

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

27 MARCH 2018

2.10 PM

PRESENT: Ms C McKinney, Chairperson presiding
Mr G Thompson, Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
Mr J Barbour
Mr C Enright
Mr K Henning
Mr R Irvine

APOLOGIES: Mr P Martin
Mr G Smyth

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Deeney, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
(Operations)
Mr M Graham, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
(Service Support)
Mr A Walmsley, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
(Community Protection)
Mr D Moore, Director of Human Resources
Mrs C Lyness, Acting Head of Finance
Ms I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary
Mr J Millar, DoH Observer
Miss D Reynolds, Head of Planning, Performance &
Governance, Observer
Mr P Gallagher, Area Commander (Operations), Observer

Item 1: Apologies

There were no apologies.

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 Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted a potential conflict with respect to the item relating to the Remuneration Committee and approval of Pay Remits for Uniformed Directors.

Item 3: Minutes – 23 January 2018

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 23 January 2018, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, on the motion of Mr Barbour, seconded by Mr Irvine.

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

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Minutes – 2 February 2018

The Minutes of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee Meeting held on 2 February 2018 were noted.

Mr Irvine, Audit, Risk & Governance Committee Member, noted the recommendations emanating from the Meeting. He reported positively on the business discussed at the Meeting.

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

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval to defer the Pensions Audit to 2018/19;**
- **Acceptance of the Audits of Information Governance; Operations Directorate; and Board Effectiveness;**
- **Approval of the Quarter 3 Progress Update on the Corporate Business Plan (April to December 2017), along with the Balanced Scorecard; and**
- **Approval of the draft 2017/18 External Audit Strategies covering (i) revenue accounts; and (ii) pension accounts.**

Service Delivery Committee – Minutes – 9 January 2018

The Minutes of the Service Delivery Committee Meeting held on 9 January 2018 were noted. Members also noted that the recommendation contained therein was adopted by the NIFRS Board at its Meeting on 23 January 2018.

Resources Committee – Minutes – 9 January 2018

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 9 January 2018 were noted. Members also noted that the recommendations contained therein were adopted by the NIFRS Board at its Meeting on 23 January 2018.

Resources Committee – Minutes – 22 February 2018

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 22 February 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 Enright.

Resources Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval of the proposed Corporate Communications structure with the exception of the Head of Corporate Communications post; and**

- **Approval of the next steps as detailed within the Briefing paper pertaining to a review of NIFRS' ill-health retirements process.**

Special Resources Committee – Minutes – 13 March 2018

The Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 13 March 2018 were noted.

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

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

Resources Committee – Recommendation

- **Approval to confirm voluntary severance for Employees 1, 2, 3 and 4 within Support Directorates as set out in the Briefing Paper.**

Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 13 March 2018

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 13 March 2018 were noted.

Mr Henning, Remuneration Committee Member, noted the recommendations emanating from the Meeting.

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

Remuneration Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval of the Pay Remits for Uniformed Directors; Wholetime Firefighters; Retained Firefighters and Control Personnel and submission of the documentation to DoH;**
- **Approval to confirm voluntary severance for Employees 1, 2, 3 and 4 within Support Directorates as set out in the Briefing Paper; and**
- **Approval of the assimilation of the current Station Commander (Day Duty) role in the Research & Development Section to a Station Commander (Flexi Duty) role increasing contractual pay for the affected postholder by 20%.**

Item 5: Chairperson's Business

Hyponatraemia Report

The Chairperson reported on meetings regarding the Hyponatraemia Report which herself and the Chief Fire & Rescue Officer attended in January.

The Chairperson explained that NIFRS is currently considering the Report and noted that the Head of Planning, Performance & Governance will be progressing a "lessons learned". The Head of Planning, Performance & Governance updated Members on progress.

The Chairperson also explained that the Permanent Secretary, DoH, will be circulating an Action Plan but this had not, as yet, been received.

2018 Control Room Awards

The Chairperson extended congratulations to NIFRS Crew Commander Clive Hamilton, Regional Control Centre, on winning the Community Champion category in the 2018 Control Room Awards. She stated the award recognised his voluntary work with the British Red Cross Fire Emergency Support Service and the Lisburn Fire Cadets Programme. She further stated that Crew Commander Hamilton is a great ambassador for the Regional Control Centre.

Legal-Island Equality & Diversity Awards 2018

The Chairperson congratulated Mrs Adele Davidson, HR Manager, Equality, Inclusion & Legal, on being awarded Highly Commended in the Individual Diversity Champion category at the Legal-Island Equality & Diversity Awards 2018.

The Chairperson thanked Mrs Davidson and her colleagues for all their work.

The Chairperson updated Members following her and Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham's meeting with Mrs McCloskey. She noted that work is ongoing and that Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham is progressing same.

Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items

Standing Order 2.6

Under Standing Order 2.6, Members unanimously agreed to approve the following:

- Draft NIFRS Business Plan 2018/19;
- Business Case for the Interim Delivery of Estates Maintenance Services through a Measured Term Contract;
- Business Case for Vehicle Telemetry System;
- Business Case for the provision of Waste Management Services for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2021;
- Addendum to the Business Case for the Migration of Software Applications onto new Upgraded Servers; and
- Business Case for ProCAD Support Agreement.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Barbour, formally adopted the above.

Revised Conflict of Interests

Members noted the amended Conflicts of Interest & Confidentiality Procedure.

The Head of Planning, Performance & Governance explained that, as part of the 2016/17 Audit Programme, Internal Audit reviewed the Procedure and had recommended that it be amended to include proposed actions to be taken should a conflict be declared. She also explained that this matter would normally have been progressed through the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee but in the interest of business continuity had been presented to the Board.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously approved the amended Conflicts of Interest & Confidentiality Procedure subject to a further minor amendment.

Finance Report

A Briefing Paper updating Members on the financial position as at 28 February 2018 was noted.

The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer gave Members an overview of the key areas within the Report noting the Revenue financial position as at 28 February 2018 which is reporting an underspend of £0.2m for the year to date but that it is anticipated that a breakeven position will be achieved. He also noted that in terms of ring fenced funding, it is anticipated that the allocation for the Voluntary Exit Scheme will be utilised in full. The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer explained the current position with respect to the pay agreement for Uniformed staff which is a risk facing the revenue budget.

Referring to the Capital budget, the Chief Fire & Rescue Officer highlighted that a further easement had been declared to DoH in February. He noted the Capital financial position as at 28 February 2018 which is showing spend during the year to date as £6.0m which equates to 51% of the capital budget. He explained that the back-loaded nature of spend is in line with previous years.

The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer informed Members that a decision was taken by the Corporate Management Team in February to over-commit the capital budget and noted the purpose of same. He assured Members that, if necessary, there is sufficient flexibility within current projects to facilitate holding back spend to ensure that the Capital Resource Limit is not exceeded at year end.

The Officers answered Members' questions relating to aspects of the information presented.

Pensions Update

The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted that a Pension Workshop to brief Members on Pension matters had taken place immediately prior to the Board Meeting. He also noted that it had been agreed that Members will be kept updated on progress through the Finance Report which is presented to the Resources Committee and to the Board.

The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer gave Members a brief overview of the current position noting that BSO has commenced a competition to recruit a Project Manager who will co-ordinate and manage the implementation of the new system and the transfer of pension administration to BSO.

The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer also updated Members on progress with respect to the compilation of the 2017 Annual Benefit Statements (ABS). He highlighted that correspondence will be issued to staff to advise that the production of ABS is being treated as a priority.

Members were informed of a recent Public Pension Forum and noted discussion which had taken place regarding the potential impact of the new GDPR. The Chief Fire & Rescue Officer undertook to raise this with BSO Pensions Service.

Business Cases

Management and Organisational Development Solution for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020

Members noted the Executive Summary relating to the Management and Organisational Development Solution for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020.

The Director of HR outlined the purpose of the Business Case explaining that approval is being sought for NIFRS to renew the Service Level Agreement with HSC Leadership Centre and ensure flexibility to add additional services as required. He answered Members' questions relating to same.

The Chairperson noted discussions she had held with the Director of HR with respect to training for Board Members, particularly when new Board Members are appointed. She noted that she would be meeting the Head of Planning, Performance & Governance and Board Administrative Secretary to consider and draw up an appropriate training and induction package for the newly appointed Members.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Irvine, unanimously agreed to approve the Business Case for a Management and Organisational Development Solution for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2020.

Electronic Retained Availability System Refresh

The Executive Summary relating to the Business Case for a refresh of the electronic Retained Availability System was noted.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Deeney gave Members an explanation of the purpose of the refresh.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Barbour, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously approved the Business Case for the electronic Retained Availability System refresh.

Grounds Maintenance

Members noted the Executive Summary relating to the Business Case for Grounds Maintenance.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Graham outlined the purpose of the Business Case.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Barbour, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously approved the Business Case for Grounds Maintenance.

Item 7: Relevant Correspondence

There was no relevant correspondence.

Item 8: Documents for Sealing

Members noted the undernoted document for sealing:

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service with –

Henry Brothers Limited – design, development and construction of proposed Learning & Development Centre at Desertcreat; and

V B Evans & Company – QS Technical Support.

Item 9: Schedule of Future Meetings

The schedule of future Meetings was noted.

The Chairperson referred to the Area & District Review and noted that the Chief Fire & Rescue Officer will keep Members updated on progress.

The Chairperson thanked all for their attendance.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
AND THE MEETING ENDED
AT 2.45 PM
