



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 22 March 2017, 10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr B A Baker, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr C B Taylor, Mr J W R Thomas, Mr R M Udall

Substitutes:

Absent:

Apologies for Absence: Mr A Fry, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr J L V Kenyon, Mr P A Tuthill

71 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 25 January 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72 2016/17 Budget Monitoring – 3rd Quarter

Members were informed of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2016/17.

Members were asked to note the forecast revenue underspend of £1.268m and approve the creation of £0.500m ESMCP Reserve for the emergency services radio communications infrastructure.

In relation to revenue, Members raised concern over the lack of capital project recharge information from Place Partnership Limited (PPL) and requested that the Treasurer make PPL aware of this concern. Members were informed that the lack of information was due to the setting up of new systems which had been delayed.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- **note the forecast revenue underspend of £1.268m; and**
- **approve the creation of £0.500m ESMCP Reserve.**

73 Thomas Review - summary and key findings

Members were provided with a summary of findings and recommendations of the recently published 'Independent review of conditions of service for fire and rescue staff in England, February 2015' (the Thomas Review).

Members were advised that out of the five main themes reviewed, 45 recommendations were highlighted which were mostly addressed to fire and rescue authorities and representative bodies as well as the Local Government Association (LGA) and the National Joint Council.

Members were pleased to note that work was already being undertaken to progress the recommended actions.

RESOLVED that the findings set out in the Thomas Review and your officers' comments on key recommendations be noted.

74 Houses of Multiple Occupation: Project Update

Members were provided with a six month update on the Houses of Multiple Occupation project being delivered by the Community Risk Department.

On 21 March 2016, approval was given by the Policy and Resources Committee to fund a 12 month project focussing on Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) type premises. The project, funded by £60,000 from Service reserves, started in August 2016 and identified fire safety issues in unlicensed HMOs and residential accommodation above commercial premises and highlighted the significant fire safety intervention that had been achieved in the first 6 months.

Members were pleased with the success so far and requested that a full year report be presented to the Authority later in the year.

RESOLVED that:

i) Members note the success of the project to date:

- **an additional 157 business fire safety checks have been carried out so far;**
- **a third of which resulted in further enforcement action; and**
- **112 residents are now living in safer conditions where the risk of**

harm or injury from fire has been considerably reduced.

ii) A full evaluation report be produced at the conclusion of the 12 month project to be presented at the Authority meeting later in the year.

75 Equality and Diversity Objectives - 2017/2020

Members were asked to approve the Service's proposed Equality and Diversity Objectives for 2017/2020, which had been developed by the Organisational Development Working Group.

Members requested that the outcomes of the Wisdom Factory CIC (Community Interest Company) review be shared with Members at a future Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the following be approved as the revised Equality Objectives for 2017–2020:

- **Leadership and Corporate Commitment**

We will encourage a culture that supports equal treatment, opportunity, inclusion and transparency at all levels of the Authority.

- **Service Delivery and Community Risk**

We will make sure that our prevention, protection and response activities target the most vulnerable people and the greatest risks.

- **People and Culture**

To have a diverse workforce that represents our community.

76 2016-17 Performance Report: Quarter 1 – Quarter 3

Members were provided with a summary of the Service's Quarter 1 to Quarter 3 performance against a comprehensive set of Performance Indicators agreed by the Senior Management Board.

Members were reminded that the Senior Management Board continue to receive reports based on the measures the Service is taking to stay within tolerance levels and where improvements are required, any necessary action will be reported to the Committee.

Members raised concern over the number of fires in prisons and were informed that although there was a rise in incidents, the Service was liaising closely with the Prisons Service.

With regard to attendance times in urban areas, Members requested further information to the next Committee meeting.

[Councillor Prodger MBE left the meeting at 11.22].

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarter 1 to Quarter 3, 2016-17:

i) A total of 5,244 incidents were attended in Q1 to Q3, an increase of 5.7% (283 incidents) over the same period in 2015-16, and 5.3% (199 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years.

ii) The majority of the increase in Q1 to Q3 is accounted for by a rise in the numbers of Special Service and False Alarm incidents, while the number of Fire incidents was down:

a. Special Services: there was an increase of 33 incidents over the nine month period. This is predominantly accounted for by increases in the number of animal assistance incidents (30 incidents), and Other Special Services such as, lift rescues, spills and leaks (non-RTC), provision of advice and assisting other agencies (37 incidents).

b. False Alarms: there was an increase of 259 incidents over the nine month period in all types of False Alarm incidents. This is mainly because of an increase in automatic activations of inbuilt fire alarms systems (174 incidents)

c. Fires: a decrease of 9 incidents for this period over the previous year is largely accounted for by a fall in the number of Secondary Fires (down by 14 incidents) with fewer outdoor fires in a wetter than usual late spring/early summer period.

iii) The number of Fires, Special Service and False Alarm incidents has stayed relatively consistent over the last 5 years.

iv) Overall Staff Sickness levels are 4.07 days lost per head, which remains within tolerance levels set (see paragraph 3 below) for Quarter 1 to Quarter 3. Quarter 3 sickness was an average of 1.24

days lost per head, which is below the quarterly five-year average of 1.63 days.

v) The Service attended 57.4% (267 incidents) of Building Fires within 10 minutes in Q1 to Q3 compared with 60.0% in the same period in 2015-16. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all building fires was nine minutes and fifty-one seconds.

vi) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 91.0%, however this did decrease by 2.7% compared to the same period in 2015-16.

77 Pensions Board Update

Members were provided with an update on the establishment and activities of the Pensions Board.

Members were reminded that the Pensions Board is not a decision making body.

RESOLVED that the following areas of progress be noted:

(i) The Pension Board has been established and is compliant with the Public Services Pensions Act 2013.

(ii) There have been two meetings of the Pensions Board.

(iii) Pension Board members have attended one training session.

78 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) – Annual Review

Members were asked to review the Authority's policy on the authorisation of covert surveillance techniques under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and informed that the Authority had not relied on covert investigatory powers during the past year.

RESOLVED that the Committee note there has been no use of covert investigatory techniques during the past year.

79 Update from the Health and Safety Committee

Members were provided with an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

RESOLVED that the following issues, in particular, be noted:

- (i) Health and Safety performance information recorded during Oct 2016 to December 2016 (Quarter 3); and**
- (ii) The involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives.**

80 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

Members were informed of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee since September 2016.

Members requested further information on electronic payslips.

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

- (i) Wyre Forest Hub;**
- (ii) Relocation of Service Headquarters (SHQ) to Hindlip;**
- (iii) Relocation of Community Risk staff into Worcester Fire Station;**
- (iv) Introduction of electronic payslips; and**
- (v) Health & Wellbeing initiatives.**

The Meeting ended at: 11:51

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman