



Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority

Full Authority

Thursday, 16 December 2021, 10:30

Chairman: Mr C B Taylor

Vice-Chairman: Mr R J Phillips

Minutes

Members Present: Mr A Amos, Mr D Boatright, Mr S Bowen, Mr D Chambers, Mr B Clayton, Mrs E Eyre BEM, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr Al Hardman, Mr M Hart, Mrs K Hey, Mrs E Marshall, Ms J Monk, Mr D Morehead, Mr R J Phillips, Ms L Robinson, Mr L Stark, Mr C B Taylor, Mr R M Udall, Mr T Wells

335 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr B Brookes, Cllr K Guthrie, Cllr N McVey, Cllr R Morris and Cllr D Toynbee.

336 Declarations of Interest (if any)

Cllr Phillips declared that he was Vice Chair of the Firefighters Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), Chair of the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board (England and Wales), a member of the NJC for Fire Service (Grey Book and Green Book) and represented the Fire Authority as a director of Place Partnership Ltd.

337 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced to Members that he had recently attended the Medal and Award ceremonies at the Town Hall in Hereford and the Guildhall in Worcester.

The Chairman invited the Chief Fire Officer to provide an update for Members on recent key events.

The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that following the meeting there was a seminar on the attendance measures and then discussed the recent large fire at a Carpet Warehouse on the Hoo Farm industrial estate in Kidderminster. He confirmed that it was not suspicious and although

was not a major incident this time, it was still the same scale of fire as the previous one in the area. The Chief Fire Officer praised the efforts of the crews who did a superb job of controlling the fire as there was a significant high risk of other businesses being lost when the wind changed direction. It took just under 2 weeks to put the fire out completely.

Members passed their congratulations to all the crews involved and were pleased to note that the drones proved to be an asset to look at neighbouring buildings. On behalf of the residents of Kidderminster and Wyre Forest, the crews were thanked for their incredible effort on the Park Street fire and this recent fire.

338 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

339 Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

340 Budget Monitoring 2021/22 – Quarter 2

The Treasurer presented Members with the current position on the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22. This report was due to be presented at the recent Policy and Resources Committee, however the meeting had been cancelled and it was agreed to provide the information to the full Authority.

Members noted the new Revised Core Revenue budget of £35.356m which took into account the temporary increase in Fire Control staffing in preparation for the replacement Fire Control project. and the net Revenue overspend of £0.026m.

With regard to the Capital budget, Members noted that the budget available to be spent at the start of 2012/22 was £5.094m of which £2.412m had occurred.

Members were pleased to note that there had been no additional long term borrowing.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) approved the revised Core Revenue Budget at £35.356m; and

ii) noted the net Revenue overspend of £0.026m.

341 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Update

The Treasurer informed Members of the current position about information available to support the 2022/23 budget and MTFP, and also sought delegated authority to enter a future Business Rates Pool.

Members were made aware that indications of council tax base changes and collection fund figures for Council Tax and Business rates were still awaited, it was hoped that there would have been an update for today's meeting. The Business rate yield information was not usually expected until mid January.

Further updates would be brought to the Policy and Resources Committee as information on the grant settlement emerged.

Members were asked to give delegated authority to enter into future Business Rates pools if appropriate, to avoid the use of the Urgent Decisions process which had been used in previous years.

RESOLVED that the Authority:

i) noted that the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) and its impact on the emerging MTFP was still awaited;

ii) noted that the Policy and Resources Committee would receive a full report as more information was available;

iii) noted the decision taken under the urgent business procedure for the Authority to participate in the business rates pooling for 2021/22; and

iv) give delegated authority to the Treasurer to determine whether to participate in business rate pooling arrangements for future years.

342 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Cause of Concern Action Plan

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the progress in implementing the Prevention Action Plan following the Cause of Concern issued by HMICFRS after the 2021 inspection, letter dated 29 June 2021.

Members were reminded of the email they received yesterday relating to the new HMICFRS review. This report was for Members to note the progress that had been made up to October 2021 and that the overall action plan was on target to be completed by July 2022.

Members also noted that the full HMICFRS inspection report would be

published in December 2021, a full review of feedback and recommendations would be prioritised, with action plans produced as appropriate, which would be reported at the Fire Authority Meeting in February 2022.

[Cllr Hart left the meeting at 11.26am and returned at 11.28am.]

RESOLVED that the Authority notes progress on actions to deliver the HMICFRS Cause of Concern Action Plan.

343 2021-22 Performance Report: Q2 (1 July – 30 September 2021)

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer presented Members with a summary of the Service's performance for Quarter 2 2021-22.

There was a query with regard to Building fires as it was felt the information provided did not adequately reflect the scale of the Fire and Rescue Service's response to fires. It was suggested to add the scale of the fire and the number of appliances attended. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer suggested additional text could be added to further reports and the Chief Fire Officer would add further comment at meetings.

There was a query with regard to diversity in the workforce. The Chief Fire Officer reported that there was a new training programme to be issued throughout the workforce and assured Members that the Service was fully committed to increase diversity. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed to Members that they would recommend to the Audit and Standards Committee that there be two EDI Champions, rather than the current one, to assist with the ongoing work.

RESOLVED that Members note the Q2 2021-22 performance headlines set out in Section 4 of the report, with further details available in Appendix 1.

344 Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 September 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 30 September 2021 be received and noted.

345 Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee presented the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 16 September be received and noted.

The Meeting ended at: 11:59

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Chairman