



## **BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

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### **REPORT OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY FROM ITS MEETING ON 25 MAY 2017 TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) held a meeting on 25 May 2017 at Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Southfields Road, Kempston. The major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below:

#### **1. MEMBERSHIP**

There had been two changes to the membership from the previous year. Luton Borough Council had appointed Councillors Khan and Saleem in the place of Councillors Ayub and Riaz.

#### **2. ELECTION OF CHAIR 2017/18**

Councillor Atkins was duly elected as Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2017/18.

#### **3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR 2017/18**

Councillor Downing was duly elected as Vice Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority for 2017/18.

#### **4. COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **Manchester Arena Terror Attacks**

The Fire and Rescue Service had participated in the nationwide minute of silence to remember the victims of the terror attack at Manchester Arena which had taken place on 22 May 2017.

##### **Former Councillor Richard Baker**

Former Councillor Richard Baker, who had previously been a long-standing County Councillor and Member of the Fire and Rescue Authority, as well as a Station Commander at Potton Station, had recently passed away at the age of 93.

The Fire and Rescue Service had written a letter of condolence to his family and it was likely that there would be a Service presence at his memorial service.

## **Code of Practice for the Flammability of Children's Dress Up Clothing**

The British Retail Consortium had recently issued new codes of practice relating to the flammability of children's dress up clothing which increased the current standard by 30%. The Service had been very active in the campaign and this had been recognised by the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service logo being placed on the Code of Practice in the list of contributors.

## **Launch of Replacement Special Rescue Unit**

This had taken place on 4 May 2017 and had been very successful. A number of Authority Members had attended and positive feedback had been received.

## **Lord Lieutenant's Service of Thanksgiving**

The Chief Fire Officer had attended the event and Keiron Stephenson, the Lord Lieutenant's Fire Service Cadet, had given a reading at the Service of Thanksgiving held on 7 May 2017. Positive feedback had been received on his representation of both the Service and the Authority.

## **Annual Service of Thanksgiving at the National Arboretum**

The Chief Fire Officer and former Chairman had attended the annual International Service of Thanksgiving held on 14 May 2017 at the National Arboretum.

## **Police and Crime Commissioner**

Councillor McVicar reported that he had written a letter on behalf of the Members of the Authority wishing Kathryn Holloway a speedy recovery. She had responded and had requested that her thanks and best wishes be passed on to the Members of the Authority.

### **5. AUTHORISATION OF MEMBERS TO REPORT TO THE CONSTITUENT COUNCILS ON MEETINGS OF THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

Councillors Downing, Mingay and Waheed were authorised to report to their respective Constituent Councils on meetings of the Fire and Rescue Authority during 2017/18.

### **6. REPRESENTATION ON THE AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE, POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUPS, ETC. IN 2017-18**

Members were appointed to serve on the following Groups/Committees for 2017/18:

Audit and Standards Committee	Councillor Chapman (Chair) Councillor Chatterley Councillor Duckett Councillor Franks Councillor Headley Councillor Saleem Councillor Waheed
Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group	Councillor Chapman Councillor Duckett Councillor Headley (Chair) Councillor McVicar Councillor Waheed
Human Resources Policy and Challenge Group	Councillor Atkins Councillor Downing Councillor Khan Councillor Mingay Councillor Saleem Councillor Waheed (Chair)
Service Delivery Policy and Challenge Group	Councillor Atkins Councillor Chapman Councillor Chatterley Councillor Duckett Councillor Downing Councillor Franks Councillor Khan Councillor McVicar Councillor Mingay (Chair)

Membership of the Local Strategic Partnerships for 2017/18 was confirmed as follows:

Bedford	Councillor Mingay
Central Bedfordshire	Councillor Downing
Luton	Councillor Waheed

It was agreed that Councillor Downing continue in his role as the Member representative on the Blue Light Collaboration Group.

## **7. DECISION MAKING BETWEEN MEETINGS, BRIEFINGS ETC.**

Members agreed that the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) Chair and Vice Chair, together with the three Chairs of the FRA's Policy and Challenge Groups for 2017/18, be appointed as an Executive Panel for the purposes of Authority decision making between meetings, involvement in briefings, Selection Panels, hearing collective grievances/collective disputes and other related matters for 2017/18.

It was reaffirmed that a quorum of three Members be present for the hearing of collective grievances/collective disputes.

It was agreed that, if in future years, a party or a constituent authority was not represented on the Executive, a named observer from that party/constituent authority would be invited to attend all meetings and briefings of the Executive.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, Ms Kathryn Holloway, was invited to attend all meetings of the Executive as an observer.

#### **8. REPRESENTATION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) MATTERS 2017/18**

The Fire and Rescue Authority agreed its representation on Local Government Association bodies and at the LGA Annual Fire Conference in March 2018.

#### **9. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

The Authority approved a programme of Member Development, including station visits, Member Development days and Budget Workshops.

Councillors Duckett and Khan were nominated to attend the LGA Fire Leadership Essentials Programme on 18 and 19 October 2017 at Warwick Conference Centre, Coventry.

It was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair be nominated to attend the full Combined Fire Authorities' conference in Wyboston on 12 October 2017, with all Members of the Authority able to attend the day event.

#### **10. INFORMATION BULLETIN**

Members considered the Information Bulletin covering the period 1 January-31 March 2017. There had been no fire fatalities during the reporting period.

In response to a comment on the number of leavers during the reporting period, Members were advised that the Service kept its recruitment profile under review to respond to fluctuations. The Service had also recruited a small number of transfers-in from other fire and rescue services.

The majority of leavers during the reporting period had been retained staff or support staff. It was acknowledged that the recruitment and retention of retained staff was an ongoing issue. For operational staff, the Service had a non-predicted level of turnover of 4%, which compared extremely favourably to the average retention figures collected by the Chartered Institute of Professional Development (CIPD).

**COUNCILLOR DOWNING  
MEMBER OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**