

NON CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
MINUTES OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM HELD ON 23 MAY 2024

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 Youldon, Assistant Director of Operational Support & Resilience
 Liz Ridley, Assistant Director of Planning & Improvement
 Julie King, Assistant Director of People Services
 Matt Lloyd, Assistant Director of Safer Communities
 George O'Reilly, T/Area Manager Protection
 Elizabeth Curtis, Communications & Marketing Manager
 Sue Walsh, Executive Assistant
 Alyson Lumb, Executive Support Officer
 Kate Sands, Observer

Apologies: None.

		Action
84/24	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held 25 April 2024</p> <p>The non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2024 were approved as an accurate record.</p>	
85/24	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p><u>74/24 Safer Communities Action Plan (Training/Occupational Health)</u> ADoPS provided a short update following a recent meeting with Adrian Rutherford and Dan Gillard (OH Collaboration), where it had been agreed to facilitate a workshop on Ill Health Retirement to include Reps from both ESFRS and Surrey, together with guidance documents and sharing examples of good practice. It was noted that Sussex and Surrey Police employed their own doctors so opportunities to explore options for this Service would also be considered. The ongoing performance of Medigold was being monitored. This led to a general discussion on the provision and demand for ESFRS staff and a review of additional waiting times.</p>	
86/24	<p>Action Points from Matrix</p> <p><u>40/24 Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2067/27 Monitoring at Month 11</u> ADoR/T stated that the provisional outturn return report would be discussed in further detail under agenda item 4. The Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring report for Period 2 will be brought to SLT in June. Action complete.</p> <p><u>72/24 Firefighters' Pension Schemes (FPS) Age Discrimination, Remedy and Immediate Detriment Briefing Note</u> CFO had requested a copy of the template letter which would be sent out by our Pensions Administrator WYPF. This had been followed up on and confirmed there was no letter. There was a short update following the withdrawal of the Pensions report from the recent Policy and Resources Panel and the ongoing position, both internally and nationally. Action complete.</p> <p><u>76/24 SLT Workplace Visit</u> It was agreed to offer a single date to HQ staff for an opportunity to have an in-person meeting with SLT.</p>	<p>SW Jun 24</p>

87/24	<p>Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2026/27 Monitoring Provisional Outturn</p> <p>The Finance Manager reported on the Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28 provisional outturn.</p> <p>The provisional outturn is an underspend to the sum of £423,000 which is a decrease from the position reported at Month 10 (end Jan) of £465,000.</p> <p>The decant costs for Preston Circus were £103,000 which had now been transferred from Estates Capital to Estates Revenue following discussions with external auditors and CIPFA. ADoR/T stated that it had not cost more, but as these costs cannot be capitalised, they had to be funded from revenue. The capital scheme budget would be reduced by £180,000 (to cover total decant costs over the whole project) in due course.</p> <p>This changed the forecast outturn to £423,000 underspend and the capital underspend to £1.589m.</p> <p>Service Training Centre and Workforce Development have requested carry forwards of £26,000, relating to the Direct Entrant, and ITG have carry forwards of £25,000 for Firewatch App, in addition to the carry forwards already agreed. The remainder of the £206,000 underspend would be transferred to the Capital Programme Reserve to provide additional flexibility.</p> <p>SLT discussed the impact of the Grey Book pay award. The general 4% award was within the budget provision. However, On-Call figures based on 90% establishment, indicated a current (budgeted) pressure of £440,000, this included CPD. Based on staff currently in post, this figure was £311,000. ADoR/T provided an overview of pressures.</p> <p>Design Guide Projects for wholtime stations were discussed at POSAA's yesterday and a subsequent meeting had been arranged for 4 June 2024 to re-visit this budget setting and consider whether an uplift would be required.</p> <p>AMoP enquired about the sprinkler reserve of £440,000. ADoR/T clarified that the sprinkler reserve had been closed and the £636,000 which had been planned to be used to balance the 2023/24 budget would be transferred to the General Balance (to return it to the 5% minimum policy level) and the financial stability reserve.</p> <p>Throughout the year, SLT has proactively managed the revenue budget with pressures in Safer Communities being offset by underspends elsewhere in the budget, including a more focussed vacancy management process through the Workforce Planning Group.</p> <p>In addition, one-off additional income from Treasury Management activity (due primarily to higher than forecast interest rates), from business rates and other government grants mean that the planned drawdown of £636,000 from reserves has not been required. Planned use of reserves for revenue projects continue to be funded from the revenue budget.</p> <p>Further planned drawdowns totalling £201,000 from the People Strategy and Improvement & Efficiency reserves have also not been required. It is recommended these amounts are re-allocated to provide flexibility for future financial years.</p>	
-------	---	--

