

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

19 DECEMBER 2018

12.10 PM

PRESENT: Ms C McKinney, Chairperson presiding
Mr C Enright
Mr K Henning
Mr R Irvine
Ms A Jones
Mr P Martin
Mr G Smyth

APOLOGIES: Mr A Walmsley, Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
Mr K Millar
Mr J Quinn
Mr W Webb

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Deeney, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
(Operations)
Mr M Graham, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer (Service
Support)
Mr D Moore, Director of Human Resources
Mrs P White, Director of Finance
Ms I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary

Item 1: Apologies

Apologies were noted.

Item 2: Declaration of Interests

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 and Mr Irvine declared a potential conflict of interest with respect to Agenda Item 6 – Standalone Strategic Items – Death-Benefit Payment. The Chairperson and Mr Irvine indicated that they would withdraw from the Meeting for this Item of Business.

Change in the Order of Business

It was agreed to take Agenda Item 6 – Standalone Strategic Items – Death-Benefit Payment as the next Item of Business. It was agreed by Members that Mr Henning would Chair this item.

At this point,
the Chairperson and Mr Irvine left the Meeting (12.15 pm)

**Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items
Death-Benefit Payment**

Members noted a Briefing Paper regarding the payment of pension death-benefit.

The Director of Finance gave a detailed overview of the Briefing Paper and the options for consideration.

During discussion, the Officers answered Members' questions/provided clarification regarding the information presentation

Following further discussion, it was agreed that a decision on the matter be deferred and that further information, as requested by Members, be presented to the Board.

At this point,
the Chairperson and Mr Irvine rejoined the Meeting (12.40 pm)
and Ms McKinney re-assumed the Chair

Item 3: Minutes – 25 September 2018

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 25 September 2018, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, subject to an amendment, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Ms Jones.

The Chairperson noted that matters arising from the Minutes would be picked up substantively through the Agenda.

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

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Minutes – 8 November 2018

The Minutes of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee Meeting held on 8 November 2018 were noted.

Mr Smyth, Chairperson of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee, noted the recommendations being brought forward by the Committee for adoption.

Mr Smyth proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Irvine.

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Recommendations

- **Acceptance of the Audits of Payroll and Non-Pay Expenditure;**
- **Approval of the Mid-Year Follow-Up Report; and**
- **Approval of the Quarter 2 Progress Update on the Corporate Business Plan (April to September 2018), along with the Balanced Scorecard.**

Service Delivery Committee – Minutes – 1 November 2018

The Minutes of the Service Delivery Committee Meeting held on 1 November 2018 were noted.

Mr Irvine, Chairperson of the Service Delivery Committee, noted the recommendations being brought forward by the Committee for adoption.

Mr Irvine proposed that the Committee’s recommendation, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Ms Jones.

Service Delivery Committee – Recommendation

- **Approval of the Project Plan for the uplift of NIFRS Audit capacity.**

Resources Committee – Minutes – 1 November 2018

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 1 November 2018 were noted.

Mr Henning, Chairperson of the Resources Committee, noted the recommendations being brought forward by the Committee for adoption.

Mr Henning proposed that the Committee’s recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Smyth.

Resources Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval for NIFRS to exit the contract with its current Pension System provider and to engage with the current HSC Pensions System provider and also approval of the addendum to the respective Business Case and subsequent revised Business Case; (Post-Meeting Note: The Addendum to the Business Case was submitted as agreed, however, DoH subsequently requested a revised Business Case. This has since been submitted and reflects what was agreed at the Committee Meeting in terms of the Briefing Paper and the associated Addendum and therefore is also considered as approved.)**
- **Approval of acting-up arrangements for Support staff in respect of the implementation of new structures;**
- **Approval to confirm voluntary severance for Employee 1 as set out in the Briefing Paper;**
- **Approval of the recommendations as detailed in the Briefing Paper in respect of an Informal Grievance relating to underpayment;**
- **Approval of NIFRS draft Consultation Strategy 2018-2021 and Policy Consultation Action Plan 2018-2019;**

- **Approval of NIFRS proposed approach to Talent Management and Succession Planning in the Community Protection and Learning & Development Departments; and**
- **Approval of the variation to standard terms and conditions of the Contract for a Fixed Asset Management System.**

Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 16 August 2018

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 16 August 2018 were noted.

Mr Martin, Member of the Remuneration Committee, noted the recommendation being brought forward by the Committee for adoption.

Mr Martin proposed that the Committee’s recommendation, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Henning.

Remuneration Committee – Recommendation

- **Approval to confirm voluntary severance for Employee 1 as set out in the Briefing Paper.**

Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 12 November 2018

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2018 were noted.

Mr Martin, Member of the Remuneration Committee, noted the recommendations being brought forward by the Committee for adoption.

Mr Martin proposed that the Committee’s recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Henning.

Remuneration Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval to confirm voluntary severance for Employee 1 as set out in the Briefing Paper;**
- **Approval of acting-up arrangements for Support staff in respect of the implementation of new structures;**
- **Approval of the recommendations as detailed in the Briefing Paper in respect of an Informal Grievance relating to underpayment;**
- **Approval that Rathlin Volunteer Firefighters are provided with annual leave, effective from 1 April 2018, as part of their terms and conditions;**
- **Approval of the Pay Remit for Support Staff for the period 1 April to 2018 to 31 March 2019 and submission of the documentation to DoH;**
- **Approval of the Pay Remit for Support Directors for 2 years – 2018/19 and 2019/20 and submission of the documentation to DoH; and**
- **Approval of the Pay Remit for Operational Directors and submission of the documentation to DoH.**

Item 5: Chairperson's Business

Excellence in Fire & Emergency Awards

The Chairperson congratulated Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Walmsley and the Prevention Team on being shortlisted for the Team of the Year Award at the Excellence in Fire & Emergency Awards recently held in London.

Guardian Public Service Awards

The Chairperson congratulated the organisation, David Moore and his Directorate on winning the award for diversity and inclusion at the prestigious Guardian Public Service Awards.

The Chairperson referred to the challenging period facing the organisation currently and expressed her personal appreciation to everyone for the personal and professional support she had received.

She noted that moving forward, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Walmsley was currently fulfilling the role of Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer and will be followed by Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham.

On behalf of the Board, she extended best wishes to Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Walmsley in this role. She stated that it was a key period for the Corporate Management Team to work together in close harmony and emphasised that the Board is here to support them in their work.

The Chairperson also expressed her appreciation to the Board Administrative Secretary for her personal and professional support throughout 2018 and her willingness to work alongside her when additional outside hours demands so required.

Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items

10 Year Capital Priorities Review

A Paper briefing Members on the approach taken to prepare a response to the DoH's 10-year Capital Priorities Review was noted.

The Director of Finance provided a detailed overview of the information presented. She explained that 2 profiles had been shared with DoH with the caveat that these required approval from the NIFRS Board.

During a full discussion, the Officers noted Members' comments and answered Members' questions/provided particularly with regard to the lack of inclusion of renewable energy solutions, the need to consider reviewing NIFRS fleet and estate requirements and the need for NIFRS delegated limits to be reviewed.

The Chairperson referred to the issue of renewable energy solutions and sought assurance that this will be taken forward by the CMT.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham undertook to follow-up this matter with the Head of Facilities & Assets and to report progress to the Resources Committee.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Irvine, unanimously agreed to approve NIFRS' response to the DoH 10-Year Capital Priorities Review subject to revisions discussed.

Disposal of Slieve Croob

Members noted a Briefing Paper relating to the disposal of the Slieve Croob communication site.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham provided a synopsis of the key information noting in particular the approach outlined in the paper. He explained that it is recommended that PSNI retain the proceeds from this sale, given the lack of income previously received, noting that NIFRS' legal adviser has also recommended this approach. He further explained that agreement is also required from NIFRS that it is content for PSNI to retain all proceeds from the sale and that NIFRS will have no further liabilities associated with the site.

During discussion, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham answered Members' questions and assured Members that, as per the legal advice received, NIFRS may sell the site and that PSNI may retain the proceeds of the sale.

At this point
Mr Martin left the Meeting (1.10 pm)

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously agreed to approve the approach outlined and to dispose/transfer the Slieve Croob site to NI Water in line with NIFRS Scheme of Delegation and the transfer provision set out in the Financial Memorandum.

Business Cases

OBC2 – NIFRS Learning & Development Centre at Desertcreat

Members noted the Executive Summary relating to OBC2 – NIFRS Learning & Development Centre at Desertcreat was noted.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham provided an overview of the information presented and highlighted that Option 3 – a centralised training Learning & Development Centre at Desertcreat – was the preferred option. He noted that approval is being sought to submit OBC2 to DoH.

At this point
Mr Martin re-joined the Meeting (1.15 pm)

During discussion, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham noted Members' comments particularly with regard to affordability and answered questions relating to the project. The Chairperson, whilst acknowledging that discussions were ongoing with regard to revenue costs, sought assurance regarding the affordability of the project.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham updated Members with regard to the issue of affordability and revenue costs. He highlighted the risk to NIFRS of not having appropriately trained personnel and also noted the potential for income generation. The Chairperson accepted these points, but returned to the previous points she had made that the affordability aspect remained a concern and in spite of Desertcreat being a PFG commitment, which she fully appreciated, the Board still would require assurances going forward. She also was of the view that the Executive Summary should make this explicit in some way.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham undertook to keep Members informed of progress with regard to OBC2.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Mr Irvine, unanimously agreed to approve the OBC2 for NIFRS Learning & Development Centre at Desertcreat.

Crash Recovery System Licence (CRS) for 2019-2024

The Executive Summary for the Business Case for a Crash Recovery System Licence (CRS) for 2019-2024 was noted.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham gave an explanation of the purpose of the project.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Martin, seconded by Ms Jones, unanimously approved the Business Case for Crash Recovery System Licence (CRS) for 2019-2024.

Provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities

The Executive Summary of the Business Case relating to the provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities was noted.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham gave a brief overview of the background and purpose of the Business Case.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously approved the Business Case for the provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities.

Item 7: Schedule of Future Meetings

The schedule of future Meetings, etc, was noted.

The Chairperson referred to the January Board Meeting and requested an update on Brexit be given to Members at that Meeting. Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Deeney to take this forward for action.

Referring to the Area & District Review, the Chairperson noted that this was work in progress and the final deadline for the Corporate Management Team to present this to the Board capturing the views of Members thus far, was at the January Meeting with no further extension to that date being possible.

The Chairperson thanked all for their professionalism and support during the year and extended her best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Post-Meeting Note

The Chairperson noted that a letter from the Permanent Secretary on the Corporate Management Team (CMT) structure with a number of key strands for action had been received. The Board/CMT would consider this in detail in January and the appropriate forums to discuss would be activated with a view to DoH also contributing to those conversations.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
AND THE MEETING ENDED
AT 1.40 PM
