



Minutes

Members Present:

Mr K Taylor (Chairman) Mr R Adams (Vice-Chairman)
Mr A Amos, Mr P Gretton, Mr A Hardman, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Mrs
F Oborski, Mr D Prodger MBE, Mr D Taylor, Mr P Tuthill and Mr R Udall.

No.	Item
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1.	Apologies for Absence
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No apologies for absence were received.

2.	Named Substitutes
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No substitutes were appointed.

3.	Declaration of Interests
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No declarations of interests were made.

4.	Confirmation of Minutes
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RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 27 March 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5.	Facing the Future: findings from the Review of Efficiencies and Operations in Fire and Rescue Authorities in England
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The Chief Fire Officer presented the Authority's suggested response to 'Facing the Future' regarding the review of efficiencies and operations in Fire and Rescue Authorities in England, undertaken by Sir Ken Knight, former Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser to the Government.

RESOLVED that the Service's response to Facing the Future (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) be approved and submitted to the Fire Minister.

6.	Asset Management Strategy: Provision of Accommodation for West Mercia Police at Service Locations
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The Head of Asset Management presented a report which sought approval to provide facilities accommodation for West Mercia Police staff at Fire Service Headquarters in Worcester and other Service locations.

RESOLVED that the Head of Asset Management be authorised to enter into:

- (i) a lease to West Mercia Police in respect of office accommodation at Service Headquarters (SHQ); and**
- (ii) a lease and/or licence arrangement in respect of the use by West Mercia Police of facilities at other fire service locations**

all on terms to be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer and Head of Legal Services.

7. Merger of the Urban Search and Rescue Team into Droitwich Fire Station

The Area Commander – Operations presented a report which sought to gain approval to merge the Service’s Urban Search and Rescue team with Droitwich Fire Station to create a single multi-functional operational unit. Approval was also sought to transfer the government provided and maintained National Resilience Incident Response Unit and equipment from Droitwich Fire Station to Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, subject to agreement by the National Resilience Board.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Service’s Urban Search and Rescue Team is merged into Droitwich Fire Station to create a single multi-functional operational unit; and**
- (ii) subject to agreement by the National Resilience Board, the existing National Resilience Incident Response Unit and equipment be transferred to Gloucestershire Rescue Service.**

8. Automatic False Alarm (AFA) Reduction Policy

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support presented a report which proposed the formal adoption of the existing Interim Automatic False Alarm Reduction (AFA) Policy into a new policy.

RESOLVED that the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) adopts the following in relation to Automatic Fire Alarms:

- (i) all pre-determined attendances to Automatic Fire Alarm calls to be one pumping appliance only, except where risk factors and Intel (intelligence) information indicate otherwise;**
- (ii) robust call filtering in the Service’s Command and Control Centre be implemented;**
- (iii) return en route be implemented when a caller confirms any previous call as now a false alarm;**
- (iv) all responses to Automatic Fire Alarms to be at normal road speeds unless the Officer in Charge of the appliance deems otherwise;**

- (v) attendance will be made to Automatic Fire Alarms received to dwellings (includes houses in multiple occupation, flats), schools, residential care and other residential (includes special units, sheltered housing, hotels, hostels);
- (vi) hospitals to receive one appliance attendance to calls from Automatic Fire Alarms, except where risk factors and Intel (intelligence) information indicate otherwise;
- (vii) the Authority will not adopt a 'charging for Automatic Fire Alarms' policy at this time; and
- (viii) implement a 'full' call filter procedure to Automatic Fire Alarms from non-residential premises and hospitals and a 'light' call filter procedure to Automatic Fire Alarms from dwellings, schools, residential care and other residential dwellings.

9. 2013/14 Budget Monitoring – 1st Quarter

The Treasurer presented a report that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2013/14.

Members were advised that when the Authority had set its budget in February 2013 approximately £180,000 savings had been identified but this figure had now risen to £200,000. He advised however that there were additional costs relating to the Lawrence Recycling fire and the Authority was therefore looking at a marginal underspend.

RESOLVED that the reported be noted.

10. Treasury Management Activities 2012/13

The Treasurer presented a report that reviewed the Authority's Treasury Management Activities for 2012/13.

RESOLVED that it be noted that the Authority's Treasury Management Activities during 2012/13 were in accordance with the prudential indicators previously agreed.

11. Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-13 – Annual Performance Analysis

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support presented a report which provided the Policy and Resources Committee with a summary of annual performance against the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-13.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee notes the summary of annual performance against the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-13.

12. Quarter 1 Performance and Health and Safety Reports 2013-14

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support presented a report which outlined the key outcomes in performance for the first quarter of 2013/14.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the following key outcomes in respect of performance in Quarter 1 2013-14:

- (i) the total number of incidents attended in Quarter 1 2013-14 is the lowest Quarter 1 total in the seven years that the current data set has been collected;**
- (ii) the Service also attended the lowest Quarter 1 totals of Special Service (non-fire emergencies) and False alarms in the last seven years;**
- (iii) although the number of Fires attended in Quarter 1 2013-14 have increased when compared to the same quarter last year, the total is still less than the average number of fires attended in Quarter 1 of the last five years;**
- (iv) the Service has also seen the lowest Quarter 1 totals of injuries from primary fires and the lowest Quarter 1 number of injuries from accidental dwelling fires in the last seven years, with no injuries reported from accidental dwelling fires in May and June 2013; and**
- (v) reported health and safety events (Appendix 2) have increased when compared with the previous quarter mainly due to a major recycling fire incident in Kidderminster in June.**

13. Urgent Decision Taken (2013/001)

The Monitoring Officer presented a report that advised the Policy and Resources Committee of an urgent decision that had been taken since the last meeting of the Committee and recommended that changes to the Scheme of Delegations be made to address such matters in the future.

Resolved that:

- (i) The decision taken under the Urgent Decisions Procedure be noted.**
- (ii) Recommended to the Fire and Rescue Authority that the Scheme of Delegations be amended to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to approve early retirements, in consultation with the Chairman and Treasurer in the case of employees whose salary is less than £45,000 and where pension costs do not exceed £45,000.**

14. Equality and Diversity Advisory Group Update

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the key areas of discussion at the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group meeting on 16 July 2013.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of this report.

15. Joint Consultative Committee Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support presented a report that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since March 2013.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the content of this report.

16. Health and Safety Committee Update

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Service Support presented a report that provided the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on the activities and terms of significance from the Service’s Health and Safety Committee.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the content of this report.

17. Contingency Planning for Strike Action

The Chief Fire Officer presented a report that had been included on the agenda as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100(B) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

The report informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the background and current position of the proposed strike action by the Fire Brigades Union and gave an overview of the Service’s contingency arrangements to cover any periods of strike action.

The Chief Fire Officer commented that he was confident that there would be an adequate number of fire engines to give cover during the strike.

Councillor M Lloyd-Hayes requested that Members’ thanks be recorded for having a set of robust contingency arrangements in place before any action took place.

Councillor R Udall proposed that the Authority should approach the Government to find a resolution to the dispute by making changes to the pension arrangements that had provoked the dispute.

Upon a vote the motion was lost and Councillor R Udall and Councillor F Oborski requested that it be recorded that they had voted in favour of the motion. Councillor M Lloyd-Hayes requested that it be recorded that she had abstained from voting on the motion.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of this report.

The meeting concluded at 12.20 pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____