

COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 9 AUGUST 2024 AT 12:00HRS IN MEETING ROOM 08 AND REMOTELY VIA TEAMS

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Kirsty Williams (Chair)
Baroness Wilcox of Newport
Carl Foulkes

APOLOGIES:

Vij Randeniya

OFFICERS PRESENT: T/CFO Stuart Millington, ACO Alison Reed – Director of People Services, T/ACFO Dean Loader – Director of Service Delivery, Lisa Mullan – Head of Finance, Procurement and Property, Gabrielle Greathead – Interim Monitoring Officer, Christian Landeg-John – Advisor to Commissioners, Suzanne Absalom – Culture Change Programme Manager, Wayne Thomas – Head of Corporate Support, Julie Snooks – Procurement Officer, Laura Grogan – Lead Communications, Attraction and Engagement Officer

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chair's announcements.

3. REPORTS FOR DECISION

3.1 HIS MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BENCHMARK INSPECTION

The Culture Change Programme Manager presented a report on the His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) Benchmark Inspection. The HMICFRS will carry out a full review of the Service which will provide the Commissioners, the Service and Welsh Government comprehensive and supporting data about the performance of the organisation that would build into the Morris Review findings, by adding further context and insight into the people elements, as well as contributing to the research arising from the three thematic reviews.

Suzanne Absalom drew the Boards attention to a correction on point 4.2 which states that a grade will be provided for the 11 topic areas. HMICFRS would provide the Service with a narrative report and recommendations in respect of any areas identified as a cause of concern or for improvement. As this is our first inspection, we would not be comparable to English FRs.

Suzanne Absalom advised the report will be published by HMICFRS. Lady Wilcox asked for clarification if it would be within the remit of SWFRA to publish the report. Suzanne Absalom confirmed it would be published on the HMICFRS website but as it is ours, we are able to publish it. There needs to be further discussion with HMICFRS around this, as there is a distinction to be made that the reports in England are published as statutory responsibility, however our inspection request is a different commission to obtain data and narrative that supports us.

Carl Foulkes commented on our capacity challenges around Senior Leaders supporting the HMICFRS with the inspection whilst delivering the change we have ongoing. It was noted that HMICFRS will work with us on a schedule of meetings to compliment the work commitments we have. CFO Stuart Millington explained that HMICFRS will have a point of contact in the Service to provide the resource of support.

The Head of Finance, Procurement and Property took the paper as read, and had no further comments on the procurement process or budget. Lisa Mullan wished to explicitly note the VEAT.

RESOLVED THAT

- 3.1.1 The Commissioners note the content of the report and the correction to paragraph 4.2.
- 3.1.2 The Commissioners note the Treasurers approval of finances to commission a HMICFRS inspection.
- 3.1.3 The Commissioners approved the direct award, through the publication of a Voluntary Ex-ante Transparency Notice (VEAT), of a contract to HMICFRS.
- 3.1.4 The Commissioners approve temporary resource to support the HMICFRS inspection and wider culture and transformation priorities.

4. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON DEEMS URGENT (Part 1 or 2)

CFO Stuart Millington wanted to make the Commissioners aware as a part of the stage 3 refurbishment program that work will begin at New Inn Fire Station. Staff and resources will be relocated to a temporary site and the lease will be signed this week for 2 years, and work will begin on the temporary site to allow staff to have appropriate accommodation during this time. They anticipate the construction to begin in November and this is planned for 2 years as it is a complete rebuild.