

**NON CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES  
MINUTES OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM HELD ON 22 AUGUST 2023**

**Present:** Dawn Whittaker, Chief Fire Officer  
Dave Norris, Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
Julie King, Assistant Director of People Services  
Matt Lloyd, Assistant Director of Safer Communities  
Sue Stanton, Executive Assistant

**Apologies:** Mark Matthews, Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
Duncan Savage, Assistant Director of Resources/Treasurer  
Hannah Scott-Youldon, Assistant Director of Operational Support & Resilience  
Liz Ridley, Assistant Director of Planning & Improvement  
Elizabeth Curtis, Communications & Marketing Manager

		<b>Action</b>
<b>142/23</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting held 19 July 2023</b></p> <p>The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
<b>143/23</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<b>144/23</b>	<p><b>Action Points from Matrix</b></p> <p><u>125/21 Sustainability Task &amp; Finish Group – Proposal for External Support</u> DCFO stated that the updated draft strategy is currently with ADoR/T for review and would be on the agenda for the Members Seminar on 21 November 2023. Discussions would be held around the strategy, action plan, general approach and include reference to NFCC Environment &amp; Sustainability Charter and toolkit. This would be brought back to SLT for comment in October in advance of the Members Seminar.</p> <p><u>91/23 HMICFRS Spotlight Report Update</u> SLT agreed to bring a further update report back to SLT in September, following the submission of the August and September recommendations. It was noted that the NFCC Survey on Independent Reporting Lines would be issued shortly.</p> <p><u>106/23 Safer Communities Provisional Outturn 2022/23 Pressures and Mitigations – interim analysis</u> ADoSC provided a short update on the action plan and stated that the narrative for HSV's had been provided to ADoP&amp;I for the APGG. This latest data would also be included within the budget monitoring report (P6), as this was not currently reflective of crewing changes. Updates would now be brought to SLT on a quarterly basis going forwards. Action complete.</p>	<p><b>ADoR/T Oct 23</b></p> <p><b>ADoPS Sep 23</b></p>
<b>145/23</b>	<p><b>Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 Monitoring at Month 4</b></p> <p>This was the second report to SLT for the 2023/24 financial year and highlights the findings from the Month 4 monitoring undertaken on the Revenue Budget 2023/24 and 5 year Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28, approved by the Authority in February 2023.</p> <p>A net revenue overspend to the sum of £192,000 has been identified, this is due to a number of pressures listed within the report and currently includes a</p>	

forecast of 6% for green book pay which is higher than £1,925 flat rate offer by c£50k.

These pressures are offset by:

- Treasury Management income (£500,000)
- IT project delays (£178,000)
- Wholtime Recruitment (£175,000)
- Additional funding (£159,000)
- Corporate contingency (£143,000)
- Utilities (£120,000)
- CRM & Airbus licences (£81,000)
- Communications vacancies (£61,000)

Safer Communities are forecasting an overspend of £1.093m. The Service must maintain a significant focus on delivering the plan to reduce this pressure to ensure it does not impact the 2024/25 revenue budget. It was noted that the real cost of The Royal Albion Hotel fire was not yet known, but details would begin to come through payroll during August.

ADoSC suggested adding some narrative around the changes to Day Crewed, prior to the report being submitted to the Fire Authority and would discuss vacancies with HR. CFO requested a further update following that meeting, with figures being bring back to SLT next month (September). ADoPS confirmed this was regularly being discussed in meetings and would look at the current waiting list of transferees. It was noted that this forms part of Workforce Planning, to provide resilience and picked up on recent PO discussions.

The Finance Manager noted the offset in overspend, and that 3 budgets had not been fulfilled, so monies would be held centrally, so although this did not affect the bottom line, it will affect each of those Directorates. ADoPS would also be taking a broader look at training and ratio of trainer/students and overall standard of training.

The current year Capital Budget was approved by the Fire Authority at £8,421,000 and updated to £8,934,000 (Property £5,665,000 and Fleet and Equipment £3,279,000) including slippage of £975,000 brought forward from 2022/23, allocation of spend in advance of £462,000 from 2022/23.

Officers have reviewed the capital plans for 2023/24 and report slippage on delivery of projects to the value of £2,387,000 (26.7%) and spend in advance of £172,000. In addition, underspend of £102,000 is expected against capital schemes.

The position on reserves shows an opening balance of £14,460,00. The forecast net drawdown from reserves is £7,277,000, a reduction of £16,000 compared to the planned drawdown of £7,293,000. This results in an estimated closing balance of £7,183,000.

