

13. Policy and Resources Committee Report

Purpose of report

1. To inform the Authority of the proceedings of the Committee Meeting held on 25 January 2012.
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Recommendation

That the Authority note the proceedings of the Committee meeting held on 25 January 2012.

Budget 2012/13 and Review of Medium Term Financial Plan

2. A report was considered that outlined the current position in relation to budgets for 2012/13 and beyond.
3. Members were reminded that a Medium Term Financial Plan had been agreed for 2010/11 – 2013/14 which was based on a set of assumptions about the future.
4. The Treasurer presented the report and drew Members' attention to the consequences of accepting the Council Tax Freeze Grant and talked through the possible budget gap and how it could be closed.
5. The Recommendations will be considered at item 7 on the agenda for this meeting.

West Midlands Contractor Framework

6. A report was considered that informed Members of the formation of the West Midlands Contractor Framework and the Authority's involvement in the consequent Partnering Agreement involving Worcestershire County Council, Herefordshire Council, West Mercia Police and The Fire and Rescue Authority.
7. The Clerk explained how the different authorities within the Framework worked together to drive down the cost of procurement. The West Midlands Contractor Framework had formulated a contract agreement which related to building services and could be used on projects over £1 million. This enabled smaller authorities such as the Fire and Rescue Authority to gain better value tenders because of the scale of the Framework Agreement.
8. Members noted the contents of the report and approved the use of Standing Order 5.1.f. (Regulation of Contracts) in awarding contracts under the Framework Agreement which negated the need to undertake a tendering exercise.

Retaining Staff with Specialist Skills

9. A report was considered that brought to the attention of the Policy and Resources Committee issues relating to potential skills gaps in the Service as a result of the possible changes to pension provision and sought agreement to a policy that mitigated the potential for this to happen.
10. The Chief Fire Officer presented the report and advised Members that currently 15 members of uniformed staff were eligible for retirement from the Service and could receive their full pension entitlement. Amongst these staff included those who had acquired specialist skills which had taken a number of years to develop. The proposed Policy allowed the Service to retain key skills as staff would be able to retire, access pension benefits, including a lump sum, and subsequently be re-employed with the pension being subject to abatement.
11. The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to the Service adopting the Policy relating to the retirement and re-employment of personnel.

Update to Work Programme 2011/12

12. A report was considered regarding amendments to the Work Programme of the Policy and Resources Committee. The Committee approved the Work Programme as amended for 2011/12.

Budget Monitoring 2011/12

13. A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the current position on budgets and expenditure for 2011/12.
14. The Committee noted the report.

Fees and Charges

15. A report was considered that updated the Committee on progress in implementing the Fire and Rescue Authority's decision on charging. Members were advised that in December 2010 the Authority had agreed a policy for charging for lift rescues and assistance to the Environment Agency.
16. It was noted that since the Authority had started to charge for lift rescues there had been a reduction in the number that had been carried out.
17. In the period July – December 2011, ten lift rescues had been carried out at £238 per rescue which had generated income of £2,380 for the Authority. Furthermore, it was reported that there had been no problems with payment of the invoices that had been sent for these rescues.
18. The Committee noted the report.

Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan – Action Plan 2012/13

19. A late report was considered that provided the Committee with details of the outcomes of the consultation process for the 2012/13 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan which finished at the end of December 2011. The report was included on the agenda in order to give the Committee the opportunity to consider the results of the consultation exercise before it was approved by the Authority.
20. Members were informed that the consultation had finished on 22 December 2011 and the results of the consultation included a detailed response submitted by the Trade Unions and 13 responses submitted in writing.
21. The current IRMP process had followed a three year cycle and had been based on the National Framework. However, it was noted that a new National Framework was currently being consulted on and would be considered at the Committee's next meeting in March 2012.
22. The Committee recommended that the proposed IRMP Action Plan be submitted to the Authority for approval.

IRMP 2011/12 Update – Review of the Provision of Operational Training and Development

23. A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the outcomes of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2011/12 Objective No. 6, the Review of Operational Training and Development.
24. Members were informed that a full review of operational training and associated procedures had taken place.
25. There were five key areas that were considered as part of the review namely:
 - Strategy, guidance and supporting documentation
 - Competence Recording Systems (Training Records)
 - Current Training Provision
 - Existing Training Facilities
 - Staffing and structure of Training and Development
26. The Committee noted the report.

IRMP 2011/12 Update – Review of the Community Safety Department

27. A report was considered that informed the Policy and Resources Committee of the outcomes of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) 2011/12 Objective No. 2, the Review of the Community Safety Department. It was noted that a fundamental review of the Community Safety Department had taken place.

28. The review considered the following:
- Review of National Guidance
 - Review of the Service's Community Safety activities and current Resource deployment
 - Summary of existing and predicted demographical information
 - Summary of known 'at risk' groups and order of priority ranking
 - A profile of operational activity
29. The Committee noted the report.

Fire Fighting Water Supply

30. A report was considered that provided a summary of the current position with respect to the provision, inspection and maintenance of water supplies and requested support with a national campaign to change legislation, which would benefit the Fire and Rescue Authority.
31. The Committee noted the proactive steps that had been taken to secure fire fighting water supplies and endorsed the Service's support of a national campaign which would result in a change in legislation around the costs for ongoing maintenance of fire hydrants.

Joint Consultative Committee Update

32. The Committee noted a report that informed Members of the Policy and Resources Committee of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held during December 2011.

Asset Management Strategy: Worcester Fire Station

33. A report was considered which sought approval from the Policy and Resources Committee to proceed with a proposal to replace Worcester Fire Station.
34. The Committee approved a proposal to replace the current Worcester Fire Station with a new building at a new location in Worcester City, within the budget allocation and approved an exemption to Standing Orders (para 5.1, Section G) due to the specific circumstances relating to the opportunity for a design and build at the Service's preferred location.

Financial Considerations

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

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	N/A

Additional Considerations

35. 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	N/A
Strategic Policy Links (e.g. IRMP, Authority Plan, Equality & Diversity, Partnerships, Environmental Impact).	No	N/A
Risk Management / Health & Safety (e.g. risk management and control measures, risk register score).	No	N/A
Consultation with Representative Bodies	No	N/A

Background papers – Agenda and Papers from Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 25 January 2012.

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