

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority Periodic Report of the Chairman on Authority Matters

Items considered by the Authority

1. Items considered by the Authority at its March meeting can be found by following the link below:-

http://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/Documents/fire_and_rescue_authority_31-03-2016.pdf

Appointment of Chairman of the Authority

2. The Authority at its meeting on 31 March appointed Mr Mark Deaville as Chairman up to the annual meeting of the Authority on 6 June 2016.

Appointment of Mr Rob Barber as Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Executive

3. Following a two day process, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority's Appointments Committee has selected Mr Rob Barber for the position of Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Executive for Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Mr Barber took up the role of Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Deputy Chief Executive with effect from Sunday 1 May 2016. The vacancy had arisen following the promotion of Rebecca Bryant to the position of Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive.

Mr Barber has been with Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service since starting as a firefighter in 1997 and has worked his way up through the organisation, most recently being in the position of the Director of Response.

Official Opening of Stone Community Fire Station

4. Stone's new community fire station was officially opened during a special ceremony on Wednesday 20 April 2016. Local Members of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Rebecca Bryant joined Station Manager David Steele at the celebration. Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Ian Dudson CBE performed the official opening watched by serving and former firefighters based at Stone and visiting members of the Estonian Rescue Board. Local dignitaries were in the audience along with representatives of organisations that use the community rooms.

The station is part of a multi-million pound investment to make Staffordshire a much safer place to live, work and visit. The ethos behind the new-look facility is to provide a multi-purpose venue with a variety of functions. Stone Community Fire Station will not only be a response facility where firefighters will turn out to emergencies but will also provide a base where vital prevention and protection work can be carried out with and for the people. The community fire station is a very strong tool in the fire service kit. Interacting much more closely and regularly with local people will help to reduce the number and severity of incidents reported. This, coupled with state-of-the-art

facilities, ensure it is fit to meet the needs of a 21st Century fire and rescue service. Facilities within the building have been created specifically with the community in mind and for the use of residents.

The £3 million community fire station has replaced the outdated base at Fillybrooks, Walton which was built in 1975. Stone Community Fire Station was the fourth facility to become operational in phase two of a major upgrade of buildings across the county. When the project is complete, 10 new community fire stations will have been built plus a brand new station at Loggerheads which will replace the 45-year-old station at Ashley.

Peer Review

5. The Authority/Service has, between 21 and 24 March, been involved in an LGA Peer Review. The Peer Review provides a level of external challenge and potential improvement by bringing together a team of peers from across fire and other sectors. The Peer Review Team comprised:-

Dave Curry (Chief Fire Officer, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service)
Cllr David Acton (Chair, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority)
Claire Cooper (Deputy Director, National Fire Policy, Home Office)
Linda Hindle (Lead Allied Health Professional Public Health England)
Robert Herring (Performance Coach and Local Government Association)
Brian Neat (Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service)
Tom Simms (County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service)
Ernest Opuni (Peer Challenge Manager, Local Government Association)

The key areas of assessment were Community Risk Management, Prevention, Protection, Preparedness, Response, Health and Safety and Training and Development. The Peer Review Team met with a number of Focus Groups and interviews were held across the Service and Fire Control following general lines of questioning to identify how we work together towards common targets and in turn achieve better outcomes for the workforce and community. The Peer Review Team gave a presentation on the summary of the findings which was positive but highlighted areas for improvement. The full report will be discussed and scrutinised by Authority Members at a special Member briefing.

Annual Statement of Assurance

6. The Authority is required to produce an Annual Statement of Assurance in order to comply with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework. The Statement provides assurance on financial, governance and operational matters and details how the Service has paid due regard to the expectations set out within the Corporate Safety Plan. One of the principle aims of the Statement is to provide a way in which communities, Government, local authorities and other partners may make a valid assessment of local fire and rescue authorities performance. The Authority approved the Annual Statement of Assurance at their last meeting and this can be viewed on the web site.

M A Deaville
Chairman

C L Wanger
Vice Chairman