

SOUTH YORKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2025

Present

Councillor A Cherryholme (Chair)

Councillor R Taylor (Vice Chair)

Councillors: S Alston, S Ayris, S Ball, A Jones, L McClean, M Morrell, J Ridler

Kilvinder Vigurs (Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime)) and David Peet (South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority SYMCA)

South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) : CFO Chris Kirby, ACFO Simon Dunker, Sue Kelsey (Director of People and Culture), Linda Haigh (Director of Finance and Procurement), AM Paul Heffernan, AM John Billings (Area Managers South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service SYFR), Danielle Clarke (Financial Services Manager), Andrew Knight (Estates & Facilities Manager), Lee Patterson (Health & Safety Manager), Martin McCarthy (Monitoring Officer), Zoe Duddell, Rob Longley (Authority Governance Team)

Apologies

Councillor B Anderson, Councillor R Reed

DCFO Andrew Strelczenie, AM Matt Gillatt (Area Manager SYFR)

Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies

Apologies for absence were received as above.

Item 2 – Announcements

None

Item 3 – Urgent items

None

Item 4 – Items to be considered in the absence of the public and press

None

Item 5 – Declarations of interest by individual members in relation to any item of business on the agenda

None

Item 6 – Reports by members

Cllr Taylor reported he had attended the Aston Park Open Day over the weekend.

Item 7 – Receipt of petitions

None

Item 8 – To receive any questions or communications from the public, or communications submitted by the chair or the clerk and to pass such resolutions thereon as the standing orders permit and as may be deemed expedient

None

Item 9 – Minutes of the Authority meeting held on Monday 16 June 2025

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 16 June 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Item 10 – Minutes of the Local Pensions Board held on Wednesday 2 July 2025

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Local Pensions Board held on 2 July 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Item 11– Minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Board on Thursday 10 July 2025

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Performance and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 10 July 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Item 12 - Minutes of the Stakeholder Planning Board Tuesday 15 July 2025

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Stakeholder Planning Board held on 15 July 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Item 13 – Ratify the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 21 July 2025

The Monitoring Officer noted that the meeting held on the 21 July 2025 was not quorate. Cllr Ball raised concern that the previous two Audit and Governance Committee meetings were not quorate. The Chair acknowledged this point and Cllr Ball's email and reiterated to Members the importance of attendance.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 21 July 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Item 14 – Ratify Fire and Rescue Authority Board and Committee Appointments

The Monitoring Officer presented the Fire and Rescue Authority Board and Committee Appointments to the Authority. The Monitoring Officer formally noted the appointment of Cllr Bannister who replaced Cllr McClean as a Member of the Fire and Rescue Authority.

RESOLVED – That Members ratified the appointed Members to Committees and Boards.

ITEMS FOR DECISION

Item 15 – Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report

The Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report 2024/25 was submitted for Members' consideration and approval by the Monitoring Officer.

A Member noted the Annual State of Fire Report was raised by Auditors as a potential future risk. The CFO confirmed this report has not been published this year. Recommendations will be considered and reported to the Fire and Rescue Authority through the Service Improvement Board.

RESOLVED – That Members considered the Annual Report of its Audit and Governance Committee and, subject to any changes made, agreed to publish it on the Authority's website.

Item 16 – Asset Management Board Update

The Asset Management Board update was presented to the Authority by the Director of Finance and Procurement.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report and provided further scrutiny and support which enabled continuous and effective management of assets.

Item 17 – Firefighter Pensions - Progress on Immediate detriment Sargeant and Matthews

The Firefighter Pensions - Progress on Immediate detriment Sargeant and Matthews report was presented to the Authority by the Director of Finance and Procurement.

Members expressed concern about the update and requested further details on possible fines. The Director of Finance and Procurement reassured the Authority that currently there is no

indication of fines being issued but that this cannot be ruled out in the future. It was confirmed that South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue (SYFR) would explore the option of putting the fines onto West Yorkshire Pension Fund (WYPF) if required.

A Member requested an update on the recuperation of £0.6m SYFR paid out to pensioners before guidance was issued. The Director of Finance and Procurement anticipated none of the money being lost as when the claims are processed the money is recovered.

Members sought reassurance for confidence in future deadlines being met and remedial statements being issued to those due to retire. The Director of Finance and Procurement confirmed that robust conversations with WYPF had occurred and that WYPF understand the importance of the matter being resolved. The Director of Finance and Procurement reassured the Board that there were now only 37 outstanding remedial statements and eight Pension accounts. All those due to retire would be able to as calculations would be worked out manually.

RESOLVED – That Members considered whether the report provided adequate assurance regarding progress against the LGA timeline and noted the actions underway to address outstanding issues.

Item 18 - Service Delivery Board Update Q1 and Q2 2025/26

The Service Delivery Board Update Q1 and Q2 2025/26 was presented by AM Billings.

Members sought further information regarding the practicality and effectiveness of Business Safety Visits (BSVs), as well as seeking clarification on five yearly reviews for low risk BSVs not being conducted.

AM Billings confirmed SYFR are reviewing BSVs as to whether the right information is being collected and getting to crews and also if there is a better way to signpost Business Fire Safety Information that may capture more businesses. It was confirmed to the Authority that the Site Specific Risk Information collected on the structure of the building rarely changes, which is part of BSVs and has informed the decision to remove the five year reviews on low risk BSVs.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of the report and provided further scrutiny to support the continued effective management of the Service Delivery function.

Item 19 – HMICFRS Inspection Report

The HMICFRS inspection report was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

Members sought further clarification on Areas for Improvement (AFIs). ACFO Dunker informed the Authority that an online HMICFRS portal displays input from other Fire and Rescue Services' information against their AFIs and SYFR undertake regular benchmarking and engagement with these services. ACFO Dunker reassured the Authority that the Service Improvement Board will provide scrutiny and monitoring of previous AFIs that SYFR feel improvement can be made upon. ACFO Dunker confirmed meetings had been held with Heads of Functions and Team Managers of departments assigned to AFIs to assess extra work required. Bids were received last week from teams for additional resources and these are being reviewed.

A Member sought reassurance on current effective mass fire survival guidance. ACFO Dunker informed Members that HMICFRS noted current processes were credible but were not embedded enough at time of inspection. SYFR will ensure training is given to all staff and this process will be tested over the next twelve months.

The CFO reminded Members that AFIs had decreased from 22 to nine in this most recent report. Members were reassured that SYFR will continue to work hard to make improvements but are doing so with finite resources.

RESOLVED – That Members discussed and noted the outcome of the SYFR HMICFRS inspection.

Item 20 – Review of Performance Management Framework

The Review of Performance Management Framework was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

RESOLVED – That Members approved the Corporate Performance Framework and Key Performance Indicators.

Item 21 - Service Improvement Board Q1 Update 2025/26

The Service Improvement Board Q1 Update 2025/26 was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

Members sought clarification on the recent AFI regarding Control staff. ACFO Dunker confirmed there had been a temporary period without a dedicated training officer but this position has now been filled and all staff receive comprehensive training. ACFO Dunker reassured Members that all new staff are classed as supernumerary until they are deemed competent and capable to answer 999 calls.

A Member sought reassurance on water related incidents. ACFO Dunker confirmed there are no issues with staffing and mutual aid for water related incidents is not being requested on a regular occurrence – the Duty Manager is notified in such cases.

RESOLVED – That Members:

- a) Noted the contents of the report and provided further scrutiny and support to enable continuous service improvement.
- b) Agreed the focus on the Areas for Improvement from the Round 3 HMICFRS inspection report.

Item 22 – Service Plan Review and Close

The Service Plan Review and Close was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the progress against the priorities and actions in the Service Plan 2024-25 and provided further scrutiny and support to enable continuous service improvement.

Item 23 - Statement of Assurance Annual Report 2024/25

The Statement of Assurance and Annual Report 2024/25 was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

RESOLVED - That Members:

- a) Endorsed and signed off the Statement of Assurance and Annual Report.

b) Noted that the assessment of the Service's compliance against Fire and Rescue National Framework is covered by this report.

Item 24 - Annual review of Risk Management

The Annual Review of Risk Management was presented to the Authority by CFO Kirby.

RESOLVED – That Members considered the Risk Management Annual Report, and the assurance provided, as part of its overall consideration of SYFRA's control framework.

Item 25 - SYFR Collaboration Update

The SYFR Collaboration Update was presented to the Authority by ACFO Dunker.

A Member sought further information on the frequency and tracking system for collaborations. ACFO Dunker confirmed the majority of collaborations are ongoing and SYFR leads regularly send out reminders throughout the organisation. A Partnerships Team within Community Safety manage some of the risk that could occur from some of these collaborations.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the current progress of the SYFR Collaboration Programme

Item 26 - Fire Contaminants Update

The Fire Contaminants Update was presented to the Board by the Health and Safety Manager.

Members asked questions around reporting of the contamination and exposure process, storage space on appliances for contaminated equipment and requested an update on protracted incidents.

The Health and Safety Manager informed Members that there is a decontamination procedure to follow post incident and for reporting exposure two forms must be completed and put on personal files. It was confirmed that all new appliances have built in space for contaminated equipment and that when managing protracted incidents each appliance or station has its own means of providing and storing clean kit.

The CFO added there is a National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) working group around health and safety with contaminants included when information is disseminated out to services.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the contents of this report and provided scrutiny and support to enable continuous improvement.

Item 27 – Estates and Green Plan Update

The Estates and Green Plan Update was presented to the Authority by the Estates and Facilities Manager.

The Estates & Facilities Manager informed Members that a Sustainability Officer has been appointed.

A Member sought information on the use of Solar Panels and battery systems. The Estates and Facilities Manager informed the Committee that the Training and Development Centre and some other stations have solar panels which is sometimes sold back to National Grid. The Sustainability Officer will explore battery technology options.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the good work undertaken by the Estates Team and the projects that they have undertaken so far.