	<p>Government grants of £4.379m were made available this year. A total of £3.638m has been carried forward in reserves to be utilised in future years. The remaining Covid-19 grant funding was utilised to fund work on Future Foundations.</p> <p>The provisional outturn is an underspend of £1.589m. There is slippage on delivery of capital projects to the value of £1,624,000 (34.1%), spend in advance of £41,000 and underspend of £6,000.</p> <p>The position on reserves shows an opening balance of £14,460,00. The net drawdown from reserves is £1,678,000, a reduction of £5,615,000 compared to the planned drawdown of £7,293,000. This results in a closing balance of £12,782,000.</p> <p>SLT noted the provisional 2023/24 Revenue Budget outturn, the provisional Capital Programme outturn including slippage and spend incurred in advance, the ITG strategy position and net drawdown from reserves, together with grants available, savings delivered in 2023/24; and cash balances invested at year end and borrowing repaid.</p> <p>SLT agreed to recommend to the Policy & Resources Panel that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> £1,597,000 of Capital Expenditure is slipped into 2024/25 The £636,000 of reserves not required to balance the 2023/24 budget is transferred into the General Balances (£480,500) and Financial Stability Reserve (£155,500) The revenue underspend of £423,000 is transferred to the following reserves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry Forward Reserve £217,000 Capital Programme Reserve £206,000 	
88/24	<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"> - Communications, Engagement and Consultation Strategy 2024-27 	
89/24	<p>Communications, Engagement and Consultation Strategy 2024-27</p> <p>CMM stated that the draft Communications, Engagement and Consultation strategy 2024-27 has been developed in support of our Purpose and Commitments, Integrated/Community Risk Management Plans and Fire Authority strategies.</p> <p>The draft strategy has been reviewed by SLT, other Senior Officers and Team Leaders and with input from CFA members and the Equality and Inclusion lead.</p> <p>The deliverables within the draft strategy take into consideration findings from the HMICFRS and the national standards on communications and engagement.</p> <p>SLT approved the draft Communications, Engagement and Consultation Strategy 2024-27 to go forward to the Fire Authority for sign off on 13 June 2024 and noted that the Future Foundations programme may impact the ability to deliver the outcomes outlined within the strategy.</p>	

