



British Fire Services Association

Admin Office: 17 Larch Close, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 9GB
Tel: 01526 830255 - Email: bfsa8@btinternet.com www.bfsa.org.uk

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
FRIDAY 8TH APRIL 2016
(MUSEUM OF RAF FIRE-FIGHTING)
RAF SCAMPTON**

PRESENT:

Mick lee	Chairman BFSA
Steve Shirley (SS)	Vice President
Frank Turner (FT)	Vice Chairman/Secretary London District
Graham Howgate (GH)	Vice President/London District President
Geoff Mcsweeney (GM)	Vice President/Chairman NW District
Tony Barker (TB)	Vice President
Dick Lovelace (DL)	Vice President/SM District
Dave Lown (DL)	Chairman EM District

APOLOGIES RECEIVED:

Peter Mills
Vernon Fisher
Derrick Crouch

The chairman opened the meeting at 10:00hrs and welcomed all those present.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks:

The chairman began by stating that this meeting was going to be restricted to just two (2) agenda items.

- a. General Secretary Vacancy**
- b. How to move the association forward**

He went on to state that there would hopefully be time set aside for airing/sharing/AOB at the end of the meeting but expressed a wish that this be kept as brief as possible so as not to inconvenience those who were travelling.

Whilst he appreciated that we would probably not come up with anything set in concrete as a result of this meeting, that the hope would be that as a Governing Council (GC) we could at least start the process of how best to take the association forward. He stated that at the very least we should expect some form of resolution to be in place before the AGM in September in respect of the general secretary position.

The chairman further stated that he would expect to have at least one more GC meeting before the AGM.

2. General Secretary (GS) Post

Notification had been received confirming the expected retirement date of Mr Derrick Crouch (DC) and that taking into account his annual leave entitlement that this would now be towards the middle part of July.

This led to some lively and constructive debate as to how we should, in the interim, fill that position and take some of the burden and stress from Derrick prior to his retirement. Both Mr Barker (TB) and Mr Howgate (GH) stated that it would not be easy, as there would have to be changes to accountancy and administration issues regarding authorised signatures etc. (GH) enquired as to whether or not there could be dedicated BFSA email addresses in respect of the GC added to website to enable direct contact with the GC for members.

Mr Shirley (SS) commented that we would also have to notify the association's webmaster as to changes of address and contact details. (SS) respectfully requested that items/issues for the web- site be directed through the webmaster direct and not through him at the fire museum.

This could be done with a simple email. (carl.bell@firemuseum.co.uk)

(TB) informed all those present that in respect of phone contact with the association going forward following (DC) retirement that he could/would organise a dedicated BFSA line through his company HQ building in Leeds, this could be manned/monitored by his staff who would then log all calls and act as a link to GC members where applicable.

In principle this was thought to be workable, the chairman asked (TB) to price up and report when this would be operational and to inform the webmaster of the new phone line number.

Discussion then revolved around the GS role and how we could progress it, once again following lively debate a proposal was put forward by (GH) that he would be willing to take on the role without claiming a salary for an interim period. It was agreed that this could provide some useful breathing space for the GC/association until such time whereby an official contract of employment, which would include all relevant salary, pension, holiday issues etc be formulated prior to advertising the role via the journal and website mediums. The chairman stated that as far as he was aware nobody had come forward since the previous meeting expressing any interest in taking on this role.

This proposal was carried by all present with an agreement that we would reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by (GH) whilst undertaking this duty/role.

In respect of the GS role going forward it was discussed whether or not it had to be a salaried post or if it could be taken on with any payment being in the form of an honorarium. It was agreed that this could be something to investigate further. The chairman stated that as an example the GS role within NAHFO (Hospital Fire Officers Association) wasn't a salaried position but one taken up as a member of the executive committee and which is voted on annually at the national conference, payment is in the form of a bursary/honorarium. The chair agreed to liaise with the NAHFO GS for details and report back at the next meeting or the AGM (whichever came first).

3. The Future for the Association:

The chairman (ML) stated and there was a collective agreement from all those present, that the events of the last year had represented an extremely difficult, emotive and challenging period for the association. He further stated that it served to highlight some of our collective weaknesses, which we needed to accept and work towards improving upon. As the incumbent chairman he accepted responsibility for some of what has

happened, but genuinely felt that the basic structure/function of the GC and its present membership had the best interests of the association at heart despite some of the criticism which has come its way over this period.

There was some general discussion as to whether or not district boundaries could be re-drawn due to the decline of some of the branches, this would/could then provide active points of contact for individual or group members who may find themselves within such an area and as a result of which do not have an active point of contact within the association.

It was agreed that this particular subject deserved further investigation/consultation and should not be acted upon at this meeting

Comments were made by (ML), (FT). (TB) that the time may have come, to once again look into reviewing the Articles of Association. It was felt that by doing so we could possibly lay a foundation by which we could start the process of moving forward with any agreed changes. Dependant on attendance this could be possibly put forward as an agenda item for discussion at the AGM.

4. A.O.B.

Following on from the recent circulated correspondence from the SM district, a proposal/suggestion was made by the chairman that he would be more than willing to meet up with members of that district at their next meeting to allow frank face to face discussion. (TB) added that he would be willing to accompany the chairman to any such meeting. An action was placed on (DL) by the chair to pass on that suggestion and report back to him via email.

A provisional date of the 24th September was agreed for this year's AGM. The venue for which is still to be confirmed, but will likely be either Site Rescue HQ Building in Leeds or the Museum of RAF Fire-fighting in Lincoln. Confirmation of this event will be posted on the website/journal and possibly in the minutes of any future GC meeting before that date.

5. Chairman's Closing Remarks:

There being no other business the chairman closed the meeting at 13:00hrs. Date/Time and venue for the next meeting will be confirmed, but likely to be in August based on the availability of the GC members over that period.

I would like to place on record my thanks and appreciation to Derrick for all his support and hard work during my tenure as chairman. I know I speak for all on the governing council in wishing him a peaceful and well deserved retirement and to once again thank him for his hard work support and dedication.

NB: These minutes hopefully reflect a true and accurate record of the April meeting. Due to Derrick's absence notes were taken by myself at the time, but were subsequently misplaced and therefore these minutes are based on my personal recollection of that meeting.

Mick Lee

Mick Lee
Chairman