



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 31 January 2018, 10:30

Minutes

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

101 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

102 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Mr R Udall declared an interest in the late agenda item 9 as a supplier to one of the Cartel companies.

103 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 22 November 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

104 Budget 2018/19 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

Members were asked to review the current position in relation to budgets for 2018/19 and beyond, and to make recommendations to the Fire Authority.

Members were advised that the increase in the council tax base had been formally confirmed as 1.3%, which is slightly lower than the expected 1.4%. Confirmation of business rate yield was still awaited from the Billing Authorities at the time of the meeting.

Members discussed the on-going pay award provision and noted the 2% provision across the whole Medium Term Financial Plan period.

With regard to the Fleet Strategy, Members requested clarification of the vehicles and were content with the provision.

Members discussed the idea of a new Community Safety project and welcomed the idea of a further report to the Committee on options and how best to promote safety to the public.

RESOLVED that:

1. the Fire Authority be recommended to:

i) agree the amendments to expenditure and resource projections as set out in Appendices 2 to 4 of the report;

ii) increase the Band D Precept by £2.37 (2.98%) in 2018/19;

iii) plan to increase the precept by 3% in 2019/20 and 1.96% per year thereafter;

iv) approve a planning assumption of annual pay awards of 2%;

v) continue to approve the Reserves Strategy to smooth the implementation of efficiencies over the period;

2. the Treasurer be authorised to make appropriate adjustments to the phasing of the use of reserves to accommodate the confirmed council tax-base, council tax collection fund, Business Rate yield and Section 31 Grant figures; and

3. the Chief Fire Officer bring a report to the Committee with recommendations for undertaking a Community Safety project and how best to promote this to the public.

105 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England - Government Consultation

Members were asked to consider the draft response on the recently published consultation on a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England.

Members were informed that a new National Framework document had been drafted to replace the current 2012 version which included changes required to embed the Fire Reform programme and provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

The Chief Fire Officer explained to Members that this was a statutory requirement and the Service will be inspected by the HMI in the Summer

of this year.

Members shared their concerns that governance was not a significant part of the review but were happy with the prepared response.

RESOLVED that the draft response to the consultation, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.

106 Proposed Fire and Rescue Services Inspection Programme and Framework

Members were provided with details of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) consultation on their proposed inspection programme and framework, together with a proposed response to the consultation.

Members were asked to note the consultation and consider if any further comments needed to be added.

Members requested that a stronger response be prepared in relation to Question 3 and the Chief Fire Officer was happy to include this, together with maintaining a watching brief over the on-going resource implications to ensure that the inspection process remains proportionate.

Members also required further clarification on the inspection and were pleased to note that it was being funded by Central Government.

RESOLVED that:

i) the proposed response to the consultation, with an adjustment to Question 3, as set out in Appendix 3 of the report, be approved.

ii) the Committee maintain a watching brief over the on-going resource implications for the Authority to ensure that the inspection process remains proportionate.

107 Relocation of Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park Estate

Members were reminded that Appendix 1 to the report was confidential and therefore the press and public would need to be excluded from the meeting if any discussion of these details was required.

Members were updated on the current position of the Headquarters relocation project and requested delegated authority for grant expenditure

and to enter into appropriate lease arrangements.

Members were pleased to note that a room will be made available for future Authority meetings and that the relocation of staff is due to be completed by 31 August 2018.

RESOLVED that:

- i) Officers proceed with the proposed building and refurbishment works to enable the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate, to be funded from the Government's transformation grant award;**
- ii) the Authority enters into appropriate legal arrangements to support the relocation of Service Headquarters to the Hindlip Park estate on terms to be agreed by the Head of Legal Services and Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority; and**
- iii) a further report on the future sale or lease of Kings Court be brought back in due course.**

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Authority were asked to exclude members of the public and press from Appendix 1 to Agenda Item 7, Item 8 and the Late Item.

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.

108 Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub

Members were updated on the progress of the project and asked to approve the revised budget allocation.

Members were informed that the layout of the proposed development had been designed to use the whole of the available site, which was larger than originally intended. The additional costs would be funded from a mixture of additional capital receipts, use of the national resilience reserve and some additional capital borrowing, the revenue consequences of which would be funded from within the existing capital programme

budget.

Members expressed their concerns over the parking of HGVs in the service road and suggested the use of double yellow lanes to avoid access issues.

Members were pleased that the planning application had been submitted earlier in the month and approved the revised budget.

Summary of Decision

The Authority agreed the revised budget for the development of the Wyre Forest Emergency Services Hub.

[Councillor Udall and Councillor Fry left the meeting at 12.05pm]

109 Late Item - Truck Manufacturers' Cartel - Compensation Claim

The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this Late Item pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency on the grounds that

- **this matter had only recently come to the attention of the Authority; and**
- **a decision is required before the date of the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.**

Summary of Decision

The Authority agreed to participate in action being coordinated by the LGA against certain truck manufacturers who had previously been adjudged to have operated a cartel.

[Councillor Phillips left the room at 12.10pm and returned at 12.12pm].

The Meeting ended at: 12:15

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman