

**NON CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
MINUTES OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2023**

Present: Dawn Whittaker, Chief Fire Officer
 Dave Norris, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
 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
 Julie King, Assistant Director of People Services
 Elizabeth Curtis, Communications & Marketing Manager
 Sue Walsh, Executive Assistant

Apologies: Matt Lloyd, Assistant Director of Safer Communities

		Action
230/23	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held 22 November 2023</p> <p>The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2023 were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
231/23	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>None.</p>	
232/23	<p>Action Points from Matrix</p> <p><u>125/21 Sustainability Task & Finish Group – Proposal for External Support</u> DCFO stated that further work was being done to finalise the action plan. ADoSC had drafted a risk assessment of the impact of climate change on the Service as part of the Quarter 3 Risk Review process and a position statement was in place. Action complete.</p> <p><u>201/22 Primary Authority Scheme Update</u> ADoSC would provide a written summary report for SLT in March. It was noted that the additional post was currently vacant but that agreement to fund for an initial 12 months from the Protection Uplift Grant remained in place.</p> <p><u>10/23 Strategic Workforce Plan</u> ADoPS advised that all teams had now been met with, apart from one, who would be directly engaged with. It was noted that this links to vacancy management, the work Enfuse are undertaking for the service and would also form a key part of HMI evidence. It was agreed to bring this back to SLT in March for the OD Business Partner to provide an update on the findings.</p> <p><u>55/23 Digital Fireground</u> ADoOSR stated this would be discussed in more detail under agenda item 16. Action complete.</p> <p><u>189/23 Corporate Risk Register Review Quarter 2 2023-24</u> ADoSC had drafted a risk assessment of the impact of climate change on the Service as part of the Quarter 3 Risk Review process, which would be discussed further under agenda item 9. This will be taken to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel for consideration on 18 January 2024. Action complete.</p>	<p>ADoSC Mar 24</p> <p>ADoPS Mar 24</p>
233/23	<p>Revenue and Capital Budget 2022/23 and Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2026/27 Monitoring at Month 8</p>	

	<p>The Finance Manager provided a partial update on latest budget monitoring position.</p> <p>There had been a reduction in the Safer Communities forecast creating a more static position leading to an overall underspend of £7,000 but further data was awaited. The Finance Manager would follow up via email in due course, once further work had been completed then prepare a report for the Policy & Resources Panel on 18 January 2024.</p> <p>Other movements were highlighted including the green book pay award and Ops P&P.</p> <p>Capital movement underspend had reduced by £250,000. Engineering was reporting slippage of £600,000 and £300,000 underspend for vehicles. The slippage in Estates had reduced in relation to Preston Circus; of the total £4.2m underspend, £3.9m was slippage.</p>	
234/23	<p>Call Over</p> <p>The following reports were not called over, and therefore all recommendations contained within them were agreed:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Armed Forces Covenant & Defence Employers Recognition Scheme - Fire Cadets Update - Strategic Performance Report Quarter 2 2023 - Manchester Arena Inquiry - Initial Operational Response to CBRN Incidents 	
235/23	<p>Strategic Service Planning and Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2024/25 to 2028/29</p> <p>The Finance Manager updated SLT on the outcomes from the Star Chamber process to inform the Fire Authority's Medium Term Service Planning strategy and medium term financial plan for 2024/25 to 2028/29.</p> <p>An illustrative budget for 2024/25 was presented to the Fire Authority on 7 September 2023, indicating a savings requirement of £2.145mm including provision for pay of 4% and price inflation of 3%. The savings requirement increased to £3.419m following Star Chambers and this was reported to the Fire Authority on 7 December 2023 along with savings proposals and flexibilities of £2.551m of which £1.423m was one-off. This left a gap of £0.869m for which further options were still to be identified.</p> <p>On 5 December 2023, the Government published its Local Government Finance Policy Statement which confirmed that fire had been unsuccessful in its bid for additional council tax flexibility up to £5. This would have provided the Service with additional flexibility of £0.568m. We have therefore continued to model a council tax increase of 2.99%.</p> <p>Working to model the MTFP for 2025/26 – 2027/28 is ongoing, using the two modelling scenarios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher range – Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) increases by 2% pa. - Lower range – SFA remains static in cash terms. <p>In this context it is essential that the SLT takes urgent action to identify its approach to delivering a balanced budget from 2025/26 onwards so that it can</p>	

	<p>be signalled in the budget report to Policy & Resources Panel for which the deadline is 5 January 2024. This will include a review of the Estates Strategy and Capital Programme which has become unaffordable in its current form.</p> <p>ADoR/T outlined some of the potential flexibilities for 2025/26 and estimates based on 1.99% council tax increase for next year using both scenarios and the Finance Manager shared figures via email after the meeting. It was stated that figures and bids were needed quickly, particularly for driver training. A project to review all non-pay spend budgets for 2025/26 was discussed.</p> <p>SLT followed up on their discussions held at the recent SLT Planning Day on 28 November 2023, which had identified options to close the remaining £689k budget gap.</p> <p>ACFO raised concerns about the potential impacts of taking the £263k East of the County savings on operational capacity and overtime. SLT discussed alternative options to replace this saving for 2024/25 and agreed to cut contingency by a further £0.25m to £0.25m, noting ADoR/T's comment that this would leave very limited flexibility in the budget to manage in year pressures bearing in mind that current pressures in Safer Communities were likely to persist into 2024/25. SLT agreed to discuss options for further permanent savings for 2025/26 with the Chairman and Group Leaders when they met on 3 January 2024.</p> <p>SLT considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) and agreed the pressures, bids, savings and flexibilities set out in the report to deliver a balanced revenue budget for 2024/25 (ii) and agreed the capital programme and associated borrowing costs (iii) its approach to delivering the significant additional savings that will be necessary to balance the budget from 2025/26 onwards 	
236/23	<p>Corporate Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2023-24</p> <p>SLT reviewed the Corporate Risk Register Quarter 3. It was noted that CR1 Health & Health & Safety Compliance has been revised from 8 (Moderate) to 6 (Moderate).</p> <p>Two new risks are proposed for escalation to the Corporate Risk Register: CR19 - Increase in Environmental incidents including wildfires, flooding and extreme weather resulting in the inability to respond effectively, and; CR20 - Failure to manage the effects and impacts of a major loss of staff event, through industrial action namely action short of strike (ASOS).</p> <p>DCFO summarised the outcomes of the Cyber Security report, including actions and preparedness. DCFO would circulate the report to SLT and the ITG Manager would pick this up via the ITG and Info Sec Group.</p> <p>SLT agreed the Quarter 3 Corporate Risk Register including changes made since Quarter 2 2023/24; considered whether new risks CR19 and CR 20 should be escalated to the CRR and identified any further information or assurance required from Risk Owners. ADoR/T confirmed that these updates would be added to the report for Scrutiny & Audit on 18 January 2024.</p>	<p>DCFO Jan 24</p>
237/23	<p>Armed Forces Covenant & Defence Employers Recognition Scheme</p> <p>The Reserve Forces & Cadet Association for the South-East (SERFCA)</p>	

	<p>supports and encourages employers to adopt the Government's Defence Employers Recognition Scheme (ERS) and Armed Forces Covenant by signing the Covenant and self-certifying their support of the ERS through the Bronze, Silver and Gold Award scheme.</p> <p>CFO will sign the Covenant on behalf of ESFRS and we are nominating the Service to join the ERS at Bronze Award level.</p> <p>The impact on the Service will be reviewed after 12 months and consideration given on seeking to escalate our membership to SILVER award level.</p> <p>SLT noted the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant and our pledge under the Employer Recognition Scheme by self-certifying under the Award's scheme (Bronze Award).</p>	
238/23	<p>Fire Cadets Update</p> <p>The Strategic Prevention Manager gave the annual update to SLT on the progress and funding of Fire Cadets following introduction into the Service in January 2020.</p> <p>2022/23 has been another successful year for cadets with a number of high-profile events and the embedding of our two High Sheriff fire cadets.</p> <p>In line with the recently approved Alternative Delivery of Prevention report, the intention is to fully move to the independent funding of Fire Cadets and we continue to explore sponsorship and grant donation opportunities.</p> <p>We are currently exploring sponsorship opportunities with a Freemason Lodge, again in Bexhill, and this is subject to a separate discussion regarding the suitability of this source of sponsorship.</p> <p>We aspire to achieve funding of the Fire Cadets independent of the Fire Authority by April 2025.</p> <p>SLT noted the update and agreed to circulate to the Fire Authority, High Sheriff and Lord Lieutenant.</p>	
239/23	<p>Strategic Performance Report Quarter 2 2023</p> <p>In November 2022, the Scrutiny and Audit Panel agreed to the refresh of strategic performance indicators recommended by SLT.</p> <p>The report is structured into four sections.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance at a glance summary. This is a high-level summary of all indicators grouped by those that are achieving their target, those near target, those that are needing improvement, against the tolerances set by service managers. 2. Service Priority Areas. All of the Fire Authority's priority areas are included with a deeper dive into performance that shows the last 12 month rolling monthly performance, the previous year's performance, the last five years quarterly data, the RAG rating and service owner commentary for indicators where performance needs improving. 3. Performance measures needing improvement. This is a deeper dive into performance or those measures that have been classified as needing improvement that are not service priority areas. 	

	<p>4. Annual Performance Measures and those that are new. There are five performance measures that are reported annually and will be in the 4th quarter annual report. There are seven new performance measures and systems and processes are being developed and they will be brought on line throughout the year</p> <p>SLT considered the new strategic performance report for quarter 2 2023/24.</p>	
240/23	<p>IT Outsource Re-tender Business Engagement Presentation</p> <p>The ITG Manager, along with Mason Advisory Consultants (Reka Pesci and Kevin Lund) gave a presentation on the key areas.</p> <p>The current Telent IT services contract has been in operation since August 2016 and was previously extended using the 3-year option. The existing contract ends in August 2026. As there is no further option to extend beyond that date, there is now the requirement to approach the market to re-tender these services. Due to the scale and complexity of this work the re-tender is being run as a project.</p> <p>Reka provided a Market Overview and noted that there are 39 providers qualified to participate in this particular Lot. The planned sourcing event is a great opportunity to identify development areas, reflect on business feedback and improve IT services. Reka outlined the focus areas and key expectations identified and how they will maximise the opportunity.</p> <p>SLT discussed the next steps including planned engagement with staff groups, stakeholders, Members, integration with JFC and the commencement of comms at the appropriate point. Telent were fully aware of the position.</p> <p>The ITG Manager would work towards presenting an initial summary of the planned re-tender to SLT in March.</p>	<p>ADoR/T Mar 24</p>
241/23	<p>Manchester Arena Inquiry</p> <p>ADoOSR provided an update to SLT on The Manchester Arena Inquiry (MAI) Action Plan.</p> <p>The MAI made some recommendations across several themes and for a number of organisations that attended that incident. This report sought to provide background information, timelines, and an update on progress against the recommendations that need to be considered and implemented by East Sussex Fire & Rescue.</p> <p>SLT noted the contents of the report.</p>	
242/23	<p>Initial Operational Response to CBRN Incidents</p> <p>ADoOSR provided an update to the SLT on the change to our Initial Operational Response to CBRN incidents, following a change in national guidance.</p> <p>In April 2023 a Joint Organisational Learning Action Note was published that highlighted that the initial operational response to incidents suspected to involve hazardous substances or CBRN had been amended. This report provides background information, timelines, and an update on progress</p>	

	<p>against the recommendations that need to be considered and implemented by East Sussex Fire & Rescue. It was clarified that further training was needed, with the aim of being fully compliant with national guidance by April 2024.</p> <p>SLT noted the contents of the report.</p>	
243/23	<p>The Digital Fire Ground</p> <p>ADoOSR provided an update on the progress towards a digital fire ground.</p> <p>The Service wants to explore, as a priority, the concept of the digital fire ground and seek to improve the business processes that “wrap” around an incident, for example, logging decisions or the completion of certain forms. Currently these are all paper based and do not make use of existing, or emerging technologies.</p> <p>A process of digitisation was being undertaken together with links to pagers and alerters. A BOSS Mobile report was being taken to the Strategic Change Board early in 2024. The roadmap was available as a useful and visual reference.</p> <p>SLT noted the contents of the report and presentation.</p>	
244/23	<p>SLT Forward Plan 2022 and FA/Members Seminar Forward Plan</p> <p>SLT noted the forward plans for 2023, which was a useful overview for the coming months.</p> <p>ADoPS would advise which HMI Culture & Value deadlines need to remain on list, as not all related to FRS’s.</p> <p>It was noted that purdah would begin at the end of March 2024 ahead of the Hastings Borough Council elections on 2 May 2024.</p> <p>The IMRP Update would be provided by GM Andy Cornford not GM Chris Baker and likely be brought to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel on 16 May 2024 instead of 18 January 2024, due to it not going to SLT until March. ADoP&I noted that the agenda for Panels in May was currently quite heavy.</p> <p>The following amendments were made to the Members Seminar timetable: <u>March</u> Artificial Intelligence, Communications and Engagement, plus Building Safety Regulations Update <u>May</u> – Direct Entry Update, Fort Road and White Paper <u>July</u> – Eastbourne ALP demo</p>	<p>ADoPS Jan 24</p>
245/23	<p>NFCC Council Meeting – 29 November 2023</p> <p>CFO provided a verbal update following attendance at the last NFCC Council meeting on 29 November 2023 and subsequent circulation of the minutes and reports.</p> <p>ADoPS would re-circulate the Pensions report which included detail of ‘what it means for us’. The Payroll & Pensions Manager would bring back an update in February for SLT to give this consideration for the Pension Board.</p>	<p>ADoPS Feb 24</p>
246/23	<p>Any Other Business</p>	

	<p><u>Managers Seminars</u> SLT agreed to retain the same attendance going forwards; GMs, SMs and GF7 or equivalent with representation if unavailable and for these to be held face to face where possible.</p> <p><u>Core Brief</u> Comms were collating feedback on new Core Brief process. ADoPS was doing the same for the new Team Brief updates.</p> <p><u>Merseyside Fire Control</u> The current strike was due to crewing. ADoOSR was raising with Surrey FRS as Merseyside are our buddy fire control. CFO would also speak to CFO Phil Garrigan.</p> <p><u>Enfuse Milestone 1 report</u> DCFO provided an update, noting that this was the first of 4 reports, the last of which was due at the end of February and would include a clear way forward and recommendations. The content of this report would be discussed further at next weeks' Board meeting in order to develop these areas through format and structure in the coming weeks. The final report would be formally written, but interim ones presented by way of a slide deck. SLT shared their initial comments and CFO commented on the use of the ESFRS logo on the documentation and associated ownership of doing so.</p> <p><u>HMI Roy Wilsher visit</u> The date (15 May 2024) would be added to diaries. SLT discussed the potential agenda which was likely to include the Prevention and Protection Teams (in Eastbourne) and also culture.</p> <p><u>Sharepoint</u> CFO enquired about roadmap, timeline, training progress and ensuring a clear message for staff. DCFO would follow this up with ITG/telement and check the latest position. ADoP&I stated there is a bid in for next year.</p> <p><u>Fire Reform White Paper</u> CFO verbally provided a summary and confirmed that Members have been advised. SLT shared their initial thoughts and would work through further at SLT in January.</p>	DCFO Jan 24
247/23	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 24 January 2024</p>	