

# NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

## MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING

21 JULY 2009

2.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr W F Gillespie, Chair presiding  
Mr C Lammey, Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive  
Mr P Bradley  
Mr J Campbell  
Mrs B Gilliland  
Mr R Pollock  
Mrs P Tally

APOLOGIES: Mr K Harper

IN ATTENDANCE: 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  
Mr B Kennedy, DHSSPS

Prior to the commencement of Business, the Chair referred to a concern raised by a Member of the Board regarding the late notification of the Special Meeting and the Board Administrative Secretary explained the delay.

The Chair, whilst seeking approval to continue with the Meeting, drew Members' attention to Standing Order 8 which states -

### NOTICE OF MEETING

8 The Agenda for the forthcoming Board Meeting and invitation to attend should be forwarded by the Board Administrative Secretary to each Board Member by Royal Mail (or any other means deemed to be effective) not less than 7 days before the Meeting. Late delivery or non-delivery of the Agenda will not by itself invalidate the convening of the Board Meeting. Dates for Board Meetings will also be advertised on NIFRS website.

Members unanimously agreed to continue with the Meeting.

The Chair, on behalf of Members, congratulated the Chief Fire Officer on his appointment as Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Down.

### 1 Apologies

Apologies were noted.

## 2 Ken Gibson Correspondence

Members noted correspondence received from Mr K Gibson.

The Chief Fire Officer gave Members an overview of the background relating to the matter raised by Mr Gibson and assured Members that it had been dealt with as sensitively as possible.

Following a detailed discussion, it was agreed that the Chair would write to Mr Gibson acknowledging his correspondence and noting that some of the suggestions he made on corporate governance would be considered by a current Review of NIFRS.

## 3 Legal Advice on Repayment

The Chief Fire Officer outlined the current position and Members noted that legal advice on repayment was still awaited.

## 4 Review

The Chair informed Members that he and the Chief Fire Officer had met with members of the Delivery & Innovation Team conducting the Comprehensive Review on 10 July. He explained that this had been a preliminary meeting and that various documents had been presented at the meeting for consideration by the Team. Members noted that a further meeting was scheduled to take place on 29 July 2009, after which the Team would be taking forward the Review.

The Chair explained that the Review Team would be meeting with the Principal Officers and Directors and added that Board Members would be given the opportunity to also meet with them.

The Chair reminded Members that the Review of Directors' Salaries would not commence until this Review was complete.

## 5 O'Brien Pension Issue

The Chair reminded Members of the process which had been agreed by the Board in respect of the O'Brien pension reconsideration. He informed Members that the Chief Fire Officer's and Fire Brigades' Union's submission had been received and it was his intention to distribute the documentation to colleagues following the Meeting.

The Chair advised Members that Mr Bradley wished to raise an issue relating to the matter.

-----

At this point,  
Mr Kennedy left the Meeting

-----

Mr Bradley referred to the Chief Fire Officer's attendance at a meeting of the Assembly Health Committee at which the matter of the O'Brien Pension issue had been raised and expressed concern that Members had not been advised of same.

-----

At this point,  
Mrs Tally entered the Meeting

-----

The Chief Fire Officer gave Members a brief background to the meeting and highlighted that upon explaining to the Committee that it was inappropriate that he discuss the matter given the Appeals process, the Meeting had concluded.

## **6 Chair's Business**

### **Membership of Board**

The Chair expressed concern regarding the loss of 4 colleagues from the Board, the District Council Members, and also in relation to how the matter had been dealt with. He explained that he had been informed that their appointments would not be extended and that replacements would not be named until the completion of the Review.

He also expressed concern as to how the Board would conduct its Business without 4 of its Members, including 3 Committee Vice-Chairs and the Chair of the Equality & Diversity Forum. He stated that consideration may have to be given to the revision of Committee structures as a result of these vacancies.

During discussion on the matter, Members expressed concern in relation to the wealth of knowledge lost to the Board and also the added pressure on the remaining Board Members to meet quorums for Committee Meetings, etc.

### **Tribunal Proceedings**

The Chair referred to issues which Mr Harper had asked be raised at the Meeting and the Chief Fire Officer informed Members of the current position in respect of recent Tribunal proceedings.

### **Official Opening – Armagh Community Fire Station**

Members noted that Armagh Community Fire Station would be officially opened by the Minister on 26 September 2009.

### **Executive Leadership Programme**

The Chair, on behalf of the Members, extended congratulations to Area Commander Eoin Doyle and Mrs Tonya McCormac, Strategic Planning Manager, on successfully completing the Executive Leadership Programme at Warwick University.

## **7 Chief Fire Officer's Business**

### **Relevant Correspondence**

The Chief Fire Officer referred to the outcomes of a Job Evaluation exercise which had recently been reported to the Remuneration Committee and informed Members that a letter of approval had been received from the Department.

### **Swine Flu**

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members of the current position with NIFRS.

Mrs Tally suggested that it would be useful if Contingency Plans for the autumn were presented to Members at the September Board Meeting.

## **8 Relevant Correspondence**

This was reported at Item 7.

The Chair reminded Members that should any Member feel a further Meeting of the Board was necessary during the summer to discuss same with him.

---

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS  
AND THE MEETING TERMINATED  
AT 3.15 PM

---