



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Tuesday, 11 October 2016,10:30

## Minutes

**Members Present:** Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr S C Cross, Ms L R Duffy, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Ms K S Guthrie, Mr Al Hardman, Mrs A T Hingley, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr R I Matthews, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr J W R Thomas, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mr G J Vickery, Mr S D Williams, Mr G C Yarranton

**Substitutes:** none

**Absent:** Mr J L V Kenyon

**Apologies for Absence:** Mr A Amos, Mr B A Baker, Professor J W Raine, Mr C B Taylor

### 97 Confirmation of Minutes

**Resolved that the minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 16 June 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### 98 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman informed the Authority of recent events he had attended:

- Worcestershire Awards Ceremony on Friday 16 September;
- Visit to Malvern Fire Station with Members on 27 September; and
- Official Turf Cutting ceremony with the Police and Crime Commissioner at Hindlip on 7 October

and also announced the carol service that was being held on Saturday 10 December at Holy Trinity Church in Hereford which all Members were invited to.

The Chairman welcomed the Police and Crime Commissioner to the

meeting.

**99 Public Participation**

None.

**100 Attendance of Police & Crime Commissioner at Meetings**

A report was presented to Members to consider proposals to enable the Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia to attend, participate but not vote at meetings of the Fire Authority. Members agreed that the Authority's Constitution be amended to accommodate the Police & Crime Commissioner at future meetings.

**RESOLVED that the Authority's Constitution be amended by the inclusion of the additions set out in the appendix to the report.**

**101 Changes to Arrangements for Appointment of External Auditors**

A report was presented to Members to approve arrangements for the appointment of external auditors following the end of the transitional arrangements at the conclusion of the 2017/18 audits.

[Councillor Jenkins entered the meeting at 10.40am].

Members were advised that a Sector Led Body would have the ability to negotiate contracts with the firms nationally, maximising the opportunities for the most economic and efficient approach to procurement of external audit on behalf of the whole sector. Members expressed concern that current external fee levels were predicted to increase when the current contract ends in 2018 and some Members doubted this would be the case but agreed that the Authority should "opt in" to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd.

**RESOLVED that the Authority "opt in" to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for the procurement of future external audit provision.**

**102 Revision to the Medium Term Financial Plan**

Following the report that was presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 21 September 2016, Members were advised of the efficiencies made by the Authority and asked to approve amendments

to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

**RESOLVED that amendments to the Medium Term Financial Plan resulting in a revised budget gap of £1.657m by 2019/20 be approved.**

**103 Wyre Forest Emergency Hub - Preferred Sites Consultation Responses**

At the start of the item, the Head of Legal explained that if the proposal for a Wyre Forest Hub was approved in principle, there was a subsequent report later on the agenda which would be in private to consider the final decision on progressing the project to fruition, budget allocation and choice of preferred site.

Opinion Research Services then provided a detailed presentation to Members on the outcome of the public consultation on suitable sites for the proposed Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub. The public consultation had been a comprehensive and fair process. In general, there was no overall preference amongst the public in favour of either site and both sites were considered acceptable to the public, although there were still some people opposed to the principle of a single Wyre Forest Hub. Although there had been relatively few responses to the consultation, public meetings and forums had been well publicised.

Members were asked to consider whether, in principle, the Authority should proceed with the development of a Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub and the subsequent closure of the three existing fire stations at Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport.

Members also commented on the new Hoobrook Ringway and how this was helping traffic in the proposed area.

**RESOLVED that:**

**i) the report from Opinion Research Services, which sets out the feedback from formal public consultation exercises in respect of two suitable sites for the proposed Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub, be noted;**

**ii) subject to land acquisition and approval of building costs, it be agreed in principle to relocate the existing fire appliances, resources and crews of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley fire stations into the proposed Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub.**

## **104 Chief Fire Officer's Report**

The Chief Fire Officer informed the Authority of recent key developments and activities, which included:

- A large fire at a wax recycling plant in Bromsgrove which he had attended personally;
- Worcestershire Awards and Medals Ceremony;
- National Challenges;
- Service Exercise;
- Station Open Days; and
- Safety Campaigns.

Members congratulated the Chief Fire Officer on the success of the Service Exercise and emphasised how impressive the realism of the scenario was. Members requested that the learning from the exercise was shared with them. Thanks were also passed to Committee and Members' Services Officers for supporting Members on the Exercise.

Members commented on the Dying to Drive campaign and the Chief Fire Officer, who had attended the Worcester and Leominster campaigns, confirmed they were well attended.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

## **105 Minutes of the Audit & Standards Committee**

The Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 4 July 2016.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 4 July 2016 be received and noted.**

## **106 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee**

The Vice-Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 September 2016.

Members queried the Hereford Slipway item and questioned the feasibility study. Members were advised that a further report would be submitted back to the Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee**

meeting held on 21 September 2016 be received and noted.

**107 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Authority were asked to exclude members of the public and press from Agenda Item 14.

**RESOLVED that the Authority agree to exclude members of the public and press as the following item is likely to disclose information relating to the financial affairs or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

**108 Wyre Forest Emergency Hub - Land Acquisition & Costs**

No Minutes Taken

The Meeting ended at: 11:50

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman