



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 02 December 2020, 10:30

Chairman: Mr K Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R Adams

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Mr A Fry, Ms K S Guthrie, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mrs J Potter, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall

171 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr J Raine.

172 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes.

173 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Fire Pension Scheme, member of the Fire NJC and Fire Commission and Chair of the LGPS Scheme Advisory Board.

Cllr Oborski declared that she was a member of the Fire Commission.

174 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

175 Budget Monitoring 2020/21 – Quarter 2

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on budgets and

expenditure for 2020/21.

He explained that with regard to the Revenue Budget, since the Quarter 2 report, there had been a number of further re-allocations to support core business activity and address the short-term impacts of Covid.

With regard to the Capital Budget, only 15% of the planned spend had occurred which represented a significant slippage and would have a corresponding impact upon capital financing costs.

With regard to Treasury Management, the Treasurer assured Members that borrowing should not be required this year due to the reduction in capital expenditure and the disposal of the former old HQ site at Kings Court.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

(i) Confirmed the proposed budget reallocations summarised in paragraph 7 (detailed in Appendix 1 Column 5); and

(ii) Noted that the forecast revenue out-turn would result in an in-year transfer to the Budget Reduction Reserve of £0.9m.

176 Urgent Decision Taken (2020/001)

The Treasurer informed Members of an Urgent Decision that had been taken since the last meeting of the Committee in relation to the Business Rates Pool 2021/22.

Members were reminded that in 2019/20 the Authority had resolved to join the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool. It was decided that this should continue for 2021/22 to keep resources in Herefordshire and Worcestershire rather than in central government and therefore the Authority was to join the pool for 2021/22.

RESOLVED that:

(i) The decision taken under the Urgent Decisions Procedure be noted; and

(ii) The subsequent decision to remain in the Worcestershire Business Rate Pool for 2021/22 be noted.

177 2020-21 Performance Report: Q1-Q2

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 1 to Quarter 2 2020-21 against a

comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board (SMB).

Members were made aware of an error in the sickness data where the figures had been transposed. Members were asked to note that there had actually been a decrease in the sickness levels and the recommendation below had been updated to reflect this.

Members were assured that with regard to Covid, any cases had been contained which was helped by splitting work forces into pods and home working where appropriate. This was testimony to the good work of staff ensuring work places were Covid secure.

A Member requested a breakdown between normal sickness and Covid and Members were advised that this information would be sent to them following the meeting.

There was a request from a Member for an amendment calling for a future report to consider the possibility of providing funding for an additional 100 firefighters over 4 years following the Report from the Fire Brigades Union over the loss of 11,000 firefighters across the country. Following discussion the amendment was put to a vote but was lost.

RESOLVED that Members noted the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Q1-Q2, 2020-21:

i) A total of 3,763 incidents were attended in Q1-Q2 2020-21, a decrease of 4.4% (173 incidents) when compared with Q1-Q2 2019-20. There has been a small increase of 3.4% in fire incidents and a 16.7% decrease in special service incidents when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20.

a. Fires: an overall increase of 34 Fire incidents in Q1-Q2 2020-21 was mainly accounted for by an additional increase of 21.2% in Secondary Fire incidents when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20. The number of Primary Fire incidents decreased by 11.2% when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20. Although there was an decrease in the overall number of Primary Fires during Q1-Q2 2020-21, there was a 28.6% increase in Primary Fire casualties, but no fatalities.

b. Special Services: an overall decrease of 193 incidents in Q1-Q2 2020-21 was largely attributed to a 29.7% decrease in Road Traffic Collisions when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20. The second largest decrease was in the collaborative incident types – ‘Assist other

Agencies' and 'Effecting entry/exit' - with 66 incidents fewer than the same period last year; however, it still accounted for over a quarter (28.8%) of all Special Service incidents in Q1-Q2.

c. False Alarms: although there was only a very small decrease of 0.8% in False Alarm incidents, the kind of False Alarms has changed when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20. There were 52 more Good Intent False Alarms, 17 less Malicious False Alarms and 49 less Fire Alarms Due to Apparatus

ii) Overall Staff Sickness level for Q1-Q2 2020-21 was 2.97 days lost per head (which is the ratio of the number of days/shifts lost per person against the average number of personnel) this shows a decrease when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20, where the number of days lost per head was 4.06. In Q1-Q2 2020-21 the Wholetime firefighter sickness was 2.67 (days lost per head) which shows a decrease when compared to Q1-Q2 2019-20 where it was 4.22. Fire Control sickness also decreased from 3.92 in Q1-Q2 2019-20 to 2.30 in Q1-Q2 2020-21. Non-uniform staff sickness also decreased from 3.92 in Q1-Q2 2019-20 to 3.73 in 2020-21. Furthermore, there were 14 cases of Covid-19 sickness, where 6 cases were confirmed. A further 129 cases of self-isolation and 19 cases of shielding across the service.

iii) The Service attended 52.47% (138 incidents) of Primary Building Fires within 10 minutes in Q1-Q2 2020-21, compared with 47.44% (148 incidents) in Q1-Q2 2019-20. The average time for the first fire appliance to attend a Primary Building Fire was 10 minutes 31 seconds for Q1-Q2 2020-21 compared with 10 minutes 53 seconds in Q1-Q2 2019-20; an average overall improvement of 22 seconds.

iv) The average for the overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance was 91.51% in Q1-Q2 2020-21 compared to 84.48% in Q1-Q2 2019-20; an increase in overall average availability of 7.03%. The new Wyre Forest hub is included in this calculation and is compared to the sum of Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport stations in 2019-20.

May 2020.

RESOLVED that the following new and existing items currently under discussion by the Joint Consultative Committee be noted:

- (i) Additional contract banding for on-call***
- (ii) Development Programmes***
- (iii) Time to Change - Employer Pledge***
- (iv) IQMPs***
- (v) Covid Update***
- (vi) Top 12 Policies/SPIs***
- (vii) Joint Protocol for Industrial Relations***
- (viii) OH Tenders***
- (ix) Update on PCC Business Case***
- (x) Job Evaluation***

The Meeting ended at: 11:37

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman