

Minutes of the meeting of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel Meeting Confirmation Hearing, held in the Chamber of County Hall, Chelmsford on Friday 29 October 2021

**Present:**

**Councillor**

Keith Barber  
Godfrey Isaacs  
Jeremy Lager  
Ross Playle  
Paul Stalker  
Michael Garnett  
Arthur Williams  
Lynda McWilliams

**Representing**

Brentwood Borough Council  
Castle Point Borough Council  
Chelmsford City Council  
Essex County Council  
Epping Forest District Council  
Harlow District Council  
Rochford District Council  
Tendring District Council

**Co-opted Independent Members**

John Gili-Ross (Chairman)

**Also in attendance**

Pippa Brent-Isherwood	Chief Executive, Office of the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Julia Berry	Head of Finance and s151 Officer, Office of the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex
Maira Bruin	Assistant Chief Fire Officer Prevention, Protection, Response
Neil Cross	Chief Finance Officer Section 151 Officer, ECFRS
Roger Hirst	Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Darren Horsman	Strategic Head of Policy and Public Engagement
Rick Hylton	Candidate
Janet Perry	Strategic Head of Performance and Resources, Essex PFCC
Andy Prophet	Deputy Chief Constable
Emma Tombs	Democratic Services Manager
Jasmine Carswell	Democratic Services Officer

<b>1</b>	<b>Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest</b>  The report of the Membership, Apologies and Declarations was received. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The membership of the Panel was noted.</li> <li>The panel welcomed three new members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Councillor Barber, Brentwood BC</li> <li>Councillor Oxford, Colchester BC</li> <li>Councillor Stalker, Epping Forest DC</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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	<p>3. The following apologies were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Andrew Baggott, Basildon Borough Council</li> <li>• Councillor Frankie Ricci, Braintree District Council</li> <li>• Councillor Mark Heard, Maldon District Council</li> <li>• Councillor Ian Shead, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council</li> <li>• Councillor Gary Collins, Thurrock Council</li> <li>• Councillor C Day, Uttlesford District Council</li> <li>• Councillor B Oxford, Colchester Borough Council</li> <li>• Sheila Murphy</li> <li>• Jane Gardner, Deputy Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner</li> </ul> <p>4. The following declarations were made by Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Lynda McWilliams declared a Code Interest in that her son is a police officer. Councillor McWilliams participated fully in the meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Urgent Business</b></p> <p>In the opinion of the Chairman, there were no matters that should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances as a matter of urgency.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Proposed Appointment of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive</b></p> <p>The Committee considered report EPFCP/17/21 which set out the arrangements for the review of the proposed appointment of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive before he could be confirmed in his post.</p> <p>The Commissioner provided a brief outline of how the selection process had been carried out and stated that he was thrilled to be able to propose Mr Hylton for the role of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive of Essex Fire and Rescue Service.</p> <p>The Commissioner then gave a brief outline of Mr Hylton's suitability for the role.</p> <p>The hearing then focused on the capability, expertise, professional competence and personal independence of the candidate for this role.</p> <p>The Commissioner explained the clear strategic plan for ECFRS and referenced the progression made since 2015. The Commissioner spoke about the changed culture within the fire service and how this is evidenced in the response of the service during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The Commissioner also discussed the need to focus on prevention work.</p> <p>The Chairman invited Mr Hylton to address the panel and respond to questions.</p>

	<p>Mr Hylton first thanked the Panel and expressed that it was a great honour to be the preferred candidate for this role. Mr Hylton gave a brief overview of his career prior to 2019 and the experience that he would bring to the role and explained his suitability for the role and key highlights of his career.</p> <p>Mr Hylton stated that whilst he understood that there was still work to do to improve the service, he was proud of what had been achieved, together with partners and colleagues, and that he was excited about what could be achieved in years to come.</p> <p>Mr Hylton expressed the importance of continuing to champion a culture of inclusivity, fairness, openness, and honesty, underpinned by accountability and continued improvement. Strong and effective partnerships are key in achieving the vision of the fire and rescue plan and in making safe communities the bedrock on which wellbeing and prosperity for all is built.</p> <p>Mr Hylton set out his main three key areas he intended to work on if successful in gaining the position:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The focus on internal culture in the first instance he saw as very vital for the service</li> <li>2. Investment in learning and development for all staff in the service and an increased diversity in the workforce to aid creating an environment for all staff to thrive.</li> <li>3. The 21st century fire and rescue service should ensure capability, resources and safety are exemplary. Investment in prevention and aiding the aging population was also key.</li> </ol> <p>Mr Hylton expressed that he agreed that personal development was extremely important and stated that he had undergone a number of leadership qualifications to ensure he develops as a senior leader, to support his team and understand the wider context of the Essex system.</p> <p>Mr Hylton expressed that he was conscious of being able to let go of his current role and step up into the Chief Executive role, if successful, and that would require drawing on experience of previous promotions in which it was vital to be able to trust the teams you recruit to complete the role you are leaving behind.</p>
4	<p><b>Deliberation on Confirmation Hearing for the Proposed Appointment of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive</b></p> <p>It was proposed and <b>RESOLVED</b> that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the deliberation stage, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person).</p> <p>The press and public left the meeting at this point.</p>

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<b>5</b>	<b>Outcome of the Confirmation Hearing for the Proposed Appointment of the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive</b>  The Panel considered the proposed appointment and unanimously <b>RESOLVED</b> to recommend to the PFCC that he proceed in appointing Rick Hylton to the position of Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive. The Chairman would write to the PFCC to confirm this, by way of a letter.
<b>6.</b>	There being no urgent exempt business, the meeting closed at 12:00pm.

**Chairman**  
9 December 2021