SLT noted the risks to Revenue Budget and the projected overspend, the Capital Programme, ITG strategy position and reduced net forecast drawdown from reserves, together with the grants available and spending plans, monitoring of savings taken in 2023/24; and current year investments and borrowing.

SLT approved the transfer of utilities, wholtime recruitment and MTFP consultation budgets to contingency and reallocation of on-call contingency to

**ADoSC  
Sep 23**

	Groups.	
<b>146/23</b>	<p><b>Medium Term Financial Plan Update</b></p> <p>The Finance Manager provided a verbal update on the latest position within the draft report, ahead of this being taken to the Fire Authority on 7 September 2023.</p> <p>The report set out an update to the 2024/25 Revenue Budget with the main changes relating to pay and price inflation including an additional 2% for Green book pay in 2023/24 (so 6% in total) which gave some headroom above the rejected £1,925 offer. The full impact of the 2023/24 grey book pay award was also reflected.</p> <p>The report proposed that provision for pay for 2024/25 for all staff was increased from 2% to 4% to reflect latest CPI forecasts and that price inflation be increased from 2% to 3%. If approved by Members in total the budget gap for 2024/25 would increase from £0.721m to £2.145m. The report also sought a steer from members as to whether to model based on a £5 Council Tax increase if the additional flexibility was offered by Government. This could provide extra income of £0.569m.</p> <p>The report also included an update on savings proposals including Tranches 1-4 which had the potential to offer up to £1.186m ongoing and £0.825m one off. Work on the capital programme was ongoing but inflation pressures on estates schemes were substantial and could make the capital programme in its current form unaffordable without significant revisions.</p> <p>The Finance Manager would continue to advise of any further headline changes.</p>	
<b>147/23</b>	<p><b>Call Over</b></p> <p>All the main reports were called over for discussion at the meeting.</p>	
<b>148/23</b>	<p><b>Recruitment of People who have a Criminal Record</b></p> <p>The HR &amp; OD Manager stated that considering upcoming legislative changes and immediate requirements to comply, this paper is submitted to inform SLT of opportunities for improving and updating East Sussex Fire &amp; Rescue Service's policies regarding:</p> <p><u>The Recruitment of People with a Criminal Record Manual Note</u> This policy is compliant with current legislation and includes a Risk Assessment &amp; EQiA for use by managers, who are hiring a candidate with a positive DBS disclosure and/or assessing an existing employee, who has reported an event, which may affect their clearance status.</p> <p><u>The DBS &amp; NPPV Manual Note</u> This manual note has now been updated provides the framework of how all colleagues will undergo a DBS and/or NPPV check from this point forward and ensures ESFRS is legally compliant. It also articulates what level of check each role will be subject to.</p> <p>SLT reviewed the report and anticipated cost model in detail. The HR &amp; OD Manager noted that 354 DBS checks were currently required and recommended moving from a Basic to a Standard check which was in line with</p>	

	<p>the DBS Code of Conduct. Renewal figures were closer aligned at £13 and £15 respectively. The anticipated cost for 2023/24 is £18,000. ADoPS would provide an update on the budget source for in year costs via email, outside of the meeting. It was noted that DBS checks are currently being outsourced, hence the inflated costs. Going forward, ESFRS were exploring the option to using ESCC, as a potentially cheaper option.</p> <p>SLT considered a contingency plan, should this process highlight any issues with existing staff. ADoPS &amp; the HR&amp; OD manager would consider guiding principles/approach going forwards. CFO would also be interested in reviewing a list of supervisory roles, should SLT to decide to carry out Enhanced DBS checks.</p> <p>DCFO would raise this topic at forthcoming FBU Consultation meeting on 1 September 2023, noting this had already gone through soft consultation.</p> <p>A full financial analysis will be undertaken with a view to taking financial pressure through the Star Chamber Process. SLT approved each recommendation as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Recruitment of People who have a Criminal Record</b> A previous policy called Recruitment of Ex Offenders has previously been in operation and the HR &amp; OD Team ask that the policy named above be removed and replaced with the Recruitment of People who have a Criminal Record.</li> <li><b>2. DBS &amp; Non-Police Personnel Vetting (NPPV)</b> We propose to change the name of this updated policy, to reflect that ESFRS currently undertakes NPPV clearances as well as DBS Checks, where required, (predominantly for personnel, based at our Shared HQ, Church Lane Lewes.</li> </ol>	<b>ADoPS Sep 23</b>
149/23	<p><b>Procurement of an independent and confidential reporting provider</b></p> <p>ADoPS outlined how the services of an independent reporting specialist, would meet the requirement to increase workforce confidence in speaking up when they witness or experience discrimination, bullying, harassment and other inappropriate behaviour or practices.</p> <p>The OD Business Partner provided an overview of the comprehensive review of three providers which has been undertaken, alongside engagement with other Fire &amp; Rescue Services on their provisions.</p> <p>SLT discussed the source of the funding, noting it was during Year 1 only, and would consider about a sustainable option for future years. ADoPS would also check during which hours Say So is staffed, ie work days only.</p> <p>SLT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) approved the procurement of an independent reporting line in principle, subject to more detailed financial analysis and budget allocation. ADoPS would share an update for SLT via email.</li> <li>b) agreed with the recommendation that the preferred supplier is Say So after consideration of the analysis detailed within Appendix A.</li> </ol>	<b>ADoPS Sep 23</b>
150/23	<p><b>Fire in Tall Buildings – Statement of Intent</b></p> <p>ADoSC gave a verbal overview following the discussions around Fire in Tall</p>	

	<p>Buildings and provided assurance to SLT and re-affirmed our service position for the purposes of the minutes as follows.</p> <p>ESFRS have not changed in our approach to FITB since the previous SLT update. We do not commit personnel above the Bridge Head without BA. We will need to add the new injects around HSE position and are awaiting the NFCC/NOG position, which will evidence why we feel maintaining our current position is appropriate and the suggestion that we review again once NFCC/NOG position has been reviewed and confirmed.</p> <p>If the NFCC/NOG change stance on this we would of course reevaluate. We will use this as an opportunity to review our statement of intent for FITB and GM Baker is undertaking this as we speak.</p>	
<b>151/23</b>	<p><b>Emergency Responders Training Course</b></p> <p>The Driver Training Manager provided an overview of the report informing SLT as to the current and anticipated future position.</p> <p>This included the forthcoming changes in primary road traffic statute; the new prescribed high-speed course all ESFRS emergency response drivers will need to undertake, and the impact that this will have on driver training course delivery, and the team capacity to meet demand.</p> <p>The amendment to the primary legislation (section 19 of the Road Traffic Act 2006) will require doubling the length of current driving courses and will include night-time driving, turning it into a 2-week course of 80hrs with a 2:1 ratio of driver/trainer. Due to the likely impact on trainers and the increase of capacity and demand, a clear proposal would be required. It was predicted that it will 3 years to train 22 new recruits and all existing staff.</p> <p>The implementation of the new course also brings with it the need for flexibility to train our learners, particularly our on-call colleagues which will require some weekend working to mitigate the impact on their primary employment.</p> <p>Adopting the requirements set out by the DFT and NFCC in conjunction with the additional demands for drivers identified, following the analysis of operational service places additional pressure on the current establishment. This additional pressure will mean that there is not sufficient capacity within the current driver training team.</p> <p>SLT noted the content of the report outlining the legislation changes; the impact that this will have on the driver training team and risk for a financial pressure to implement the changes required.</p> <p>The Driver Training Manager will review and propose a formal training model that includes the financial analysis for a new model that incorporates the changes outlined in this report and provide a further written update in October.</p> <p>In the interim, ADoPS would provide a verbal update for SLT in September with an overview of the proposed report and staffing models (following a similar model used for Engineering).</p>	<p><b>ADoPS Oct 23</b></p> <p><b>ADoPS Sept 23</b></p>
<b>152/23</b>	<p><b>Annual Performance Outcome Report 2022-23</b></p> <p>The Planning and Intelligence Manager stated that this report provides SLT with details of East Sussex Fire Rescue Service's performance for the period</p>	

	<p>April – March 2022/23.</p> <p>It was noted that HSV's were over target with a 1000 more than this time last year. There has also been an increase in vehicle fires which would be reviewed in more detail.</p> <p>It was recommended that ADoSC draw out further details on deliberate fire by way of a commentary for Members (particularly in the Wealden area) from a Safer Communities perspective.</p> <p>The Planning and Intelligence Manager would also check with the Home Office whether the data around response driving was recorded as to whether it was on a blue light or not.</p> <p>The year end results for 2022/23 demonstrate an improvement of performance across a number of areas with 12 indicators showing an improvement in performance against the previous year and nine showing a decline.</p> <p>SLT considered the performance results and progress towards achieving the Service's purpose and commitments as contained in Appendix A.</p> <p>SLT and Cllr Nuala Geary were also complimentary on the new layout and presentation of report, particularly with regards to the Complaints and Compliments section which was now broken down by area.</p>	
153/23	<p><b>SLT Terms of Reference – Annual Review</b></p> <p>SLT reviewed the current Terms of Reference to ensure these remained up to date and reflective of the function, process and ethos of the meeting which was agreed by SLT.</p> <p>CFO wished to ensure clarity of where the decision-making sits, in view of other meeting re-structures and streamlining of processes. It was agreed to amend the DMO reference to cover Governance, an overview for the Fire Authority and to seek a legal view if required. SS would update the Terms of Reference accordingly.</p> <p>SLT agreed that the ESO would only attend SLT meetings when matters of interest arose, and would not become a member of SLT.</p>	<p><b>SS</b> <b>Sep 23</b></p>
154/23	<p><b>SLT Forward Plan 2022 and FA/Members Seminar Forward Plan</b></p> <p>SLT noted the forward plans for 2023, which was a useful overview for the coming months.</p> <p><b>Fire Authority – 7 Sept</b> <u>Sustainability Action plan</u> – SLT advised that this would now come to December as it would not be ready for September.</p> <p><b>Members Seminar – 18 Sept</b> <u>Service Culture</u> will include NFCC Action plan, HMI spotlight report &amp; action plan plus the ESFRS Culture report. DCFO also sent his apologies as he would likely be on the second week of his jury service at that point.</p>	
155/23	<p><b>Home Office Visit by Dan Minshull</b></p> <p>Dan Minshull provided an overview of the work carried out by the Fire and</p>	

	<p>Research Analysis Team and shared the headlines for today's discussion:</p> <p>Fire Statistics &amp; National Fire Data Collection System  Minimum Service Levels Appliance Utilisation Analysis  Firefighter Utilisation  Economic &amp; Social Cost of Fire  Future Trends, Pressures &amp; Projects  Working with Home Office – Dan is liaison lead for ESFRS</p> <p>SLT thanked Dan for his time and endeavoured to continue to improve our service led organisation. A non-sensitive version of the ppt would be circulated outside of SLT.</p>	
1556/23	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>HMICFRS Misconduct Inspection</u> This was currently still awaited.</p> <p><u>HMICFRS Spotlight report returns</u> This was currently still awaited and discussed under action 91/23.</p> <p><u>FW Mobile App GW2</u> DCFO provided an update regarding the purchase and installation of the app, which would use £23k of funds, which ADoR/T had confirmed was available from reserves. SCB are content with the approach but it had also been raised for SLT awareness. It would provide immediate interaction with staff to make them aware of incident and removes the need for What's App Groups. SLT were supportive.</p> <p><u>Carol Service</u> It was proposed to hold this in Seaford on 14 December 2023. CFO stated that due to Sussex Police previously joining Surrey and with WSFRS hosting their own service, the East Sussex event would be for FRS personnel and families only, with some key invitations to partners.</p> <p><u>NFCC Culture Plan</u> ADoPS stated that the document had recently been published and follows on from Culture Conference earlier this year. ADoPS shared the headlines including the NFCC vision statement to improve public trust and confidence, plus that of staff and inclusivity of underrepresented groups. ADoPS would share the slides put together for the NFCC Culture Action plan following the meeting.</p> <p><u>Fire Aid</u> CFO shared the personal letter of thanks from Phil Garrigan in support of Ukraine. This had already been shared in Service Brief and the image of the shared union between the UK FRS and the people of Ukraine would be framed and put on display at HQ.</p> <p><u>Fire Cover (Lewes)</u> DO issues being picked up and raised with ADoSC.</p> <p><u>Battery &amp; Storage systems</u> ADoSC and The Protection Manager would ensure clear point of contact to resolve ongoing issues.</p> <p><u>Gypsy and Traveller site</u> DCFO would be meeting Nick Skelton tomorrow following a recent letter to Rupert Clubb, ESCC regarding the gypsy and traveller site in Maresfield, which had reached a point of escalation due to the implications of not being able to train staff with BA. ADoPS was in the process of preparing a briefing note.</p> <p><u>Home Office visit</u> Jenna Marsh had personally thanked SLT for their engagement and informative visit on 16 August. She had reflected back and</p>	

	felt positivity on what our service is trying to do, despite the obstacles and was focussed on trying to improve safety of the public. A copy of her email would be shared with SLT after the meeting.	
<b>157/23</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>  The next meeting will be held on 19 September 2023	