



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Wednesday, 01 October 2014,10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Ms L R Duffy, Mr W P Gretton, Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs A T Hingley, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms P Agar, Mr A Fry, Ms R E Jenkins, Mr S C Cross, Mr J L V Kenyon, Mr R M Udall, Mr G J Vickery, Mr R I Matthews, Mrs F M Oborski MBE, Mr G C Yarranton

Substitutes: **none**

Apologies for Absence: Professor J W Raine

1 Declarations of Interest (if any)

None.

2 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 9 June 2014 be agreed and signed by the Chairman.

3 Chairman's Announcements

(i) The Chairman had recently represented the Authority at the Worcestershire Medals and Awards Ceremony at the Guild Hall on Friday 5 September 2014 and he would also be attending the Herefordshire Medals and Awards Ceremony at Hereford Town Hall on Friday 21 November 2014.

(ii) There is an exercise at Shrub Hill Station in Worcester on Sunday 19 October 2014 to which Members will be invited.

(iii) The refurbishment of Malvern Fire Station was now complete.

(iv) The official opening of Bromsgrove Fire Station would take place

on Thursday 30 October 2014 by HRH Princess Alexandra.

4 Public Participation

Mr Carl Horsburgh, a recently retired firefighter and former FBU representative, submitted a further petition opposing to the proposed cuts.

Mr Horsburgh then made the following comments:

- Reduction in fire appliances should be decided by the public.
- Concerns with proposed changes to standard crewing from 5 to 4.
- Only 11 out of 46 Fire Services had a standard crew of 4.
- Urged that firefighters be asked if they were happy with the proposals.

Cllr Lloyd-Hayes from Herefordshire Council suggested that more could be done to publicise Authority meetings and asked the following questions:

- Why reduce multi-operational vehicles designated at Hereford when they were seen as necessary?
- Why is the main animal rescue crew based in Bromyard?
- The people of Hereford are in support of Option 3.

The Chief Fire Officer replied as follows:

- No fire engines were being removed from Hereford or Worcester stations, only changes to crewing were being proposed.
- When animal rescue was investigated, Bromyard and Pershore stations were the ideal locations. All firefighters were fully trained and it was successful and working well.

5 Community Risk Management Plan 2014-2020

(Cllr Jenkins entered the meeting at 10.48am).

The Chief Fire Officer presented the report regarding the response to and findings from the public consultation on the Authority's draft Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) and containing recommendations for the implementation of the Fire and Emergency Cover Review.

The report also sought consideration of the use of the Authority's

Reserves to defer implementation of some of the CRMP proposals and to approve the draft CRMP for publication.

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the item and explained the importance of reaching a decision on this matter as there was still a budget gap of £2.137m outstanding for the two following financial years. A number of options had been identified as set out in the report and the Chief Fire Officer recommended Option 2 as the preferred approach.

An amendment proposed by Cllr Kenyon to support Option 3 was discussed and rejected. Following a further amendment proposed by Cllr Vickery it was resolved as follows:

RESOLVED that:

(1) following detailed consideration of the responses to the consultation on the draft Community Risk Management Plan, the Authority's updated financial position and having regard to additional discussions with Members, staff and representative bodies it is proposed that:-

(a) there be no change to the existing fire engines at Bewdley, Broadway, Whitchurch and Kingsland; and

(b) there be no change to the second fire engines at Kidderminster, Evesham, Leominster, Bromyard and Ross-on-Wye;

(c) Option 2 of the additional proposals (as illustrated in appendix 1 and 2 of this report) be approved, namely:

(i) the second whole-time fire engines at Hereford and Worcester fire stations be changed to the Day Duty crewing system (12 hours permanently crewed and 12 hours retained duty system crewed in each 24 hours), the Chief Fire Officer to determine the exact hours of crewing following consultation with relevant staff;

(ii) there be no change to the second retained duty fire engine at Redditch;

(iii) subject to (2) below the Service aim to have five firefighters on all first fire engines whenever possible but agrees that standard crewing for all fire engines be four firefighters;

(iv) the second fire engines at Ledbury and Tenbury fire stations be removed from the Service's fleet of fire engines;

and

(2) Up to £0.8m of reserves in total (£0.3m general reserves and £0.5m from the budget reduction earmarked reserve) be used to maintain five firefighters on all wholetime based first fire engines (except those at Hereford and Worcester) on as many occasions as possible for an initial period of two years (2015/16 and 2016/17) and that the position be reviewed thereafter;

(3) The Authority requests the Chief Fire Officer to work with Elected Members, operational colleagues and trade unions to investigate the feasibility of introducing Day Crewing Plus for the second wholetime fire engines at Hereford and Worcester and report back to the Authority within 6 to 12 months;

(4) The Community Risk Management Plan be amended to reflect the above decisions and the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to publish the document with any further minor amendments as may be necessary;

(5) Changes to fire cover as agreed be implemented in a timescale and manner at the discretion of the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority; and

(6) The arrangements for any reduction of the number of staff to be employed as a result of the above changes to fire cover, be considered by the Chief Fire Officer and a report be brought back to the Authority if necessary.

6 Notice of Motion

Cllr Kenyon withdrew his Notice of Motion.

7 Review of Conditions of Service - Operational Staff

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report informing Members that the Department for Communities & Local Government (DCLG) had initiated a review of conditions of service for operational fire staff at all grades, including Brigade Commanders and has published two questionnaires to gather views from Fire and Rescue Authorities.

(Cllr Kenyon left the meeting at 11.50am).

RESOLVED that the draft responses to the questionnaires

published in connection with the review of conditions of service be approved.

8 Provision of Internal Audit Services

The Treasurer presented a report to inform Members of a potential entry to the collaborative partnership arrangement for provision of Internal Audit with Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service and sought authority to join the shared service if appropriate.

RESOLVED that the Fire Authority give delegated authority to the Treasurer, in consultation with the Clerk, to enter into a shared service arrangement if appropriate.

9 Chief Fire Officer's Service Report

The Chief Fire Officer informed the Authority of recent key developments and activities.

(Cllr Kenyon re-entered the meeting at 11.55am).

Cllr Oborski thanked the Chief Fire Officer for providing vehicle, equipment and training accommodation for SARA at Kidderminster Fire Station.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 2 June and 10 September 2014.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meetings held on 2 June and 10 September 2014 be received and noted.

11 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 June 2014.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting

held on 30 June 2014 be received and noted.

(ii) the role of overseeing Member Development be undertaken in future by the Audit and Standards Committee instead of a Member Development Working Group.

The Meeting ended at: 11:56

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman