

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW, ON FRIDAY 21 DECEMBER 2012

Present : Councillors M Khan (in the chair), T Austin, C Burke, D Davies, J Dodds, D Gray, S Hamilton, P Harrand, L Holmes, J Hughes, A Hussain, B Selby, B Smith, A Taylor, G Thornton, A Wainwright, A Wallis, P Wardhaugh and G Wilkinson

Apologies: Councillors Grahame and Townsley

40 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Councillor D Davies

The Chair extended a welcome to Councillor Debbie Davies from Bradford who had been appointed as a replacement for Councillor Valerie Binney who had left the Authority on 10 November 2012.

Retirement – M Redfearn, Director of Service Support

On behalf of the Members, the Chair thanked the Director of Service Support, Martyn Redfearn, for his work and commitment to the Authority during his time with West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and, particularly in the latter years when he had taken office as the Director with responsibility for human resources. Members wished him well in his retirement which would take effect in January 2013.

A warm welcome was also extended at the meeting to Mr Dave Walton – the newly appointed Director who would commence duties on 2 January 2013.

Presentation – Fundraising Brigade of the Year

The Chair presented Crew Manager Stuart Wilson and Watch Manager Paul Austin with the Spirit of Fire Award (Fundraising Brigade of the Year 2012) in acknowledgement of their hard work and commitment in raising monies throughout the Brigade.

41 ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

The meeting determined that there were no items which necessitated the exclusion of the public.

42 URGENT ITEMS

Financial settlement – verbal update

The Chief Finance Officer updated Members on the financial settlement which had been announced on Wednesday 19 December.

It was reported that the effect of the settlement would mean that the Authority would lose £4.1m in revenue support grant which was a reduction of 7.96% (compared to a national average reduction of 8.3%).

This, coupled with a reduction in precept freeze grant of £1.07m made a total grant loss of £5.17m in 2013/14. There would be a further loss of £3.38m of grant in 2014 / 15 which would bring the total over two years to £8.55m.

Members were also advised that, although the general level of council tax / precept increase (which would require a referendum) had been set at 2%, there was a dispensation for fire and rescue authorities. This dispensation would allow the eight authorities who have the lowest band D precepts (including this Authority which at £52.41 is the second lowest) to increase these by up to £5 per year without the need for a referendum.

Finally Members were informed that the Authority's bid for £11.25m capital grant phased over 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 to fund the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) building programme had been successful and that, in total, the Authority would receive £14.65m of capital grant over the two-year period.

A detailed report would be submitted the Finance and Resources Committee on 25 January 2013.

Executive Minutes – 17 December 2012

The Minutes of the 17 December 2012 meeting of the Executive Committee had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting for information.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 17 December 2012 be received.

[The Chair had agreed to add the Minutes to the agenda as the Committee had not taken place by the time of despatch of the Authority papers].

Finance and Resources Committee Minutes – 21 September 2012

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee at a meeting held on 21 September 2012 be considered at agenda item 10 (Min no. 49 refers)

[The Chair had agreed to add the Minutes to the agenda as these had been omitted in error].

43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest made in any matter under discussion at the meeting.

It was reported that dispensations in respect of agenda item 15 and 16 (items relating to the Integrated Risk Management Plan, Min nos. 54 and 55 refer) in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 had been granted by the Authority's Monitoring Officer to Councillors T Austin, D Gray and B Selby. These dispensations had been noted in the Authority's register.

44 AUTHORITY AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which advised of a change in membership of the Authority as notified by Bradford Metropolitan District Council. The new appointment had formally taken effect on 11 November 2012. This change had consequent effects on Committee membership.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the appointment of Councillor Debbie Davies (Conservative) to replace Councillor Valerie Binney (Conservative) as Member of the Fire Authority be noted; and
- (ii) That Councillor Davies be appointed as substantive member of the Community Safety Committee and Consultation and Negotiation Panel and Councillor Harrand be appointed as substantive member of the Audit Committee and as replacement for Councillor Binney on the Community Safety Briefing Group.

45 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2012 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

46 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Audit Committee at a meeting held on 14 September 2012 be received.

47 MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee at a meeting held on 2 November 2012 be received.

48 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Community Safety Committee at a meeting held on 11 November 2012 be received.

49 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee at meetings held on 21 September and 30 November 2012 be received.

50 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION - MINUTES

The Chair drew Members' attention to Minute no. 5 (Legislation update – Metal theft) in the Minutes of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board of 11 September 2012. This had been an issue in which Members of the Authority had taken great interest and had given their support to a change in legislation.

The Chair also took the opportunity to draw Members' attention in their role as District Councillors to Min no. 1 of the Safer and Stronger Communities Board of 5 November 2012 which related to the financial modelling of the domestic violence services.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Minutes of the Fire Commission at meetings held on 19 October 2012 and 7 December 2012 be received;
- (ii) That the Minutes of the Safer and Stronger Communities Programme Board at meetings held on 11 September and 5 November 2012 be received; and
- (iii) That the Minutes of the Fire Services Management Committee at meetings held on 14 September 2012 and 16 November 2012 be received.

51 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which outlined the activities of the Brigade in the areas of operations and technical matters for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 October 2012.

Members commented specifically on the excellent results which had seen a decrease in primary fires over the previous 10-year period of 70% and a reduction in all incidents over the same period of 42%. The Director of Service Delivery advised Members in detail of the figures relating to smoke alarm ownership and the impact this had had in the overall reduction in fires and increase in safety for the people of West Yorkshire.

Further comment was made about the attacks on firefighters and the pleasing results in terms of arrest and charges made in this regard.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That Officers be commended for their good work in reducing the incidence of primary fires and all other activity requiring a Fire Service response.

52 CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE ASSESSMENT

Members considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided Members with an update on the attainment of the Customer Service Excellence full compliance standard (including 9 compliance plus) against all 57 elements of the award.

RESOLVED

That the attainment of the Customer Service Excellence standards with full compliance be noted.

53 COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT – CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which advised Members of responses made to Communities and Local Government (CLG) on the following documents;

- guidance on Statements of Assurance for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England
- protocol on Government intervention action on Fire and Rescue Authorities

Members were advised that the responses had been drafted in conjunction with the political group leaders of the Authority.

RESOLVED

That the consultation responses as detailed in the report now submitted be noted.

54 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) – FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the outcome of the formal 12-week consultation process in relation to the eleven Integrated Risk Management Plan proposals originally submitted to the Fire Authority on 7 September 2012.

Members were advised in detail of the comments received in relation to the eleven proposals including submissions received on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the Fire Officers' Association (FOA). It was also reported that a number of comments had been received since the end of the formal consultation period – these responses had been duly logged and noted.

A copy of all the responses received had been made available to Members prior to the meeting.

Members expressed their appreciation for the excellent, professional and equitable manner in which the consultation exercise had been conducted and the commitment of officers to attend meetings and draft responses to issues raised by members of the public. It was reported that the process itself had been audited and had received substantial assurance from internal audit.

RESOLVED

That the consultation responses to the Integrated Risk Management Plan proposals received during the 12-week consultation period be noted.

55 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) – PROPOSALS

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Strategic Development which presented a range of proposals for changes to emergency cover having had regard to the relevant and substantive issues raised during the 12-week consultation period.

The changes would result in significant efficiency savings (£7.2m) which would help address the shortfall in funding whilst maintaining levels of emergency response and could be achieved without the need for any wholetime compulsory redundancies by aligning the introduction of the changes to the retirement profile. A copy of detailed risk based planning assumptions associated with the proposals was included in the report now submitted.

It was reported that, in response to comments and concerns raised during the consultation process, some of the original proposals had been amended to incorporate alternative risk based options.

Members were advised that the final proposals for changes to emergency cover during 2013 – 2020 were as follows;

- Fairweather Green
Amended proposal – removal of second appliance and replacement by a Fire Response Unit (FRU) **and** alternate (dual) crew the Command Unit and Welfare Unit with the FRU (net saving £97,750)
- Haworth and Keighley
Amended proposal – removal of appliance from Keighley in 2013 **and** delay closure of Haworth Fire Station for a maximum of two years pending evaluation of feasibility of alternative options raised (net saving £970,000)
- Idle and Shipley
Merger of two existing stations and building of new replacement station (net saving £885,000)
- Odsal
Amended proposal - removal of one appliance from Odsal and replacement with Command Unit at Fairweather Green (not Odsal) (net saving 736,000)
- Halifax
Provision of one Combined Aerial Rescue Pump (CARP) and one alternative appliance (net saving £880,000)
- Marsden, Slaithwaite and Meltham
Closure of Marsden fire station (net saving £225,000)
- Stanningley
Removal of second fire engine and replaced by Fire Response Unit and alternate (dual) High Volume Pump, Hose Layer and Welfare Unit (net saving £408,000)
- Hunslet and Morley
Amended proposal – stations to remain in current locations, Hunslet reduction to one fire appliance(wholetime shift duty system), Morley to stay as one fire appliance (day crewing duty system) (net saving £1,013,250)
- Cookridge and Moortown
Merger of Cookridge and Moortown fire stations (net saving £885,000)
- Garforth and Rothwell
Amended proposal – Rothwell and Garforth remain in current locations with application of Day Crew duty systems at both stations (net saving £1.36m)
- Ossett and Wakefield
Removal of one fire engine from Wakefield and construction of new fire station to replace Ossett (net saving £677,500)

It was reported that the difference between the original proposals and in the final recommendations was insignificant in terms of overall impact on average response times.

Members commented on the excellent work that had been done by officers to address what had been a very difficult issue and acknowledged the fact that this had not been done through choice but rather through financial necessity. The Chief Fire Officer also reassured Members that the proposed changes ensured that the Authority continued to meet its statutory duties under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

Two motions for amended proposals in respect of changes to Shipley / Idle and to Marsden were put to Members by Councillors Gray and Burke respectively. The amendments both proposed delays in a decision in both station areas pending consideration of alternative options. Having considered a technical response from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Director of Strategic Development in respect of the amendments, on being put to Members, the motions were both lost.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the following proposals be approved as part of the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2013 - 2020;
1. Removal of one fire engine from Fairweather Green and replacement with a Fire Response Unit to be dual crewed with the Command and Welfare Units. The current wholetime shift duty system to apply ensuring immediate response 24 hours per day.
 2. Removal of second fire engine from Keighley and a maximum 2-year suspension of closure of Haworth fire station to allow a detailed feasibility study to be completed on any possible alternatives.
 3. Closure of Shipley and Idle fire stations and replacement with a new fire station and one fire engine at a site in the vicinity of the Leeds Road / Cragg Road / Briggate area to ensure a response within the Risk Based Planning Assumptions (RBPA) to the higher risk areas. Application of current wholetime shift duty system to ensure immediate response 24 hours per day.
 4. Removal of one fire engine from Odsal.
 5. Removal of one fire engine from Halifax and provision of a fully equipped Resilience Pump which can be utilised when required as an alternative to the Combined Aerial Rescue Pump.
 6. Closure of Marsden fire station.
 7. Removal of second fire engine at Stanningley and replacement with the Fire Response Unit for Leeds District, to be dual crewed with the High Volume Pump, Hose Layer and Welfare Unit. Application of current wholetime shift duty system to ensure immediate response 24 hours per day.

8. Retention of Hunslet and Morley fire stations in their current locations and removal of one fire engine from Hunslet. Day Crew staffing to apply at Morley and current wholetime shift duty system at Hunslet to ensure immediate response 24 hours per da.
 9. Closure of Cookridge and Moortown fire stations and replacement with a new fire station with one fire engine at a suitable location to provide appropriate cover for both areas. Application of current wholetime shift duty system to ensure immediate response 24 hours per day.
 10. Retention of Rothwell and Garforth fire stations in their current locations. Day Crew staffing to apply at both stations.
 11. Removal of one fire engine from Wakefield and provision of fully equipped Resilience Pump which can be utilised when required as an alternative to the Combined Aerial Rescue Pump and construct a new fire station to replace Ossett at Junction 40 of the M1 motorway; and
- (ii) That annual update reports on progress with the Integrated Risk Management Plans be submitted to each December meeting of the Authority.

Chair