

**Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
Policy and Resources Committee
21 November 2012**



Minutes

Members Present

Mr K Taylor (Chairman) Mr G Yarranton (Vice-Chairman)
Mr T Bean, Mr B Bullock, Mrs M Bunker, Mr J Campion, Mr A Hardman, Brigadier P Jones
CBE, Mrs M Lloyd-Hayes, Mrs J Potter, Mr D W Prodger MBE and Mr D Taylor.

No	Item
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1.	Apologies for Absence
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There were no apologies for absence.

2.	Named Substitutes
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No substitutes were appointed.

3.	Declaration of Interests (if any)
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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
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RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 5 September 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5.	2012/2013 Budget Monitoring – 2nd Quarter
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A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2012/13.

The Treasurer advised Members that it was likely that an underspend of just under £700,000 would be attained. This had been achieved through savings made from whole-time salaries from the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) review last year and through budget holder savings.

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

6.	Financial Prospects
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A report was considered that provided Members with a further update on developments on the funding position for 2013/14 and beyond.

The Treasurer presented the report and advised Members that the Authority would not receive details of its settlement until mid-December 2012 and thus it was difficult to predict the Authority's position until such details had been received.

The Authority had adopted a planning assumption of a 3.5% precept increase however the Government had announced a grant equal to 1% of precept if an authority were to freeze the precept again and the threshold for increase over and above what a referendum was required was now set at 2%. The change in precept increase would have a significant impact for the Authority as the precept represented two thirds of the Authority's funding.

In order to cover the costs of a referendum and deliver an additional useable resource of £0.5m, a precept increase of 6.2% would be required. Members were advised that due to the uncertainties regarding the Authority's financial settlement, detailed information and options to address the budget gap would be brought to them at a Budget Seminar to be held on 16 January 2013.

RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee:

- (i) note the contents of the report; and**
- (ii) will recommend to the Authority a future planning assumption for the precept.**

7. The Fire and Rescue Authority Annual Plan 2012-13 Quarter 1 and 2 Performance Analysis

A report was considered that provided the Policy and Resources Committee with a summary of Quarter 1 and 2 performance against the Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-13.

The report showed Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 in combination in order to give Members a better perspective of overall performance. There was now a tolerance approach to performance based on the previous three years performance.

The following points were highlighted:

- there had been a reduction in the total number of fires;
- there had been an increase in special services directly related to flooding incidents;
- there had been a reduction in false alarm calls;
- there had been a significant reduction in secondary fires;
- primary fires had reduced by 28%;
- there had been a slight increase in chimney fires;
- there had been a reduction in the number of domestic dwelling fires;
- there had been a slight reduction in attendance standards;
- there had been an increase in non-uniform sickness; and

- there had been a slight drop in availability of retained staff.

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

8. Equality and Diversity Advisory Group

A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the key areas of discussion at the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group meeting held on 8 November 2012.

Members were advised that the Group had approved a number of equality objectives including:

- to embed equality impact assessments of all Service Policies into core business;
- appropriately target community engagement in response to available data;
- analyse recruitment and employment data for trends and take appropriate action; and
- to develop partnerships to promote equality.

Members were advised that training on equality and diversity would be rolled out to both Members and staff.

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

9. 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 September 2012.

Key items under discussion were the review of allowances and the part-time workers settlement.

New items for discussion included:

- timescales for disciplinary investigations;
- whole-time pumps riding with a crew of 4 rather than 5;
- amount of time spent by Crew and Watch Commanders implementing the resilience register;
- staff suggestion scheme; and
- car parking at Service Headquarters.
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RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

11.35 am Councillor A Hardman entered the meeting at this point.

10. Health and Safety Liaison Panel Update

A report was considered that updated the Policy and Resources Committee on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Liaison Panel.

The following points were highlighted:

- the injuries referred to in the report were mostly of a minor nature;
- during the last 12 months a large number of health and safety related training courses had been completed; and
- the Service was now using a new occupational health provider and a questionnaire was being circulated to staff to ensure that the working relationship was progressing as it should.

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

The meeting concluded at 11.39 am

Signed: _____
Chairman

Date: _____