



# Minutes

## Full Authority

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Date: 29 September 2023

Time: 10:30

Venue: Dewsbury Town Hall

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Present: Cllr D O'Donovan (in the chair), Cllrs Almas, Anderson, Downes, Farmer, Fazal, Garvani, Hall, Hussain, Keith, Kirton, Mohammed, Pollard, Shaheen, Tulley and Zaman

In Attendance: Ishaq Mahmood

Apologies: Cllrs Hawkins, Renshaw, Sutcliffe and Wood

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### 23 Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed Cllr Habiban Zaman to the Authority and thanked Cllr Mussarat Pervaiz for her work with the Authority since 2018.

### 24 Admission of the public

There were no items that required to exclusion of the press and public.

### 25 Urgent items

There were no urgent items.

### 26 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under discussion at the meeting.

### 27 Minutes of meeting held on 29 June 2023

#### RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 29 June 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## **28 Matters arising**

Members requested and were provided with an update on the recruitment of the 34 additional fire fighters and requested clarification of the number of Firefighters currently in place.

## **29 Minutes of Committees held since 29 June 2023 and of other relevant Outside Bodies**

Members requested an update on the Operational Resource Pool and were advised that the pool had been disbanded earlier this year and moved to local stations to provide more operational capacity. Members discussed the availability of pumps and were assured that the communities of West Yorkshire have effective fire cover, despite high levels of sickness which are gradually reducing.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of Committees and other relevant outside bodies as circulated be received.

## **30 Statement of Assurance**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report which sought Members' approval for the annual Statement of Assurance for 2021 – 22 and 2022 – 23 as a valid assessment of West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority's performance. It was noted that the publication of the 2021 – 22 Statement has been significantly unavoidably delayed as a result of the delay in the external audit of the final accounts. A caveat has been added to both statements to the effect that the accounts for both years are still to be finalised.

The Annual Statement of Assurance is a requirement of the National Framework and will be published online in an accessible format.

Members commented on the state of the external audit function as delays are widespread across Fire and Rescue Authorities and Local Councils. It was noted that only 27% of 2021/22 audits have been cleared across the sector but that statutory deadlines are going to be introduced.

### **RESOLVED**

That the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority Statement of Assurance 2021 – 22 and 2022 - 23 be signed and approved for publication.

## **31 Constitution Review**

Members received a report from the Director of Corporate Services which provided a small update of the Constitution, to include the provision of Say-So an independent reporting tool, to compliment the whistle blowing policy.

### **RESOLVED**

That the constitution be updated as detailed in the report.

## **32 Calendar of Meetings**

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval for an amendment to the approved programme of meetings for 2023 – 24, specifically to bring forward the date of the AGM to Thursday 20 June 2024, after consideration of the committee dates for 2024 / 2025.

### **RESOLVED**

That the programme of meetings 2023 – 24 be amended as detailed in the report now submitted.

## **33 Automated Fire Alarms Review**

Members considered a report of the Director of Service Delivery which gave details of the proposed changes to the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) mobilising policy. The report contained two primary changes, which would release significant capacity for training, prevention and protection work:

1. The service will not respond to AFAs in commercial properties unless on receipt of a confirmed incident. With the exception of sleeping risks (Inc Hospitals, Care Homes, Hotels), Education premises, COMAH and Heritage sites.
2. The service will mobilise one appliance to AFAs at the above 'exception' sites other than high rise or high-risk priority premises.

Members were assured that where false call outs continue repeatedly there is a cost recovery process and that regular alarm system inspections are undertaken by the Fire Protection Team on commercial premises, with all faults and required changes being reported back to the Responsible Person. It was noted that the Responsible Person is a legal definition/requirement.

Members were advised that FBU have been consulted regarding the proposed changes but that they had not yet responded. Members expressed concern that reducing the number of call outs in our statistics may result in funding cuts in the longer term and Members challenged the report author on the methods to be used to communicate the changes and the need to reassure the communities of West Yorkshire that lives are not being put at risk.

Following concerns raised by Members it was agreed that automatic fire alarms from domestic properties would continue to attract two appliances during evening hours.

Further discussions regarding the plans took place including the option to operate a different policy during day light and night time hours, the need for Control to maintain their discretion and flexibility in response, the effect of appliance breakdown or crash, the go live date, the policies of other Fire and Rescue Services relating to AFAs and the need for regular reviews.

### **RESOLVED**

The changes to how WYFRS will respond to incidents raised by automatic fire detection systems are approved with the proviso that there will be an informal review 6 months after the go live date, which is expected to be in January 2024 and a formal review presented to the Authority after 12 months.

### **34 Membership of Authority and Appointment to Committees**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report which set out recent changes to the membership of the Authority and subsequent required changes to committee appointments.

It was reported that Councillor Pervaiz has resigned from the Authority and her replacement Cllr Habiban Zaman has been appointed with effect from 23 August 2023.

#### **RESOLVED**

- a) That Cllr Zaman will replace Cllr Pervaiz on the Human Resources Committee and
- b) That Cllr Zaman will replace Cllr Pervaiz as Vice-Chair of the Community Safety Committee

### **35 Performance Management Report**

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Corporate Services which advised of the Authority's performance against key performance indicators for the period 1 April 2023 – 17 September 2023.

Members noted the 2020 Covid data had not been removed from the 3 year average due to the new reporting system, One View, but it was agreed that the year on year data was more relevant. Members were encouraged to contact their relevant District Commander should they require more in-depth local data.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

### **36 Youth Intervention Who We Are Presentation and Annual Update**

The Youth Intervention Team Manager gave a presentation to members explaining the purpose and function of the Youth Intervention Team (YIT) and the Director of Service Delivery presented a report detailing the progress and successes of the Team for the academic year 2022 – 23.

Members were pleased to note that the Youth Intervention Team have engaged with and delivered to 1,568 young people, the majority of whom are deemed as vulnerable and most likely to need or instigate blue light services now or in the future. This year's figure is almost triple last year's figure of 592 young people.

The report further detailed the excellent work undertaken by the team including:

- Delivering 92 structured Youth Intervention programmes to 472 children and young people.
- Engaging 44 young people with Get Started programmes in Emergency Response, Boxing and Survival
- Dealing with 93 referrals from the WYFRS prevention database regarding children or young people playing with fire.
- Delivering educational interventions to 73 young people in 57 separate groups on the consequences of arson and responsible road use.
- Developing and delivering specific packages on bonfire safety to 548 young people and water safety to 374 young people.

- Piloting a programme with a primary school in the Leeds district aimed at preventing young people, under the age of 10, entering the Youth Justice System when they reach the age of criminal responsibility.

Members welcomed the presentation and requested, and were provided with, further information on the Princes Trust and the 2 year B-Tec programme, which hasn't been available for approximately 6 years as it was not considered to be cost effective.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

### **37 Programme Change 2023 – 24**

The Director of Service Support submitted a report updating members of the progress in relation to the Programme of Change 2023-24.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

### **38 HMICFRS Update**

Members received a presentation from the Manager of the Service Improvement and Assurance Team (SIAT) on the latest update regarding the HMICFRS inspection.

Members were advised that 110 people were interviewed by the HMICFRS during their previous visit and that all interviews are private and confidential.

Members noted there are 2 items behind schedule on the action plan and were advised one was due to the OSARIS system still being built and the other due to maternity leave, which has now come to an end and the post holder would be returning to complete this action.

Chair