90/24	<p>Outcomes of availability of data and dashboards initiative</p> <p>ADoOSR provided some background detail following the last report to SLT in September 2023 and the performance measure dashboard work. This has initially been produced for Safer Communities, but there is a clear opportunity to it to be extended across the service.</p> <p>GM Administrator (West Group) provided an overview of the data and dashboard initiative for OSR covering 4 areas; Operational Response, Operational Preparedness, Collaboration and Learning. The two Operational areas were being developed at the moment. The Power BI toolkit has proved helpful in enabling the collation, analysis and filtering of data. GM Admin can now run a single report instead of separate reports, providing consistency of understanding and improved intelligence and analysis. ADoP&I stated that the provision of Power BI training is included within the Proof of Value - Mobilising.</p> <p>SLT were shown the capabilities of the work, including access to live information and links to other sites/programmes. SLT agreed the need to improve the provision of data and intelligence and how it informs decision. Thematic plans were in place to develop this further, noting that this was in addition to existing business plans.</p> <p>SLT thanked the GM Administrator (West Group) for the work she had done in this area. SLT noted that work would continue to be taken forward as part of the wider data strategy, and included in the implementation plan for the data warehouse. The work on performance measures is integral to our efforts to be increasingly data and intelligence-led.</p>	
91/24	<p>Operational Planning & Policy Briefing Note</p> <p>ADoOSR provided SLT with a briefing note for their information and awareness of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Marauding Terrorist Attack JOPS Edition 3 Update b. JESIP Training Update and Doctrine Edition 3.1 c. Initial Operational Response to Incidents Suspected to Involve Hazardous Substances or CBRN Materials <p>SLT noted the report.</p>	
92/24	<p>SLT Forward Plan 2024 and FA/Members Seminar Forward Plan</p> <p>SLT noted the forward plans for 2024, which was a useful overview for the coming months.</p> <p>It was agreed to move the Environment and Sustainability Action Plan from June's Fire Authority meeting to September.</p> <p><u>Members Seminars</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLT agreed to cancel the forthcoming Members Seminar on 1 July due to proximity to the general election and considered utilising this date for Members Induction instead. • Potential items for the Seminar on 17 September would be results of the Benenden trail including updates on sickness and other absences; Direct Entry Update and Fort Road Update. • The Seminar scheduled for 20 November would be held in person instead, possibly at Preston Circus. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Review/Fire in Tall Buildings (FITB) were also considered as future topics. 	
93/24	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><u>Awards Ceremony budget 23/24</u> AL requested funding ahead of a number of key ESFRS events due to take place this year, the first being the 50th Anniversary event on 4 July 2024. In addition to the cost of the venue, there was a request to purchase of display equipment at cost £1,500, which could be re-used at future service events. The estimated cost for all elements is approx. £3000, noting that the Awards Ceremony budget for 2023/24 was underspent by £4,935. SLT agreed to allocate £4,000 from contingency towards this and CMM offered our existing display boards and part of the printing budget to offset this cost.</p> <p><u>Home Office Secondment</u> DCFO advised that Katie Cornhill would shortly be seconded to the Home Office at the beginning in July for a period of 6 months and would be working with the Fire Policy Team on a number of issues. There would be an expression of interest for current GM's to replace her role at STC. An article regarding the secondment would be placed in Service Brief in due course.</p> <p><u>Welfare Update</u> ADoOSR provided a welfare update on Neal Martin and ADoR/T did the same for Jen Wheeler. SLT sent their thoughts good wishes to their respective families.</p> <p><u>Fire Cadets - Quiz Night (Bexhill)</u> This event had been very well attended and raised a total of £1,800. Comms would follow shortly.</p> <p><u>National Resilience grab pack</u> CMM provided an update on the Government "Prepare" recently launched on the Resilience website and her planned follow up actions.</p> <p><u>Use of Social Media</u> A reminder would be included within Service Brief regarding appropriate use of social media prior to a forthcoming general election.</p> <p><u>HMICFRS State of Fire</u> This had now been published along with the NFCC response. SLT discussed the request for FRS's to produce a report on the recommendations.</p> <p><u>HMICFRS Avon FRS and Cornwall FRS re-visit</u> CFO commented on the note/cause of concern and SLT considered estates repairs and other matters including workwear/PPE.</p> <p><u>PRIDE</u> CFO advised that the formal invitation to Brighton Pride had now been issued to South East CFO's. CFO advised SLT to remain strong, clear and focussed and remember that we serve a diverse community. Acknowledging that there may be more potential activism ahead of the forthcoming Pride events, there had been a request that consideration be given our ESFRS staff in the planning and preparations.</p> <p><u>Member Update</u> Following a recent meeting with BHCC, CFO advised that BHCC Leader, Cllr Bella Sanky had committed to supporting a Fire Cadet Unit in the City along with some funding. Cllr Jackie O'Quinn would be returning to the Fire Authority along with new Member, Cllr Raphael Hill. With regards to ESCC, Cllr Paul Redstone had now been appointed as Conservative Leader.</p>	

	<p>Due to his recent appointment as Chairman of ESCC, Cllr Roy Galley will no longer sit on the Fire Authority going forwards, so a new Fire Authority Chair would be appointed at the Annual Fire Authority meeting on 13 June 2024.</p> <p><u>Training at STC</u> SLT discussed the recent cancellation of a Breathing Apparatus course, which CFO stated was not acceptable and needed to be addressed as a matter of urgency. DCFO would be meeting with ESCC again and contact has already been made with Sussex Police regarding a recent event. SLT are clear that staff should feel safe, and be made to feel that their training is being taken seriously. ESFRS have a zero tolerance on abusive behaviour to staff. It was agreed that additional plans would be made around each training date and the Duty Officer be mobilised if required.</p> <p><u>The Fire Fighters Charity</u> ADoR/T noted that Morgan Sindall, our main contractors for Preston Circus had raised £4,000 for the charity through a sponsored bike ride.</p>	
94/24	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on 20 June 2024</p>	