



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 27 January 2016, 10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr A Fry, Mr R M Udall, Ms R E Jenkins, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mrs E Eyre, Mr J W R Thomas, Mr R J Phillips

Substitutes: none

Absent: Mr J L V Kenyon

Apologies for Absence: Mr B A Baker

37 Declarations of Interest (if any)

No Member declared an interest.

38 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 16 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

39 Treasury Management Activities 2014/15

Members were informed of the Treasury Management Activities for 2014/15 and advised that the Prudential indicators set by the Authority in February 2015 were within the limits of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

RESOLVED that Members agree the Prudential Indicators were within the limits set by the Authority in February 2015 and that there are no matters that require further attention.

40 Budget 2016/17 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Members were informed of the current position in relation to budgets for 2016/17 and beyond.

Members were advised that in late December the formula grant provisional figures for 2016/17 to 2019/20 were announced. Over the four year comprehensive spending review period, the total grant reduction is as anticipated in the Medium Term Financial Plan. However, the savings are greater in the first two years which mean that additional savings would need to be made in the earlier years, which total £1.096m. This can be funded from earmarked reserves that we put aside last year to cover this eventuality.

[Councillor Adams entered the meeting at 10.38am.]

In respect of the precept, Members were asked to consider an increase of 1.96% for Band D.

Members were reminded that the last 2015/16 budget monitoring report identified potential savings of £0.792m but a decision as to how this should be used had not as yet been decided.

Members congratulated the Finance team on the work they had done with the figures.

RESOLVED that the Fire Authority be recommended to:

- i) increase council tax by £1.50 per year (1.96%) for 2016/17;**
- ii) use £0.960m of the earmarked reserve to smooth the impact of the accelerated grant reduction;**
- iii) rephase £0.150m of the previously approved use of general balances from 2016/17 to 2017/18;**
- iv) agree the budget planning assumptions set out in Appendix 1;**
- and**
- v) note the remaining budget gaps set out in Appendix 2.**

41 Task and Finish Group for Vehicle Fleet Capital Programme

Members were asked to establish a Task and Finish Group to examine the Vehicle Fleet Capital Programme. The Group will enable Members to have oversight of the Vehicle Fleet Capital Programme and an updated report will be provided to Members by the end of March 2016.

Members were asked to consider nominating Members for the Task and Finish Group who were interested in the subject matter and inform the Head of Legal Services.

The Terms of Reference agreed by Members were:

- review the Vehicle Fleet Strategy approved in 2007;
- review the Authority's anticipated future requirements and strategy with regard to replacement of vehicles; and
- make recommendations.

RESOLVED that:

- i) a Task and Finish Group to examine the Vehicle Fleet Capital Programme be set up;**
- ii) Councillor R Phillips be appointed as Chairman to the Task and Finish Group;**
- iii) the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group be agreed; and**
- iv) Group Leaders to nominate a Member from each group and inform the Head of Legal Services.**

42 Removal of Incident Response Unit for Mass Decontamination

Members were informed that following a national review, it had been determined that 22 National Resilience Incident Response Units (IRU) provided for mass decontamination across the Country, including the one currently stationed within Hereford & Worcester, are no longer required and will no longer be funded by Government.

Members were advised that the loss of the IRU at Hereford Fire Station would not cause any significant operational issues within the Service and the local decontamination capability could easily be provided at minimal cost for Hereford Fire Station. Assurance was also given that all HWFRS firefighters would continue to train and hold the necessary skills to deal with the variety of incidents that involve hazardous materials and be able to effectively decontaminate themselves.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- i) notes the removal of the Incident Response Unit from the National Resilience Asset Register, and subsequent reduction in Section 31 Grant funding to support this vehicle; and**

ii) notes the intention to remove the vehicle from Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service after 31 March 2016.

43 West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police Operations and Communications Centre (OCC) Programme

Members were informed of the progress of the West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police Operations and Communications Centre (OCC) programme and were asked to approve the relocation of the HWFRS Fire Control to Hindlip Park.

Members were reminded that this was a separate issue to the relocation of Service Headquarters.

Members were assured that HWFRS were fully engaged with the programme, were key stakeholders in all of the associated projects and it was hoped the OCC, including the HWFRS Fire Control, would be in operation in 2017.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the progress of the OCC Programme and of the planning application submitted by West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police be noted; and.**
- ii) Officers be authorised to proceed with the relocation of Fire Control to the Hindlip Park site, on terms to be agreed by the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Treasurer and Head of Legal Services.**

44 Health and Safety Committee Update

Members were updated on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee and Members' attention was drawn to key areas of work currently being undertaken by the Service.

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

- i) Health and Safety performance for Quarter 2 of year 2015-16 (Jul - Sept 2015); and**
- ii) the involvement of the Service in a number of Health and Safety initiatives at a national level.**

The Meeting ended at: 11:26

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman