr Campbell, unanimously -

Resolved: **“to approve the Procurement Policy subject to the agreed minor amendments”.**

Code of Best Practice

Members noted that the Code of Best Practice had been considered at the Discussion Workshop prior to the Board Meeting.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Bradley, seconded by Mr Harper, unanimously –

Resolved: **“to approve the Code of Best Practice subject to the agreed minor amendments”.**

4 Election to Committees

The Chair circulated a paper outlining possible Committee membership for consideration. He explained that the membership had been prepared in light of his discussions with individual Members.

The Board, on the motion of Mr McKeever, seconded by Mrs Gilliland, unanimously –

Resolved: “that the membership of the Standing Committees should be as follows:

Service Delivery Committee

**Mr J Beattie;
Mr K Harper;
Mr D McKay;
Mr J McKeever;
Mr R Pollock;
Mrs P Tally.**

Service Support Committee

**Mr P Bradley;
Mr J Campbell;
Mrs B Gilliland;
Mr K Harper;
Mr A Hatch;
Mr D McKay.**

Audit Committee

**Mr J Campbell;
Mrs B Gilliland;
Mr J McKeever;
Mr R Pollock.**

The Chair referred to the election of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs and invited nominations for the post of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Service Delivery Committee.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Beattie, seconded by Mr McKeever, unanimously agreed that Mr Harper be elected Chair of the Service Delivery Committee. On the motion of Mr Harper, seconded by Mr McKeever, it was agreed that Mr Beattie be elected Vice-Chair of the Service Delivery Committee.

It was accordingly –

Resolved: **“that Mr K Harper be elected Chair and Mr J Beattie be elected Vice-Chair of the Service Delivery Committee”.**

The Chair invited nominations for the post of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Service Support Committee.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mrs Gilliland, unanimously agreed that Mr Hatch be elected Chair of the Service Support Committee. On the motion of Mr Hatch, seconded by Mr Bradley, it was agreed that Mrs Gilliland be elected Vice-Chair of the Service Support Committee.

It was accordingly –

Resolved: **“that Mr A Hatch be elected Chair and Mrs B Gilliland be elected Vice-Chair of the Service Support Committee”.**

The Chair invited nominations for the post of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee.

The Board, on the motion of Mrs Gilliland, seconded by Mr McKeever, unanimously agreed that Mr Campbell be elected Chair of the Audit Committee. On the motion of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mrs Gilliland, it was agreed that Mr McKeever be elected Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee.

It was accordingly –

Resolved: **“that Mr J Campbell be elected Chair and Mr J McKeever be elected Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee”.**

The Chair informed Members that the Remuneration Committee consisted of the Chair of the Board, the Chair of the Service Delivery, the Chair of the Service Support Committee and one other Member of the Board.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Harper, seconded by Mr Bradley, unanimously agreed that Mrs Tally be elected to serve on the Remuneration Committee.

Members noted that the Joint Negotiating Committee consisted of the Board Chair and Chief Fire Officer and the Chairs of the 3 functional Committees.

5 National Joint Council Matters

Report on Meetings

The Chair outlined the current position with respect to the issue of Continual Professional Development and explained that the Joint Working Group had been unable to reach an agreement.

The Chair gave Members a detailed overview of the difficulties associated with both continuing to pay the Long Service Increment until agreement is reached on CPD as proposed by the Fire Brigades' Union or commencing the phasing out of the payment of the Long Service Increment.

Following a detailed discussion, the Board, on the motion of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Bradley, unanimously –

Resolved: **“to await the outcome of the National Joint Council Meeting to be held on 29 September 2006 and to defer the phasing out of the Long Service Increment until 1 November 2006”.**

National Employers' Circulars

Members noted the following Circulars which had been circulated since the last Meeting of the Board.

- EMP/6/06 - Issued as a Confidential Circular;
- EMP/7/06 - Industrial Relations Training for Fire Authorities;
- EMP/8/06 - Contact Details for the NJC Employers' Secretariat;
- EMP/9/06 - Contact Details for the NJC Employers' Secretariat;
- EMP/10/06 - Technical Advisory Panel (Merseyside May 2006);
- EMP/11/06 - Introduction of Continual Professional Development Payments;
- NJC/6/06 - Technical Advisory Panel (Merseyside May 2006).

6 Chair's Business

The Chair gave Members a brief overview of his activities during the previous months.

Board's Christmas 'At Home'

The Chair informed Members that the Board's Christmas 'At Home' was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 12 December 2006.

Job Scene – Odyssey Arena

The Chair referred to the Job Scene being held at the Odyssey Arena on 28 and 29 September and highlighted that NIFRS would be participating.

World Extrication Challenge & Conference – South Africa (6-13 October 2006)

The Chair, on behalf of the Board, extended best wishes to the Chief Fire Officer and the Team from Red Watch, Crescent Link Fire Station, who are representing the UK at the World Extrication Challenge in South Africa.

7 Chief Fire Officer's Report

The Chief Fire Officer gave Members a brief overview of operational matters and incidents of note since the last Meeting of the Board.

He also informed Members that, on 4 August, NIFRS had received the Freedom of the Borough of Carrickfergus.

The Chief Fire Officer drew Members' attention to Items to Note, in particular he advised Members that the Coroner's Office were making preparations to hold an inquest for Leading Firefighter Joe McCloskey, Dungiven Fire Station who had died following fatal injuries he received at a fire at the Gorteen House Hotel, Limavady, on 31 October 2003.

The Chief Fire Officer also advised Members of a Report being prepared by the Northern Ireland Audit Office regarding the acquisition of NIFRS Training Centre at Boucher Crescent. He stated that once finalised, a copy of the NIAO report would be forwarded to Members along with the NIFRS response.

Equality Reports

Members noted the following draft Equality Reports which had been considered at the Discussion Workshop prior to the Board Meeting –

Report on Voluntary Undertaking;
Section 75 Annual Progress Report; and
5 year Review of the Equality Scheme.

The Board, on the motion of Mr McKay, seconded by Mr Harper, unanimously –

Resolved: **“to approve the draft Equality Reports listed subject to the agreed minor amendments”.**

Mr Bradley acknowledged the work contained within the documents and congratulated the Director of Human Resources and her staff on the excellent reports and their presentation.

At this point,
the Equality Manager left the Meeting

Management Accounts

The Director of Finance & Performance Management gave Members a brief overview of the Management Accounts for the period ending 31 August 2006.

8 Relevant Correspondence

Members noted the following relevant correspondence:

- (a) Writ of Summons from Solicitors acting on behalf of the McCloskey family; and
- (b) Letter of Commendation from the Minister, Paul Goggins, congratulating NIFRS on its work in Fire Safety.

9 Sealing of Documents

Members approved the sealing of the undernoted documents:

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service with –

Water Service – Licensee Agreement in respect of equipment at Slimero Service Reservoir and Tullyhill Service Reservoir.

10 Meetings of the Board and its Committees

Members noted that the next Board Meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 24 October 2006.

The Chair encouraged the Chairs of the 3 functional Committees to discuss the convening of Meetings with the Chief Fire Officer as soon as possible.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
AND THE MEETING TERMINATED
AT 4.05 PM
