



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 15 November 2022, 10:30

Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Vice-Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Minutes

Members Present: Mr D Chambers, Mr A Ditta, Mr J Hardwick, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr T Wells

0214 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr K Hey, Cllr J Monk, Cllr L Robinson and Cllr R Udall.

0215 Named Substitutes

Cllr E Marshall substituted for Cllr J Monk.

0216 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr R Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales) and a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book).

0217 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 May 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

0218 Attendance Performance Measure – Public Consultation Report

The Assistant Director of Prevention presented a report following the public consultation on proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure, including a detailed report from the external consultants, Opinion Research Services (ORS), who had undertaken the consultation on our behalf. ORS also gave a presentation on the methodology,

responses received and conclusions to be drawn from the consultation.

[Cllr Hardwick entered meeting at 10.41am].

[David Chambers entered the meeting at 10.51am].

Although there had been a relatively low response to the public questionnaire, this was not uncommon and there had been a good representative split between Worcestershire and Herefordshire. 75% of respondents had 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the proposals and this support was also reflected by the two focus groups, where the proposals had been discussed in more detail.

Whilst the FBU were not in favour of the first two proposals, Members were nonetheless satisfied the changes would actually show areas of real performance and be more transparent than the current arrangements.

It did not invalidate the results but Members were nonetheless disappointed with the response rate to the consultation and it was recognised that any future consultation exercises should endeavour to improve upon this.

Members agreed to recommend the Fire Authority approve the revised Attendance Performance Measure at their meeting on 12 December 2022.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED *that:*

1. efforts be made to improve upon the response rate to any future consultation exercises; and

2. the Fire Authority be recommended to:

(i) approve the proposed changes to the Attendance Performance Measure; and

(ii) adopt a revised Attendance Performance Measure which:

- removes call handling time from the calculation;***
- measures performance across three zones (10, 15 and 20 minutes from each fire station); and***
- measures performance across a broader range of emergency incidents rather than just fires in buildings.***

0219 Budget Monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 2

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on the revenue

and capital budget for 2022/23.

With regard to the pay award budgets, the Treasurer confirmed that since writing the report the FBU had rejected the offer of 5% in a recent ballot. The figure that had been factored into the budget was based on the employers offer of 5%.

There were further savings in the capital financing programme due to delays to the start of the scheme,

Members were informed of the projected small revenue budget overspend of £0.131m which would be funded from the budget reduction reserve if necessary.

With regard to Treasury Management, Members noted that the Authority was significantly “under-borrowed” to the extent of around £10m. This shortfall is funded by disinvesting the large cash balances held in relation to the ear-marked revenue reserves. As the invest to improve programme progresses this cash will be used up and additional long term borrowing will be required.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

i) Approves the allocation of pay award budgets in Appendix 1 Column 3;

ii) Approves the revised Capital Budget allocations in Appendix 2;

iii) Notes the forecast Revenue Budget over spend of £0.131m; and

iv) Notes the potential for this to change dependent on the final pay settlement.

0220 2022-23 Performance Report: Q2 (01 July – 30 September 2022)

The Assistant Director of Prevention presented Members with a summary of the Service’s performance for Quarter 2, 2022-23.

Members noted that there was a total of 2,475 incidents in Q2 2022-23, which was an increase of 24% on Q2 2021-22. This was mainly due to a significant increase in the number of outdoor fires during the summer. There was also a small increase of special service incidents and a small increase in false alarms.

RESOLVED that Fire Authority note the Q2 2022-23 performance headlines set out in Section 4 of this report, with further details available in Appendix 1.

0221 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer – Director of Prevention and Assets, presented Members with the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since the last update provided on 4 May 2022.

Members noted the new and existing items currently under discussion, in particular regarding the ballot of FBU members for industrial action.

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

- i) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Contracts/Policy***
- ii) On Call Bandings***
- iii) Fitness, Attendance Management and Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policies***
- iv) Promotion Processes***
- v) Industrial Action***
- vi) Review of Three Core Strategies***
- vii) Current Financial Position***
- viii) Project Updates – National Operational Guidance (NOG), On-Call, Unwanted Fire Signals and Fire Investigation***

The Meeting ended at: 11:52

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman