

NORTH YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE



Independent Audit Committee (IAC)

Tuesday 23rd September 2025

DRAFT Summary Minutes

Meeting: Independent Audit Committee
Date and Time: Tuesday 23rd September 2025, 14:00 – 16:00hrs
Location: Haigh Conference Room, Alverton Court Police HQ and via Teams
Chair: Roman Pronyszyn

Attendees:

Name	Role
Roman Pronyszyn (RP)	Committee Member & Chair
Heather Cook (HC)	Committee Member
Damien Henderson (DH)	NYFRS Area Manager - Director for Service Improvement and Assurance
Charlie French (CF)	NYFRS Director of Service Design and Delivery
Clare Godfrey (CG)	NYFRS Head of Finance
Lee Chapman (LC)	NYFRS & NYP Deputy Director for Support Services and Transformation
Michael Porter (MP)	YNYCA OPFCC Assistant Director of Resources (Deputy s73 Officer)
Paul Clark (PC)	YNYCA Governance & Assurance Manager
Matt Stacey (MS)	RSM UK Risk Assurance Services – Managing Consultant
Richard Malanaphy (RM)	Member (pending vetting)
Ian McClelland (IM)	Governance Support Officer

Apologies:

Name	Role
Dr Stuart Green (SG)	Committee Member & Vice Chair
Lisa Stitt (LS)	Assistant Chief Officer
Mat Walker (MW)	NYFRS Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Peter Topping (PT)	Member (pending vetting)

Items and Decisions:

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
1.	Attendance and Apologies. Attendance and apologies are noted above. With only two Members in attendance, the quorate threshold was not met to approve any necessary decisions. Any decisions required would be deferred and sent to SG for comment. CF noted that MW has now left NYFRS having been appointed as the London Fire Brigade Deputy Commissioner and Operational Director for Preparedness & Response.	Refer to Item 16
2.	Declaration of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.	

No.	Discussion	Outcome / Decision
3.	Minutes and Actions of Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the meeting held on 19.06.25 were reviewed. There were no comments or amendments and the Minutes were recorded as accurate and were proposed for approval by RP, seconded by HC.	Approved
4.	<p>Internal Audit. MS provided an update on all audit documents.</p> <p>4.1. Progress Report. Continued progress against the FY25/26 Internal Audit Plan was discussed. The summer leave period and major fire incident at Langdale Moor did impact on FRS staff availability, but audits have continued with a number scheduled to be completed ready for presentation at future meetings. Given the recent introduction of a new Sustainability Strategy, the scheduled Environmental Audit has been removed from the FY25/26 Plan to allow time for that new strategy to embed. The committee noted the solid progress reported. Committee Members present noted the report.</p> <p>4.2. Credit Cards Audit - Final Report. This is a clear example of proactive use of internal audit by NYFRS as when an issue was discovered an independent audit was requested to provide a level of assurance around the policies and procedures. The audit focused on training, reporting processes, sample testing usage and the robustness of policies and procedures. The audit resulted in a <i>partial assurance</i> opinion. Discussions noted that credit card spending levels are low and that the use of credit cards remains necessary. CG provided assurance that the high-level action to review and communicate the Users Policy has been completed. Remaining medium and low level actions are being progressed at pace. Committee Members present approved the audit.</p> <p>4.3. Code of Ethics Audit - Final Report. The audit focussed on the core ethical principles in place, awareness campaigns and how the Code of Ethics is embedded across NYFRS, as well as seeking assurances that any issues are investigated. Broad and deep conversations were conducted with the workforce. The audit resulted in a <i>substantial assurance</i> opinion. This level of opinion is not given out lightly, but there is clear evidence that the culture is built into a 'top down' process and demonstrates that NYFRS is set up to take ethics and cultural matters forward in the correct manner. DH added that the staff had been fully engaged with the audit process. RP noted the very positive audit. Committee Members present approved the audit.</p> <p>4.4. Emergency Services News Briefing August 2025. These News Briefings are compiled and published quarterly and contain relevant details of new regulation, legislation and reports that have recently been published which are hoped to be a useful document for officers to refer to. DH confirmed that the document is most useful and remains an agenda item on the NYFRS Risk & Assurance Board to ensure wider organisational knowledge and focus.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
5.	Matters Arising. There were no outstanding matter arising from the previous Minutes.	
6.	<p>Finance and Accounts. MP provided the update.</p> <p>6.1. FY24/25 Budget Monitoring Outturn Covering Report. The report shows an overspend of £489k which was higher than forecast and was a result of a larger than expected pay award. There remain continuing challenges for the delivery of the capital programme. The budgetary position is briefed to the NYFRS SLT throughout the FY. Despite the significant increase in the precept, challenges have continued and a small future overspend is forecast.</p>	

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	<p>Approximately 70% of the total budget is spent on salary, and whilst forecasting exercises are undertaken against a variety of potential pay awards (2.5% - 4.5%) and with an earmarked reserve allocated, this remains an area of budget setting risk until pay awards are confirmed, as well as the fluctuating inflation rate. The £420k contribution from NYP from the significantly rebuilt and refurbished Joint NYFRS / NYP Station at Ripon was highlighted.</p> <p>This report had been presented to the Deputy Mayor in Jun 25 as part of the reporting cycle, with the general recognition of the financial challenges faced over the previous decade and remains a key report for future budget and precept setting as well as the stability of NYFRS. Committee Members present noted the report.</p>	Noted
7.	<p>Information Governance Report – SIRO Report. CF provided the background on the key updates within the report. The ICO Accountability Tracker shows that NYFRS are currently 42% fully compliant, 42% partially compliant and 16% not meeting compliance. There are resource constraints in this area, but prioritised work continues particularly on updating critical policies and procedures.</p> <p>Whilst no new DPIAs have been required, there has been a general increase in FOIs received which are broadly completed within statutory guidance. There is a joint team that deals with information assurance alongside NYP which provides a standardised approach and management. The departure of MW as SIRO is being managed to ensure legality. Committee Members present accepted the report.</p>	Accepted
8.	<p>Internal Audit Tracker. CF provided a high level summary of internal audit activity captured via recommendations from audits. The continued good working relationship with RSM was noted which includes monthly progress meetings and ensuring realistic delivery dates are set against actions. Actions from the most recent three audits have been added resulting in 20 live actions on the tracker are being progressed. Of the 20, 12 are on schedule to be completed within the agreed time frame, the remaining 8 are overdue and are being closely monitored through Risk & Assurance Board governance, but are a result of the scale of work required against an unrealistic time frame for completion.</p> <p>Work continues to progress all live actions although there has been delays due to the impact of the Langdale Moor critical incident. This will result in delays against some action target dates. Known risks have been mitigated and all critical safety equipment has been prioritised for servicing within deadlines. A great deal of work has been undertaken regarding health and safety actions and a structured programme of work is in place to continue with the remaining tasks. Assurance was provided by MP that live actions are discussed in detail at the Risk & Assurance Board which provides a high level of oversight and direction to deliver on the remaining actions. This level of detail, scrutiny, leadership and ‘check and challenge’ culture has resulted in NYFRS being in the best position it has been in for a considerable amount of time. Committee Members present accepted the report.</p>	Accepted
9.	<p>Risk Register & Risk Tracker. CF provided background on the key updates within the register and tracker. There are now 11 live entries on the Corporate Risk Register; this is a very stable trend. One risk has been closed since the previous meeting,</p> <p>Check and challenge processes continues to take place at the regular Risk & Assurance Board, members of that board have all received training to fully understand risk rating and mitigation. A new impact score for <i>Reputational Impact</i> has now been added to the overall risk scoring system. MP highlighted the financial risks, particularly following the major incident at Langdale Moor. This was a significantly expensive operation for</p>	

