



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Thursday, 08 October 2015, 10:30

Minutes

Members Present: Mr R C Adams, Ms L R Duffy, Mr W P Gretton, Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr C B Taylor, Mr P A Tuthill, 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, Mr J W R Thomas, Mr A Amos, Mr B A Baker, Mrs E Eyre, Mr S D Williams

Substitutes: none

Absent: Professor J W Raine

Apologies for Absence: Ms K S Guthrie, Mrs A T Hingley, Ms P Agar, Mr A Fry, Mr R J Phillips

Declarations of Interest:

47 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 17 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

48 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed the following guests from the Local Government Association (LGA) who were in attendance for item 6 on the agenda:

- Cllr Jeremy Hilton – Fire Services Management Committee Chairman
- Helen Murray – Principal LGA Advisor to the West Midlands Region
- John Wright – Senior LGA Advisor

The Chairman also updated Members on the following activities:

- The Members' Visits to facilities in Herefordshire and Worcestershire which had been well attended and had provided Members with an opportunity to view fire stations, equipment and to meet firefighting staff.
- The forthcoming multi-agency exercise at the Fire Service College to which all Members had been invited to observe on 11 October 2015.
- The first Shareholder Meeting of Place Partnership Ltd that had taken place on 1 October 2015. The Authority was represented at the meeting by the Chairman and ACFO John Hodges.
- The Annual Combined Fire Authorities Conference on 22 October 2015, which the Chairman was due to attend with the Chief Fire Officer.
- The National Service of Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony on the 13 September 2015 where the Authority was represented by the Vice-Chairman and the Chief Fire Officer.
- The recent award to ACFO Hodges of an MBA by the University of Worcester. Members joined the Chairman in congratulating ACFO Hodges.
- The recent award of Supporter of the Year at the Spirit of Fire Awards to Station Commander Martin Lown for his fundraising work for the Firefighters' Charity. Members joined the Chairman in congratulating SC Lown who had raised a total of £12,000 for the Charity by climbing Kilimanjaro, Mount Everest Base Camp and Mount Toubkal in full fire kit and breathing apparatus.
- The official opening of the new Worcester Fire Station by the Duke of Gloucester on 19 November 2015.

49 A Service for the Future

The Authority was provided with a brief presentation by Cllr Jeremy Hilton, Helen Murray and John Wright from the Local Government Association (LGA) with regards to the work of the LGA in relation to Fire Authorities.

Members were then provided with an opportunity to ask questions, during which the following points were raised:

- Members noted the extensive lobbying role of the LGA on behalf of fire authorities and consults with various organisations such as the

Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA);

- the LGA had recently published a joint response with CFOA to the Government Spending Review, which set out the potential of the fire and rescue services to play a vital wider role in contributing to the ambitions of the spending review. The submission made recommendations to the Government, which aimed to exploit this potential;
- one key area where the fire and rescue services could assist was in co-responding to incidents with ambulance services. This was an area that was currently in operation in many fire and rescue services but not in the West Midlands region;
- the LGA also had a role in the provision of learning and improvement support to fire authorities through peer challenges and support to local politicians through various workshops and mentoring facilities.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Jeremy Hilton, Helen Murray and John Wright for their presentation.

RESOLVED that:

i) the work of the LGA in relation to the Fire and Rescue Authorities be noted; and

ii) the recent response to the Government Spending Review from the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) and the LGA be noted.

50 Enabling Closer Working Between Emergency Services

The Authority considered a draft response to the recent Government consultation document on a proposed series of measures to drive greater collaboration between the police, fire and rescue and NHS ambulance services. The consultation response had been drafted by Group Leaders.

RESOLVED that:

i) the response to the document "Enabling Closer Working Between the Emergency Services" be agreed, subject to the inclusion of concerns that any expansion of the Police and Crime Commissioner's existing remit would make that role too large and unmanageable; and

ii) any further amendments be approved by the Authority Chairman in consultation with Group Leaders.

51 Approval of Early Retirement

The Head of Legal Services explained that when the previous Scheme of Delegation was approved, it had not been envisaged that Members would need to be involved in approving early retirement cases involving mid-ranking staff at Station Commander level. The Authority was informed that although a Station Commander's basic salary was less than £45,000, once the flexi-duty allowance was taken into consideration it was over the approved threshold.

The Authority considered the proposed extension to the Scheme of Delegation so as to permit the Chief Fire Officer to determine any applications for early retirement received from officers at Station Commander rank.

RESOLVED that the existing delegated authority to the Chief Fire Officer to approve the early retirements, in consultation with the Chairman and Treasurer, in the case of employees whose salary is less than £45,000 be extended to include officers at Station Commander rank subject to the pension costs still not exceeding £45,000.

52 Constitution Changes

The Authority considered proposed amendments to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules and subsequent amendments to the Appointments Committee terms of reference to give effect to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2015.

The Head of Legal Services explained that although the Regulations were not strictly applicable to fire authorities it was good governance practice to incorporate them with the Authority's constitution.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the amended Officer Employment Procedure Rules be adopted;**
- and**
- ii) the amended terms of reference for the Appointments Committee be adopted.**

53 Chief Fire Officer's Service Report

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

The Authority congratulated Sonja Sinclair-Elechi on her recent Jubilee Award which had recognised her voluntary work for Service's Critical Incident Stress Team (CIST) that provided vital stress debriefing sessions after traumatic incidents.

Members also recognised the recent success of the Dying to Drive multi-agency road safety scheme aimed at young road users in Herefordshire.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

54 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the meetings held on 29 June 2015 and 28 September 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meetings held on 29 June 2015 and 28 September 2015 be received and noted.

55 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee reported the proceedings of the Committee meeting held on 14 September 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 14 September 2015 be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 12:10

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman