

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Resources Committee
23 January 2013**



Minutes

Members Present

Mr K Taylor (Chairman)

Mr T Bean, Mrs M Bunker, Mr J Champion, Mrs E Eyre, Mr A Hardman, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mrs J Potter, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr D Taylor and Mr R Udall.

No	Item
-----------	-------------

1.	Apologies for Absence
-----------	------------------------------

Apologies for absence were received from Mr G Yarranton.

2.	Named Substitutes
-----------	--------------------------

No substitutes were appointed.

3.	Declaration of Interests (if any)
-----------	--

The Chairman invited Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary or other interests against any of the Agenda items and none were declared.

4.	Confirmation of Minutes
-----------	--------------------------------

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 21 November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5.	Budget 2013/14 and Review of Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
-----------	---

A report was considered that reviewed the current position in relation to budgets for 2013/14 and beyond and requested the Policy and Resources Committee to make recommendations to the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Mrs E Eyre entered the meeting at 10.35 am

The Treasurer presented the report and handed round an additional sheet which outlined the latest resource forecast. Members were advised in turn of the resources available to the Authority, the precept assumption and the expenditure requirements. Reference was made to the budget gap and ways to address it which had been debated extensively by Members at the Budget Seminar held on 16 January 2013.

Mrs M Bunker entered the meeting at 10.40 am

Members then focussed on the impact of accepting the Council Tax Freeze Grant and a debate ensued on the merits of accepting this grant.

Recommended to the Authority:

- (i) that the Council Tax Freeze grant be taken in 2013/14;**
- (ii) that the budget assumptions be agreed;**
- (iii) to approve the consequential budget and precept requirements for 2013/14;**
- (iv) to approve the precept policy for the Medium Term Financial Plan as 2%; and**
- (v) to note the consequential budget gaps arising.**

6. Development of Crewing Changes to Bromsgrove and Reduction in Watch Levels Across the Service

A report was considered that informed the Committee of the progress towards the implementation of the changes to crewing and staffing at Bromsgrove Fire Station aligned to the 2011/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Recommendation 4.

At the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 7 June 2012 Members had requested that a paper be brought back to the Committee outlining the progress with regard to the proposed changes.

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report and outlined how the changes had so far been implemented.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the report.

7. Member Learning and Development Strategy

A report was considered that obtained the views of the Committee with regard to a 3 year strategy to drive forward the learning and development of Authority Members.

The Head of Legal Services presented the report and Members responded with the following comments:

- The number of Members who turned up for training was disappointing and whether there was some way to mitigate this. (A Member suggested that this should be a matter for Group Leaders).
- It was considered important to have the appropriate skills in order for Members to be able to be effective in their role as a Member of the Fire Authority.

- It was also considered important that there should be no duplication of training from the constituent authorities, district authorities and the Fire Authority.
- It was suggested that work should take place towards having a shared Herefordshire/Worcestershire Member Development Programme.
- The timing of training should be taken into consideration particularly for those who were at work.
- Training for interviewing for the Appointments Committee should be made compulsory.

Members were thanked for their comments. It was confirmed that it was not the intention of the Authority to duplicate any training that Members received from their constituent authorities and the training that would be delivered would encompass specific areas which were linked to the Fire Authority. Members were asked to feed back any further thoughts to the Corporate Support Manager or to the Member Development Champions.

RESOLVED

- (i) **that the Policy and Resources Committee recommend to the FRA that the draft Member Learning and Development Strategy be approved; and**
- (ii) **to put forward any further views to the Member Development Working Group.**

8. Joint Consultative Committee Update

A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since November 2012.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.51 am

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____