



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 12 September 2018, 14:00

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr T D Baker-Price, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr A Fry, Dr C A Hotham, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr R J Phillips, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall

124 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr J Potter.

125 Named Substitutes

There were no named substitutes for this meeting.

126 Declarations of Interest (if any)

There were no interests declared.

127 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 28 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

128 2018/19 Budget Monitoring – 1st Quarter

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2018/19.

Members were asked to note the forecast revenue underspend of £0.820m and approve the earmarking of £0.750m towards the cost of replacing Broadway Fire Station.

During discussions on the capital budget in relation to Redditch Fire

Station, Members were informed that a suitable site had been identified for a replacement fire station and the project was progressing well. Members thanked the Head of Legal Services for his work in relation to Redditch fire station.

A Member raised a query with regard to the interest rate payable to the Public Works Loans Board. The Treasurer confirmed to Members that the borrowing interest rate was just over 3% on a fixed rate.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- i) Note the forecast revenue underspend of £0.820m (-2.5%);**
- ii) Approve the earmarking of £0.750m (-2.3%) of this underspend towards the cost of replacing Broadway Fire Station; and**
- ii) Note the continuing budget risk regarding the pay award.**

129 2018-19 Performance Report: Quarter 1

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

In response to a question from a Member regarding crewing proposals, the Chief Fire Officer agreed to bring an update report to the next Fire Authority meeting on 19 December 2018. He also gave an assurance that no permanent changes to people's contracts would be implemented, in the meantime, without the agreement of the relevant recognised bodies. However, any appropriate variations to people's working arrangements that do not require any contractual changes would continue to be progressed in order to meet identified Service needs and priorities.

Concern was also expressed over future housing developments in the West of Worcester and the potential requirements on the Service for additional fire cover. The Chief Fire Officer indicated that the next CRMP in 2020 would take account of all new development in the area.

A Member questioned the response times for retained stations but was reassured that the delay was often due to road conditions rather than the distance required to travel.

RESOLVED that Members note the following headlines drawn from Appendix 1 relating to performance in Quarter 1, 2018-19:

- i) A total of 1,917 incidents were attended in Q1, an increase of 8.2%**

(145 incidents) over the same Quarter of 2017-18, and 11.5% (220 incidents) higher than the average for the last five years. However, the overall 5 year trend remains relatively consistent.

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

a. Special Services: an increase of 20.4% (80 incidents) is mainly accounted for by increases in the number of Road Traffic Collisions (44), Flooding (21) and Other Special Services (30

b. False Alarms: a substantial increase of 8.9% (69 incidents), most common automatic activations are at a number of sheltered housing, nursing homes and hospitals.

c. Fires: have decreased slightly by 0.7% (4 incidents) over the previous year.

iii) Overall Staff Sickness levels were 2.06 days lost per head and is above the 5-year average of 1.44.

iv) The Service attended 60.4% (119 incidents) of Building Fires within 10 minutes in Quarter 1, compared with 60.6% in the same period in 2017-18. The average time for the first fire appliance attendance at all building fires was 10 minutes and 32 seconds.

v) The overall availability of the first On-Call (Retained) fire appliance remains high at 88.1%; however, this has decreased by 2.2% when compared to the same period in 2017-18.

vi) That a report on crewing proposals be made available for the next Full Fire Authority meeting in December 2018.

130 Creating a Strategic Alliance

Members were presented with a plan to create a strategic alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services.

Members were informed that the creation of a formal Strategic Alliance and Governance framework was a major step towards collective resilience, capacity and sustainability to effectively meet on going financial challenges, while also seizing the opportunity to deliver key joint priorities over the next 3-5 years and provide additional value to our local

communities.

Members expressed their disappointment in the PCC's response and requested that the Chairman of the Authority respond formally ensuring a copy is made available to members of the public on the website.

The Chief Fire Officer assured Members that any savings from within the Alliance would be brought to the Fire Authority's attention.

Finally Members agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman should both represent the Authority on the Strategic Alliance Board if agreed with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority.

[Councillor Baker-Price left the meeting at 3.00pm].

RESOLVED that:

i) The plan to create a Strategic Alliance between Hereford & Worcester and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Services be approved.

ii) If agreed with Shropshire Fire and Rescue Authority, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be nominated to represent the Authority on the Strategic Alliance Board to be set up to oversee the Strategic Alliance.

131 Update from the Joint Consultative Committee

Members were informed of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since March 2018.

Members were pleased to learn that the vetting process was near the end of completion for the relocation of staff to Hindlip.

[Councillor Udall left the meeting at 3.13pm].

Members were also pleased to note proposals to use body and vehicle cameras throughout the Service to protect staff. The dangers of one incident recently was highlighted to the public on social media from the video footage obtained.

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

- i) Changes to crewing systems**
- ii) Relocation to Hindlip**
- iii) Cultural Review**

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Authority were asked to exclude members of the public and press from Agenda Item 9.

It was RESOLVED to exclude the public and press on the grounds that the discussion would be likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, namely - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information subject to legal professional privilege.

132 Redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station

Members were asked to approve the redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station and the allocation of funding for the project.

Members were reminded that the future of Broadway Fire Station was considered as part of the CRMP process in 2014, at which time it was decided that the station should be kept as part of the Service's emergency cover arrangements.

Members agreed that Broadway Fire Station was in very poor condition, its design was not fit for modern needs and was overdue for replacement or major upgrading.

Summary of Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee authorised officers to proceed with the redevelopment of Broadway Fire Station on the existing site.

The Meeting ended at: 15:34

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman