

**NON CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**  
**MINUTES OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM HELD ON 18 JUNE 2025**

**Present:** Mark Matthews, Chief Fire Officer  
 Dave Norris, Deputy Chief Fire Officer  
 Hannah Youldon, Assistant Chief Fire Officer  
 Matt Lloyd, Assistant Director of Response and Operational Resilience  
 Duncan Savage, Assistant Director of Resources/Treasurer  
 Doug Marshall, Assistant Director of People Services  
 Justine Cadogan, Assistant Director of Digital, Technology & Change  
 George O'Reilly, Assistant Director of Risk Reduction  
 Elizabeth Curtis, Communications & Marketing Manager  
 Sue Walsh, Executive Assistant  
 Vincent O'Neill, Observer

**Apologies:**

		Action
97/25	<p><b>Minutes of the Meeting held 21 May 2025</b></p> <p>The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2025 were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
98/25	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><u>Assistant Director recruitment</u> On behalf of SLT, CFO gave congratulations to ADoPS and ADoRR on their recent substantive promotions. Having now formally joined SLT under the new structure, CFO explained who he was looking forward to working with each of them in delivering the community offer together and that their efforts and delivery over many years had resulted in their recent success, of which they should be rightly proud.</p> <p><u>HMICFRS report</u> Details of the ESFRS HMICFRS report were released first thing this morning and Comms have been issued accordingly. CFO gave his reflections on the content and what we do next as a Service. CFO also recognised and acknowledged the amount of work involved and teams who have supported this inspection, with particular thanks to the PIT Team and the role of the Comms Team over recent weeks.</p> <p><u>Devolution Update</u> DCFO provided a verbal update and was liaising closely with the Office of the PCC in Cumbria FRS for lessons learnt and was regularly exchanging information with WSFRS and Sussex Police which assisted timelines and related matters. DCFO also provided a Local Government Review (LGR) update, following a statement released by the Minister yesterday relating to the options around Surrey and WSFRS and consideration being given to other options going forwards.</p> <p><u>Remediation (High Rise &amp; Medium Rise)</u> ADoRR provided an update on this specific matter for the awareness of SLT together with an overview of current/ongoing enforcement notices in place. Regular meetings would be arranged at the appropriate levels going forwards, in order to maintain effective communication.</p> <p><u>Middle East</u> ACFO was in regular contact with CT and NILO Leads and keeping a close watching brief on the local position. Currently there was no emerging intelligence or updates in terms of community safety. Further details would also be discussed at the forthcoming CT Briefing on 24 June 2025.</p>	

	<p>Following that, ACFO would decide if any comms was required at this time.</p> <p><u>Bicester Motion incident</u> DCFO had attended the parade on behalf of ESFRS, to acknowledge the funeral procession for Ff Jennie Logan in Bicester, Oxfordshire on 14 June 2025. There had been good attendance by FRS's and members of the public. It was likely that the funeral of Ff Martyn Sadler would take place at the end of July.</p> <p><u>Telent contract</u> ADoR/T gave a short verbal update on recent discussions and negotiations, which in turn has created a delay in signing the contract. SLT also discussed the associated risks on this matter.</p>	
99/25	<p><b>Action Points from Matrix</b></p> <p><u>191/24 Strategic Review of Training</u> ADoROR stated that Part B was not yet finalised, so would now be brought back to SLT in July.</p> <p><u>84/25 Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2025/26</u> In order to tie in with MHCLG publication date of 30 June 2025, this would be discussed in further detail under agenda item 14. Action complete.</p> <p><u>86/25a Oracle Fusion Implementation – Phase 3 Payroll Integration Funding &amp; Delivery Plan (Norfolk FRS)</u> ADoR/T had not yet made contact with Norfolk FRS but would raise this issue under agenda Item 13. Action complete.</p> <p><u>86/25b Oracle Fusion Implementation – Phase 3 Payroll Integration Funding &amp; Delivery Plan (Risks)</u>. ADoDTC/ADoR/T reassured SLT that this was progressing, with all the key actions underway. The risks had been dealt with, funding agreed and the onboarding of the SME was underway. Action complete.</p> <p><u>89/25 NFCC Support to PO's</u> CFO had spoken to Cllr Evans with regards to preparing a report to Members around support and training for PO's. CFO/ACO would consider further who will lead on this then prepare a report for decision at the Policy &amp; Resources Panel on 17 July 2025. Action complete.</p>	<p><b>ADoROR Jul 25</b></p>
100/25	<p><b>Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25 and Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 Monitoring at Month 2</b></p> <p>The Finance Manager provided a verbal presentation on the current position, noting that the Revenue Budget was currently £50.868m. This included pay inflation of 2% across Gold, Grey and Green Book. To balance budget, there was a planned drawdown of £0.512m from General Reserves.</p> <p>This led to an SLT discussion around reserves, pay implications and the timing and frequency of budget monitoring at SLT. It was reconfirmed that formal written reporting to SLT would take place on a bi-monthly basis (with interim updates focussing on necessary detail) together with bi-monthly updates for Fire Authority and the Policy &amp; Resources Panel. CFO reiterated the requirement and need for live budget monitoring and forecasting on a regular monthly basis. This data needed to be readily available for SLT and managers for their awareness and to reduce guess work. Options to streamline and improve this process were considered, which included monthly meetings with Finance Business Partners.</p> <p>SLT appreciated oversight of the deeper detail and found this a useful and</p>	

	helpful conversation and agreed there was a need to have conversations early enough to assist the wider work across the organisation.	
101/25	<p><b>Revenue and Capital Budget 2024-25 and Capital Programme 2024-25 to 2028-29 Monitoring - Provisional Outturn</b></p> <p>This is the 5th report to Senior Leadership Team for the 2024/25 financial year and highlights the Provisional Outturn on the Revenue Budget 2024/25 and 5-year Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29.</p> <p>The provisional outturn is an underspend to the sum of £1,671,000, which is an increase in the underspend reported at Month 10.</p> <p>The provisional outturn underspend is £1,050,000 greater than the forecast at P10, the significant movements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £358,000 Airwave credit</li> <li>• £197,000 Estates Condition, Drainage and Flood Surveys and work</li> <li>• £162,000 Decant costs</li> <li>• £126,000 Treasury Management</li> <li>• £70,000 OSR Equipment</li> </ul> <p>Further analysis of the Provisional Outturn will be carried out to establish if there are any ongoing pressures or savings that will continue into 2025/26.</p> <p>The Capital Strategy has been increased to £30,793,000 to include slippage of £1,624,000 and allocation of spend in advance of £35,000 from 2023/24, along with additional budget of £566,000 for Estates capital projects agreed at Policy &amp; Resources Panel in July.</p> <p>The provisional outturn on delivery of the capital programme is an underspend to the value of £1,503,000 (19%).</p> <p>The position on reserves shows an opening balance of £13,309,000. The net drawdown from reserves is £3,005,000, an increase of £3,000 compared to the planned drawdown of £3,002,000. This results in a closing balance of £10,304,000.</p> <p>The original provisional outturn of over £2m was now £1.67m, which had allowed a reduction in transfers of reserves. The Finance Manager outlined the carry forward from underspends and clarified these were revenue slippage not new bids.</p> <p>There was a wider SLT discussion on the remainder of underspend in terms of budgets, visibility and clarity at regular intervals throughout the year. It was acknowledged that due to the work which has been carried out so far, this has radically reduced the significant pressure on the budget.</p> <p>SLT noted the provisional 2024/25 Revenue Budget outturn, provisional Capital Programme outturn including slippage and spend incurred in advance, ITG strategy position and net drawdown from reserves together with the grants available, savings delivered in 2024/25 and cash balances invested at year end and the borrowing repaid.</p> <p>SLT also recommend to the Policy &amp; Resources Panel that:</p> <p>(i) £1,394,000 of Capital Expenditure is slipped into 2025/26</p>	

	<p>(ii) The revenue underspend of £1,671,000 is transferred to the following reserves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Carry Forward Reserve £530,500</li> <li>b) ITG Strategy Reserve £358,000</li> <li>c) Pension Admin Reserve £100,000</li> <li>d) Financial Stability Reserve £633,000</li> </ul>	
<b>102/25</b>	<p><b>Call Over</b></p> <p>The following report was not called over, and therefore all recommendations contained in them were agreed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2025-26</li> </ul>	
<b>103/25</b>	<p><b>Internal Audit – Overtime Arrangements</b></p> <p>To report the findings of the internal audit review of Overtime Arrangements and the proposed actions to be taken as a result to improve governance and control.</p> <p>The report makes four findings of which two are high risk and two are medium risk. The main actions agreed by the Service are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Remind all staff that are responsible for inputting data of their authorising responsibilities in-line with policy</li> <li>- Implement a quality assurance process to ensure compliance across the service.</li> <li>- Review Manual Note HR01_10_v5 Overtime – Uniformed Personnel</li> <li>- Review of overtime process forms to ensure that the activity can be drilled down for further scrutiny</li> </ul> <p>The majority of actions were set with a completion date of 30 April 2025 and these have been completed. There are two outstanding actions with extended completion dates.</p> <p>The first is the revision of the Overtime – Uniformed Personnel manual note and will need to include consultation with all staff and representative bodies before agreement.</p> <p>The second is an improvement on the initial critical recommendation which is to automate the changes but is dependent on the delivery and capability of the Oracle project and ultimately 2-way updates between Vision and Firewatch.</p> <p>SLT commented on and approved the management response to the audit report so that it can be finalised, agreed the target dates for implementation and noted that the report will be taken to Scrutiny &amp; Audit Panel on 17 July 2025.</p>	
<b>104/25</b>	<p><b>Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025</b></p> <p>To provide an Opinion on East Sussex Fire Authority's internal control environment and report on the work of Internal Audit for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.</p> <p>SLT's attention is drawn to the following:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five reports received a partial or minimal assurance opinion and have been reported in full to SLT and S&amp;A Panel (overtime due June / July)</li> <li>• A review of HR / Payroll and a Fraud Risk Assessment were still in progress at the time of writing this report</li> </ul> <p>All key performance indicators for the Internal Audit Service have been met or exceeded during the year, excepting that relating to the overall delivery of the plan.</p> <p>It is planned to take this report to Scrutiny &amp; Audit Panel on 17 July 2025 and therefore outstanding reviews will need to be finalised in advance of the deadline.</p> <p>Governance and Risk Management could potentially be included in future as a desktop review, which may require possibly an extra 5-10 days across the year. DCFO noted that HMICFRS were also including this element in future Inspections. SLT were keen to discuss how Internal Audit could complement this going forwards and would be followed up with ADoR/T outside of the meeting.</p> <p>SLT:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. noted the Head of Internal Audit's opinion on the Fire Authority's internal control environment for 2024/25;</li> <li>ii. noted that the outstanding review will need to be finalised by the end of April</li> <li>iii. considered whether the Fire Authority's system for internal audit has proved effective during 2024/25</li> </ol>	
105/25	<p><b>Corporate Risk Register Review Quarter 1 2025-26</b></p> <p>SLT reviewed the Corporate Risk Register 2025/26 Quarter 1.</p> <p>ADoR/T provided some additional background on the Oracle Implementation payroll integration, timescales and associated risks to payroll which was discussed at length by SLT. The draft risks and mitigations would be considered for addition to the Risk Register at the next quarterly review, once the nature and impact of the risk was clearer. It was noted that Starters, Movers &amp; Leavers would be dealt with by the Data Management Board.</p> <p>CR1 Health &amp; Safety Compliance – ADoRR provided an update on the resources which were in progress in terms of recruitment to temporary posts, so this could potentially be removed from the risk register by the end of Quarter 3.</p> <p>CR9 Occupational Health Collaboration failing to deliver effective service – This risk has been updated to reflect the specific risk surrounding Occupational Health collaboration rather than a broader collaboration risk.</p> <p>CR17 Firefighter Pension Scheme - SLT discussed the financial, legal, reputational and operational impacts resulting from McCloud / Sargeant case.</p> <p>ADoPS provided an update ahead of the forthcoming breach deadline of 30 June 2025 and stated what data had already been submitted and what was still left to do. It was likely there would be another breach, either by WYPF regarding the lack of software or by the Service for not supplying the data. SLT considered setting up a Gold Group ahead of 30 June 2025 to pull this all</p>	

	<p>together.</p> <p>There would also be a review of all of the outstanding actions by each Directorate, in order to take ownership and move forwards.</p> <p>SLT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) agreed the Quarter 1 Corporate Risk Register including changes made since Quarter 4 2024/25;</li> <li>b) identified any current risks to be removed from the CRR and any new risks to be added; and</li> <li>c) identified any further information or assurance required from Risk Owners.</li> </ul>	
<b>106/25</b>	<p><b>Productivity and Efficiency Plan 2025-26</b></p> <p>ACFO sought approval to submit the Productivity &amp; Efficiency Plan to the MHCLG by the extended deadline of 30 June 2025, prior to formal reporting to the next Policy &amp; Resources Panel.</p> <p>A draft Productivity Plan follows the format and requirements set out by the new guidance released in February.</p> <p>Due to the changes required by the Home Office, Fire &amp; Rescue Services were initially provided a deadline for submission as the 30 April 2025, however, due to a number of competing priorities, particularly the Oracle Fusion go-live, ESFRS was able to get an extension to the 30 June 2025.</p> <p>Unfortunately, there has not been an opportunity to submit the Plan for prior approval by the Fire Authority. Instead, it will be submitted retrospectively to Policy &amp; Resources Panel on 17 July 2025.</p> <p>SLT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) reviewed the draft Productivity &amp; Efficiency Plan 2025/26 and made final suggested amendments</li> <li>b) approved the plan as amended, for publication and submission to the MHCLG by the extended 30 June 2025 deadline</li> <li>c) noted that the Productivity &amp; Efficiency Plan will be submitted for approval retrospectively by Policy &amp; Resources Panel.</li> </ul>	
<b>107/25</b>	<p><b>Strategic Performance Report Quarter 4 2024/25</b></p> <p>SLT reviewed the Strategic Performance Report Quarter 4 2024/25 and wanted to ensure that the narrative matched the detail of the report. ADoR/T highlighted the areas to follow up and check with ADoDTC.</p> <p>SLT considered the Strategic Performance report and suggested amendments, prior to it being presented at the Scrutiny and Audit Panel on 17 July 2025.</p>	
<b>108/25</b>	<p><b>SLT Forward Plan 2025 and FA/Members Seminar Forward Plan</b></p> <p>SLT noted the forward plans for 2025, which was a useful overview for the coming months.</p> <p>SLT agreed that funding for the OD Specialist role will be agreed via the</p>	

	<p>Future Foundations Board.</p> <p><u>Scrutiny &amp; Audit Panel – 17 July 2025</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Primary Authority Partnership Enhancement</u> – remove from agenda</li> <li>• HMICFRS Inspection Report – CMM would provide a covering report. This would be presented by ADoRR not ADoDTC</li> <li>• Annual JFC report – continue to take as planned</li> <li>• Annual Corporate Plan – it was agreed to take this to Fire Authority in September instead.</li> <li>• ADoPS would be on annual leave for Panels</li> <li>• An update on Devolution was considered</li> </ul> <p><u>POAP</u> – a date would be arranged for September</p> <p><u>Members Seminar – 21 July</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed that there would be a demo (as previously agreed) and an informal open forum (walk and talk?) session at the next Seminar.</li> <li>• CRMP Update would be removed, as this will have just been taken to the Panels on 17 July 2025.</li> </ul> <p><u>Members Seminar – 15 September</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Call, AFA and Devolution (3 items agreed)</li> </ul> <p><u>Members Seminar – 25 November</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fires in Tall Buildings</li> </ul>	
109/25	<p><b>BHCC Annual Legal Services Review</b></p> <p>Monitoring Officer, Liz Culbert provided an update and overview from BHCC following receipt of the following on 12 June 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lexcel Audit – external audit of our legal practice over 3 days – no non-compliances and 35 areas of good practice.</li> <li>• Shortlisted Junior Lawyer of the Year 2025</li> </ul> <p>A current list of contacts were shared and there was an overview of the Constitution (located on the ESFRS website). The MO offered to provide a session for SLT on the Constitution, which was welcomed by those present.</p> <p>The MO also provided an update on the Devolution Revolution and BHCC LGR interim proposal.</p>	
110/25	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Helping Hoodies – Badge Approval</u> SLT considered the legal advice which had been received and although acknowledged there was a certain level of considered risk, on balance, agreed to use of our logo for this purpose and in support of The Firefighters Charity. ACFO considered the timing of this action against the current Standards piece and it was agreed that staff should not wear this to work. ESO to draft comms for wider communication and update.</p>	<p><b>ESO Jul 25</b></p>
111/25	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 15 July 2025</p>	

