

# NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

## MINUTES OF A MEETING

27 SEPTEMBER 2016

3.50 PM

PRESENT: Ms C McKinney, Chairperson presiding  
Mr D Ashford, Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer  
Mr C Enright  
Mr K Henning  
Mr R Irvine  
Mr P Martin

APOLOGIES: Mr J Barbour  
Mr G Smyth

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Graham, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operational Support)  
Mr G Thompson, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Operations)  
Mr A Walmsley, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Protection)  
Mrs J Kelly, Director of Finance  
Mr D Moore, Director of Human Resources  
Miss D Reynolds, Business Assurance Manager  
Ms I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary  
Mr J Millar, DoH Observer

### Item 1: Apologies

Apologies were noted.

### Item 2: Conflicts of Interest

The Chairperson enquired as to whether any Members of the Board wished to declare any potential conflicts of interest with any of the business items on the Agenda. Members confirmed that there were no apparent conflicts of interest.

The Chairperson noted that, during the Closed Session Meeting prior to this Meeting, she had requested Members to review their declaration of interests to ensure currency. She requested that the Corporate Management Team also review their declaration of interests.

### Item 3: Minutes – 28 June 2016

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 28 June 2016, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, subject to an amendment, on the motion of Mr Enright, seconded by Mr Irvine.

#### **Item 4: Reports from Board Committees, including noting of Committee Minutes and adoption of Recommendations**

##### **Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Minutes – 16 June 2016**

The Minutes of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2016 were noted.

##### **Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Minutes – 28 June 2016**

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee held on 28 June 2016 were noted.

##### **Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Meeting – 13 September 2016**

Members noted that a Meeting of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee had been held on 13 September 2016. The Minutes of this Meeting will be presented to the November Board Meeting.

Mr Enright proposed that the recommendations emanating from the Meeting, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Irvine.

##### *Audit, Risk & Governance - Recommendations*

- Approval of the Audits of Asset Management, Management of Measured Term Contracts (MTC) and Station Audits, and the Review of Culture;
- Approval of the Corporate Business Plan Quarter 1 Progress Update (April to June 2016) and Balanced Scorecard;
- Approval of the draft Policy Development Framework subject to a minor amendment;
- Approval of the revised Conflicts of Interest & Confidentiality Procedure;
- Approval of the draft Corporate Governance & Accountability Framework subject to amendment and S75 review;
- Approval of draft NIFRS Corporate Planning & Performance Management Framework subject to minor amendment and S75 review.

##### **Service Delivery Committee – Minutes – 9 June 2016**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Service Delivery Committee held on 9 June 2016 were noted. Members also noted that the Board, at its Meeting on 28 June 2016, approved the recommendations as contained within the Minutes.

##### **Service Delivery Committee – Minutes – 25 August 2016**

The Minutes of the Service Delivery Committee held on 25 August 2016 were noted.

Mr Henning, Vice-Chairperson of the Service Delivery Committee, provided an overview of the key business discussed and the recommendations emanating from the Meeting. He proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Irvine.

### *Service Delivery – Recommendations*

- Approval that NIFRS review the existing Fire Safety Strategy to incorporate the findings of the CFOA Business Strategy Group – Audit and Data Gathering Group; progress the development of a Short Audit process for Inspecting Officers based on the recommendations and guidance in the CFOA report; and a Short Audit process be introduced within NIFRS taking cognisance of the CFOA report, commencing during the Business Planning Year 2017/18; and
- Approval of proposed risk calculation amendment.

Mr Martin referred to fire safety visits to schools, etc, and, whilst acknowledging NIFRS' budget has been reduced, expressed concern with regard to the impact on visits to locations further away from Area Headquarters. He asked if the budget could be revisited given the positive impact of such visits.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Walmsley acknowledged the impact of the budget reduction noting that the budget pressure remains. He informed Members of the introduction of a new suite of Local Performance Indicators (LPIs) which assists with the breakdown of budget and a way forward. He explained that there will also be Community Protection leads at Areas and outlined their role. Assistant Chief Fire Officer Walmsley pointed out the need for more focused engagement.

The Chairperson indicated her support for the fire safety visits and also with regard to the LIFE Schemes which have positive outcomes.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Walmsley outlined the current position with respect to the LIFE Schemes explaining that NIFRS is considering a new Scheme. He also noted NIFRS' partnership with the Prince's Trust.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Thompson referred to a potential review of the work routine of Wholetime personnel with regard to community development activities and to consider if they can be utilised outside of their Station areas to undertake community engagement activities.

The Chairperson stated that she looked forward to receiving the proposals.

### **Resources Committee – Minutes – 16 June 2016**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 16 June 2016 were noted. Members also noted that the Board, at its Meeting on 28 June 2016, approved the recommendations as contained within the Minutes.

### **Resources Committee – Minutes – 25 August 2016**

The Minutes of the Resources Committee held on 25 August 2016 were noted.

Mr Henning, Chairperson of the Resources Committee, provided an overview of the key business discussed and the recommendations emanating from the Meeting. He proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Irvine.

### *Resources – Recommendations*

- Approval of the draft revised NIFRS Equality Scheme & Action Plan subject to consultation as appropriate;
- Approval of the Training to Development to Competent process and Payment procedure for Rathlin Volunteers;
- Approval of the Standby and Call-Out Policy & Procedure subject to any significant changes following consultation;
- Approval of the Reasonable Adjustments Policy subject to consultation;
- Approval to confirm voluntary severance for 4 x Employees; one within RCC and 3 within Support Staff; and
- Approval of the Implementation Plan for the revised Learning & Development structure and approval of the inclusion of the Driver/Assessor role within the Support establishment and the progression to advertisement.

### **Resources Committee – Meeting – 15 September 2016**

Members were informed that an additional Meeting of the Resources Committee had been held on 15 September 2016. The Minutes of this Meeting will be presented to the November Board Meeting.

Mr Henning, Chairperson of the Resources Committee, provided an overview of the recommendations emanating from the Meeting. He proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Enright.

### *Resources – Recommendations*

- Approval of the following HR policies subject to consultation as appropriate:
  - RTC Training Policy (subject to amendment); and
  - Casualty Care Training Policy;
- With respect to the Finance Directorate structure – approval for amended structure in light of developments in IT and Procurement; continuation of implementation of new structure, and finalisation of IT transfer of NIFRS staff and establishment of new arrangements; and
- Approval to renew, in the short-term, interim SLA with BSO for Procurement Services.

The Director of Finance referred to the Finance Directorate structure and clarified that approval had been given for the continuation of implementation of the new structure with the exception of Procurement. She explained that further information regarding the Procurement aspect is to be brought back to the next Meeting of the Resources Committee.

### **Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 28 June 2016**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 28 June 2016 were noted. Members also noted that the Board, at its Meeting on 28 June 2016, approved the recommendations as contained within the Minutes.

## **Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 8 September 2016**

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 8 September 2016 were noted.

The Chairperson proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Martin.

### *Remuneration – Recommendations*

- With respect to personnel who have a Day Duty/Day Crewing contract who are required to work on a public holiday/alternate day, approval to make Public Holiday payments for future occurrences in line with Grey Book Conditions of Service; to make the equivalent payment to those who worked on 28 December 2015 in line with Grey Book Conditions of Service; and to issue an amendment to Service Circular 2/2016 to clarify same for future reference;
- Approval to confirm voluntary severance for 4 x Employees; one within RCC and 3 within Support Staff;
- With respect to the implementation of the Learning & Development structure, approval to confirm the changes in grades following job evaluation with the effective date to be determined by the Director of HR and communicated to postholders following consultation; and
- Approval for a former employee to be provided with payment for any arrears due following Job Evaluation and that NIFRS considers any such requests received on a case-by-case basis.

## **Remuneration Committee – Meeting – 27 September 2016**

It was noted that a Meeting of the Remuneration Committee had been held prior to the Board Meeting.

The Chairperson proposed that the Committee's recommendation, as detailed below, be approved by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Henning.

### *Remuneration – Recommendation*

- Approval of the Pay Remit for Wholetime Firefighters and submission of the documentation to DoH.

## **Item 5: Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson stated she had nothing to report.

-----

At this point,  
the Business Assurance Manager joined the Meeting

-----

## **Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items NIFRS Standing Orders**

Members noted a Briefing Paper relating to the review of NIFRS Standing Orders, along with the draft revised Standing Orders and associated Issues/Decisions Log, encompassing some outstanding decisions to be taken.

The Business Assurance Manager drew Members' attention to the Issues/Decisions log and gave a detailed overview of the key changes to the Standing Orders and the outstanding issues to be considered by the Board.

With respect to the outstanding issues/decisions, the following was agreed:

- *Role of Vice-Chairperson* – the proposed wording defining the role and responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson was agreed.
- *Urgent/Emergent Issues* – inclusion of a new Standing Order relating to email approvals in exceptional circumstances to ensure business continuity agreed. It was also agreed that approval will be deemed as unanimous based on available Members allowing for scheduled leave or sickness, and that retrospective approval will subsequently be required by the Board in formal session.
- *Order of Business* – proposed Order of Business agreed.
- *Attendance of Press and Public* – it was clarified that the DoH representative may attend all Board/Committee Meetings including 'Closed Sessions'.
- *Common Seal* – agreed that Vice-Chairperson also be a signatory for the sealing of documents. Members noted that this Standing Order is being retained subject to legal advice confirming requirement for same.
- *Ex-Officio Members* – it was agreed that the Chairperson is the only ex-officio Member of Committees with the exception of Audit, Risk & Governance, and that the Chief Fire & Rescue Officer should only attend Committee Meetings in his capacity as an Executive Director.
- *Standing Committees* – revised section, including additional Standing Orders specific to Special Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups, agreed.
- *Powers of all Committees* – the Board agreed to delegate authority to Standing Committees.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Enright, unanimously –

**Resolved: “to approve the revised NIFRS Standing Orders, subject to minor amendments and the inclusion of the aforementioned decisions”.**

The Business Assurance Manager outlined next steps for taking forward the revised document.

The Chairperson thanked the Business Assurance Manager. She also referred to a recent meeting with the Permanent Secretary regarding legacy issues for accountability at which Miss Reynolds had accompanied herself and Mr Smyth, and expressed her appreciation to Miss Reynolds for her attendance and stating that Miss Reynolds is a great ambassador for the organisation.

-----  
At this point,  
the Business Assurance Manager left the Meeting  
-----

## **Procurement Arrangements**

Members noted a Procurement Paper seeking the removal of the requirement for Board approval before Contracts are awarded.

The Director of Finance outlined the background to the Procurement Paper explaining that the introduction of “etendersni” software brought an opportunity to review current processes. She outlined the current position with regard to arrangements for all procurements that exceed the EU procurement threshold and also with regard to Mini Competitions via existing Frameworks. She noted that the new procurement software provides a full audit trail and generates the award letters following final evaluation.

The Director of Finance explained that it is proposed that the requirement for Board approval of Contracts above the EU threshold, including Mini Competition procurements, managed in-house be removed from the Procurement Policy and Procedures from 1 October 2016. Members noted that the Board would still be provided with Reports on Contracts Awarded.

The Director of Finance answered Members’ questions relating to the information presented.

Mr Henning suggested that the Resources Committee be informed of any Contracts awarded over the EU threshold.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Mr Martin, unanimously –

**Resolved: “that the requirement for Board approval of Contracts above the EU Threshold, including Mini Competition procurements, managed in-house be removed from the Procurement Policy and Procedures from 1 October 2016”.**

## **NIFRS PAMP 2016/17-2021/22**

The draft NIFRS Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) 2016/17-2021/22 was noted.

Members were informed that, as requested by the Resources Committee at its Meeting on 25 August 2016, the Plan had been reviewed and, due to the need to meet Departmental deadlines, was being presented to the Board for consideration and approval.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Graham updated Members on the current position noting further amendments to be made to the Plan. He answered Members’ questions relating to the Plan.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Mr Irvine, unanimously –

**Resolved: “to approve the draft NIFRS Property Asset Management Plan 2016/17-2021/22 subject to amendments”.**

### **Business Cases**

Members noted the Executive Summaries for the undernoted Business:

- Strategic Outline Case – Larne Fire Station;
- Strategic Outline Case – Belfast International Airport;
- Business Case – Refurbishment and Reconfiguration of Day Crewing Fire Station at Dungannon;
- Business Case – Refurbishment and Reconfiguration of Day Crewing Fire Station at Strabane;
- Business Case - Refurbishment and Reconfiguration of Day Crewing Fire Station at Downpatrick;
- Business Case – Refurbishment and Reconfiguration of Limavady Fire Station; and
- Business Case – Learning & Development Restructuring.

Mr Irvine sought assurance that the proper procedures had been diligently followed in the preparation of the Business Cases.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer assured Members that due procedures had been adhered and stated that should any issues arise he would inform the Board accordingly.

**The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Martin, unanimously agreed to approve the aforementioned Business Cases.**

-----

At this point,  
Mr Enright left the Meeting (4.45 pm)

-----

### **Desertcreat**

Members noted a Briefing Paper updating Members with regard to the Desertcreat project.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer advised Members of the current position with respect to the appointment of the Design Team for the enabling works at Desertcreat.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted that the first meeting of the Desertcreat Project Board had taken place. He gave Members an overview of an issue raised relating to land ownership and explained how it will be resolved.

Referring to the make-up of the Desertcreat Project Board, the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer stated that he would welcome Board Member representation on the Project Board.

The Chairperson supported the proposal for Board Member representation and proposed Mr K Henning. This was seconded by Mr Martin.

The Chairperson enquired if Members wished to have further discussion regarding this matter. Members requested that the matter be brought back to the next Board Meeting.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer highlighted that paperwork relating to the Project will be circulated to Members on a regular basis.

### **Finance Report**

A Briefing Paper updating Members on the financial position as at 31 August 2016 and the HMRC visit.

The Director of Finance highlighted the key points from the paper noting in particular the revenue financial position as at 31 August 2016. She drew Members' attention to the budget pressures and noted the actions being taken to address same. She added that she believed there remained a budget pressure at the projected year-end position.

The Director of Finance noted that the Ground Clearing Meeting with DoH was scheduled in early November and explained that an updated financial position will be presented to the Resources Committee in October.

Referring to the Capital budget, the Director of Finance updated Members on the financial position as at 31 August 2016. She explained that the expenditure profile for the Logistics Support Centre had been revised and that discussions had been held with DoH regarding same.

Members noted a MTC update and the Director of Finance explained that payments between the bodies within the Contract are made on a payment certificate basis. She stated that NIFRS has been assured by CPD Management that this payment certificate arrangement has been cleared with HMRC.

-----

At this point,  
ACFO Walmsley left the Meeting

-----

The Director of Finance answered Members' questions regarding the information presented.

### **Item 7: Relevant Correspondence**

The following routine correspondence was noted –

- Invitation for the Chairperson of the Board to attend the launch of Fire Safety Week on 3 October 2016.

The Chairperson informed Members that Mr Enright would be representing the Board at the launch.

The Chairperson highlighted that NIFRS would be launching its People at Risk Strategy on 5 October 2016.

#### **Item 8: Documents for Sealing**

Members noted the undernoted documents for sealing:

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service with –

Rainey & Best – Bills of Quantities for Enabling Works Logistic Support Centre, Boucher Road, Belfast;

Ellie's Deli – Provision of interim Catering arrangements; and

IHS Global Limited – Authorised access to an On-Line Publication Library.

#### **Item 9: Schedule of Future Meetings**

Members noted a schedule of future Meetings.

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Board, congratulated Gary Thompson on his appointment to the role of Chief Fire & Rescue Officer. She also thanked Dale Ashford for all his work in the role of Interim Chief Fire and Rescue Officer.

---

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS  
AND THE MEETING ENDED  
AT 5.05 PM

---