



Minutes

Members present:

Mr G Yarranton (Vice-Chairman),
Mr T Bean, Mrs L Eyre, Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Mr D Prodger MBE, Mr C Smith, Mr D Taylor, Mr R Udall

No	Item
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1. Apologies for Absence

Due to the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman took the Chair.

Apologies were noted from:

Mrs M Bunker, Mr R Bullock, Mr J Campion, Mr A Hardman, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mrs J Potter,

2. Named Substitutes

None

3. Declaration of Interests (if any)

The Chairman invited Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests against any of the Agenda items. No interests were declared.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 8 June 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Local Government Pension Scheme Discretions

The Committee considered a Statement of Policy in relation to the discretionary regulations of the Local Government Pension Scheme which employers were required to formulate, publish and keep under review. The Director for Service Delivery informed the Committee that the Statement of Policy followed a model that had been adopted by a number of Authorities.

Following a question from a Member it was confirmed that comments from representative bodies had been taken into account.

In addition, it was proposed that the Committee be delegated responsibility for exercising the discretionary elements of the LGPS (including the authority for incurring any costs involved).

[Cllr Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes entered the meeting]

RECOMMENDED to the full Authority that:

- i) the Statement of Policy attached at Appendix 1 is approved and;***

- ii) the Policy and Resources Committee be delegated responsibility for exercising the discretionary elements of the Local Government Pension Scheme, including the authority for incurring any costs involved.***

6. Budget Monitoring Report 2011-12

The Treasurer updated the Committee on the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2011-12. With regards to the revenue budget, the Committee was informed that savings of £0.399 million had already been identified. Following a question by a Member, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that further savings should be identified through prudent management of staffing.

In response to a question by a Member with regards to the £0.027 million overspend to date on Fleet, the Director of Finance & Assets confirmed that this related to maintenance costs and was a timing difference of spend against budget profile which did not present a problem.

The Treasurer informed the Committee that the original capital budget in respect of Fire Control had envisaged that certain costs would be outside the scope of the project. However as the project had progressed some “out of scope” issues would now have to be included. The Treasurer also stated that it was anticipated that the grant bid to DCLG for an additional £1.8 million would be successful.

In the ensuing discussion regarding the capital budget the following points were made:

- The Service would push DCLG for an early notification of the results of the grant bid to enable progress.
- Although the Service would be working in partnership with Shropshire FRS with regards to Fire Control, each Service had submitted a separate bid for £1.8 million, the bids had been formulated in partnership.
- Negotiations with regards to the re-build of Malvern Fire Station were likely to be completed in a matter of weeks.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. Treasury Management Activities 2010/11

The Treasurer informed the Committee of the Treasury Management Activities for 2010/11.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8. Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan 2012/13

The Chief Fire Officer presented the draft IRMP Action Plan 2012/13 to the Committee and explained that it was anticipated the new National Framework would provide a different direction to Fire Services and be less directive than the current Framework. The Service had developed a one year Action Plan for 2012/13 that reflected current workloads and was in line with the current Action Plan. Following Authority approval, a wide variety of individuals, groups and partnerships across the two counties would be consulted on the proposed actions.

In the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- The Service did not receive additional funding for its responsibilities with regards to Road Traffic Collisions and relied on the usual income streams ie Council Tax and Government Grant.
- The Service was currently reviewing significant bridge crossings in the two counties with a view to the assessing the potential impact of closure and developing contingency plans as necessary.
- The review of fleet arrangements was an ongoing process and as a consequence was seen to be included in the Action Plan at recommendation 3 and 5.
- Joint training with other Services and other emergency organisations was undertaken where possible.

RECOMMENDED to the full Authority that the 2012/13 draft Action Plan be approved for consultation.

9. IRMP Recommendation 3 – Reduction of Attendance at Automatic Fire Alarms (AFAs)

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented a review of Attendance at False Alarms caused by Automatic Fire Alarms and subsequent recommendations. The CFO explained that the Service attended approximately 3,000 AFAs per year, of which only a very small fraction subsequently turned out to be real fires. Firefighting action was only used to extinguish 25 incidents out of 6,067 incidents that originated from AFAs over a two year period.

The recommendations included reducing attendance to one appliance, except where risk factors and intelligence information indicated otherwise and non-attendance at hospitals and non residential premises, unless a fire had been reported. This would free up appliances to respond more effectively to real incidents and create more time for training and community safety work. The CFO stressed that the Service would always respond to a genuine fire call.

RESOLVED that further engagement with stakeholders be endorsed in order to support a future submission to the full Authority for consideration.

10. Reported Abuse of Staff

The Chief Fire Officer presented an analysis of events from 2006 to date, nearly all of which were verbal abuse of varying degree and nature. The few incidences of physical abuse had been of a minor nature and not resulted in any serious injury or harm. The CFO explained that a package of training in Conflict Resolution had been developed internally and rolled out to 44 staff so far.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. Fire Authority Plan 2011-2012 – First Quarter Performance Analysis

[Cllr D W Prodger MBE left the meeting]

Members discussed and noted the performance analysis for the first quarter against objectives sets out in the current Fire Authority Plan. The Committee was informed that the Service had succeeded in improving outcomes across a wide range of indicators throughout the first quarter. The Head of Policy and Planning presented the Service's achievements in relation to Key and Primary performance indicators and explained areas where continuous improvement was required for the remainder of

2011/12.

In the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

- The Service had been working with organisations such as the Severn Valley Railway with regards to their responsibilities in minimising fire risk on their property.
- There would always be difficulties in achieving standards of fire cover in some of the rural areas, particularly in Herefordshire, due to the topography and distances involved.
- All Retained staff had received new alerters that were more robust than previous models.
- A good deal of work had been undertaken by the Service with regards to Road Safety, particularly in Herefordshire.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. Annual Report on the Progress of the Retained Duty (RDS) Implementation Plan

The Director of Service Delivery informed the Committee of progress on the Retained Duty System (RDS) Implementation Plan, which had followed the review of RDS management and working practices in 2008. The Implementation Plan consisted of 24 objectives which sought to improve practice for RDS staff. In particular, the introduction of an Electronic Availability System to record availability of RDS appliances and personnel had produced significant improvements for staff.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

13. Employment Monitoring for 2010/11

The Committee considered the Annual Report on Employment Monitoring for 2010/11.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

14. Joint Consultative Committee Update

The Chief Fire Officer informed the Committee of issues raised at the previous Joint Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

15. Equality and Diversity Steering Group Update

The Committee considered the update from the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

16. Health and Safety Liaison Panel Update

The Committee noted significant issues raised and referred the nomination of an Authority Member representative to sit on the Health & Safety Liaison Panel to Group Leaders for endorsement at the full Authority.

[Cllr C T Smith left the meeting]

RESOLVED that:

- i) the report be noted and;
- ii) the nomination of an Authority Member representative to sit on the Health & Safety Liaison Panel be referred to Group Leaders for endorsement at the full Authority.

17. Exclusion of Public and Press

In the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority, agenda item 18 - Asset Management Strategy: Strategic Training Facilities and Bromsgrove Fire Station was likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of the Authority. It was therefore recommended that the meeting should not be open to the public and press at the time that item 18 is considered.

RESOLVED that the public and the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 18 Asset Management Strategy: Strategic Training Facilities and Bromsgrove Fire Station.

18. Asset Management Strategy: Strategic Training Facilities and Bromsgrove Fire Station

The Chief Fire Officer updated the Committee of the current status of the Strategic Training Facilities project, as part of the Asset Management Strategy, and requested approval from the Committee to purchase land at Kingsland to enable the construction of one of the training facilities.

Cllr Mrs Lloyd-Hayes declared a personal interest in regards to the construction of the proposed Strategic Training Facility at Kingsland as she was currently a Member of Herefordshire Council's Planning Committee. Following advice from the Corporate Support Manager, Cllr Lloyd-Hayes declared that her personal interest was also prejudicial and left the meeting. It was confirmed that meeting remained quorate with 5 Committee Members in attendance.

. The Chief Fire Officer also updated the Policy and Resources Committee on the progress with the partnership work to re-provide a joint Police and Fire Station in Bromsgrove.

RESOLVED that:

- i) ***the purchase of land at Kingsland to the sum set out in the report be agreed; and***
- ii) ***the on-going partnership work between H&WFRS and West Mercia Police to provide a new Police and Fire Station be supported..***

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman.

Date: _____