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	<p>NYFRS and without external support the organisation would be in a difficult financial position. An application for additional emergency government funding via the Bellwin Scheme¹ has been submitted.</p> <p>The risk that the Local Government Funding Formula may result potentially in significantly less government funding is being activity reviewed as this may affect the medium term financial plan for NYFRS. Committee Members present noted the clearly presented and useful report which was accepted.</p>	Accepted
10.	<p>Complaints & Compliments. CF presented the details which are compiled by the Office of Police, Fire and Crime within the Combined Authority. From the generally low number of complaints (average of 15 per year over past 5 years) there are no specific themes or areas of concern identified.</p> <p>Similarly, there was a general low number of compliments (average of 31 per year over last 3 years). It was noted that compliments are now most likely to be expressed informally to local crews or via social media.</p> <p>Social media had captured a significant number of compliments following the Langdale Moor incident, and very few complaints, despite the lengthy disruption. There may be future opportunities to capture positive feedback from social media platforms. Committee Members present noted the report.</p>	Noted
11.	<p>HMICFRS Report. DH provided an update on the HMICFRS Inspection report.</p> <p>This recent HMICFRS inspection resulted in 7 Areas For Improvement, a Senior Responsible Officer has been allocated to each. By comparison, the previous inspection had resulted in 2 Causes For Concern, 8 Recommendations and 24 Areas for Improvement.</p> <p>Progress has been made against the 7 recommendations from the report and following scrutiny at the recent Risk and Assurance Board a number of the recommendations were assessed as completed and closed.</p> <p>Certain recommendations have been progressed as far as is practicably possible, such as the rotating staff, or moving promoted officers, to different stations. Recommendations such as this are not only impacted by the geographical and rural nature of NY, but also by individual family circumstances, and will be recommended to be closed, despite not fully achieving HMICFRS's recommendation. There is sound rationale to do so.</p> <p>A new monitoring portal is being utilised to upload all evidence of how recommendations are being addressed. NYP have utilised such a system for some years, but it is new to FRS and is being fully embraced. Committee Members present accepted the report.</p>	Accepted
12.	<p>Fire Independent Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25. MP provided an overview of the prepared Annual Report which includes comments on all areas that the</p>	

¹ The Bellwin scheme is activated where an emergency or disaster occurs and, as a result, local authorities incur expenditure from the taking of immediate action to safeguard life or property, or to prevent suffering or severe inconvenience. Ministers are empowered to activate a scheme after considering the circumstances of each individual case. The Bellwin scheme is intended to reimburse the cost of local authority actions taken in the immediate phase of an emergency,

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	<p>Committee had considered throughout FY24/25 that they may wish to bring to the attention of the Deputy Mayor and Chief Fire Officer.</p> <p>It is an honest report and reflects both the many positives, areas that still require improvement, financial accounts and progress against both the HMICFRS inspection recommendations and internal audit recommendations.</p> <p>Members present thanked MP for compiling the very thorough and comprehensive report. RP noted the very solid progress made by FRS in recent years. Committee Members present accepted the report.</p>	Accepted
13.	AOB. No further business was raised.	
14.	Next Meeting. Thursday 4 th December 2025 at 10:00.	
15.	<p>Date for Future Meetings.</p> <p>Thursday 19th March 2026 at 15:00.</p> <p>Thursday 25th June 2026 at 15:00.</p> <p>Thursday 24th September 2026 at 15:00.</p> <p>Thursday 17th December 2026 at 15:00.</p>	Accepted
16.	<p>Post Meeting Addendum. <i>The DRAFT Minutes were presented to Committee Member SG for review. SG had been sighted on all meeting papers.</i></p> <p><i>SG had no further questions or comments and supported all outcomes and decisions made during the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Further, SG added his thanks to MP, CF, DH and MS for their considerable efforts.</i></p>	All Noted and Accepted agenda items were supported.

Actions Agreed:

No.	Action / Update	Owner	Date Issued	Due Date	Date Closed
	No actions allocated at this meeting.				