

9. Report from Policy and Resources Committee

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Authority of the proceedings of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 November 2012.
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Recommendation

The Policy and Resources Committee recommend that the Authority note the proceedings of the Committee meeting held on 21 November 2012.

2012/13 Budget Monitoring – Second Quarter

2. A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2012/13.
3. 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 budget holder savings.
4. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Financial Prospects 2013/14

5. A report was considered that provided Members with a further update on developments on the funding position for 2013/14 and beyond.
6. The Treasurer presented the report and advised Members that the Authority would not receive details of its settlement until mid-December and thus it was difficult to predict the Authority's position until such details had been received.
7. 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 freezes the precept again;
 - and that the threshold for increase over and above what a referendum was required will be set at 2%.
8. The change in precept increase would have a significant impact for the Authority as the precept represented two thirds of the Authority's funding.
9. 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.

10. Due to the uncertainties regarding the financial settlement Members were advised that detailed information and options to address the budget gap would be brought to them at the Budget Seminar to be held on 16 January 2013.
11. The Committee noted the report and will recommend to the Authority a future planning assumption for the precept.

Fire and Rescue Authority Plan 2012-2013 Quarter 1 and 2 Performance Analysis

12. 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.
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.
14. 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.
15. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Equality and Diversity Advisory Group Update

16. 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.
17. 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.

18. Training on equality and diversity would be rolled out to both Members and staff.
19. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Joint Consultative Committee Update

20. A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the activities of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) since September 2012.
21. Key items under discussion were the review of allowances and part-time workers settlement.
22. 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.
23. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Health and Safety Liaison Panel Update

24. 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.
25. The following points was 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.
26. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Financial Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are financial issues that require consideration	No	

Legal Considerations

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
There are legal issues e.g. contractual and procurement, reputational issues that require consideration	No	

Additional Considerations

27. The table below sets out any additional issues arising from the proposals contained in this report and identifies the relevant paragraphs in the report where such issues are addressed.

Consideration	Yes/No	Reference in Report i.e paragraph no.
Resources (e.g. Assets, ICT, Human Resources, Training & Development, Sustainability).	No	
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	No	
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	

Supporting Information

None

Background papers – Agenda and Papers from Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 21 November 2012.

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