

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY 17 JULY 2009 AT 10.30 A.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW

AGENDA

1. Minutes of meeting held on 17 April 2009 (p 1)
2. Urgent items
3. Admission of the Public :

The Committee is asked to consider whether, by resolution, to exclude the public from the meeting during the items of business marked with an 'E' reference, because of the possibility of the disclosure of exempt information.

4. Declarations of interest

To consider any Declaration of Interest in relation to any item of business on the agenda.

Items for noting

5. Arson reduction strategy and policy (p 9)
6. Brake – Road safety charity – partnership arrangements (p 37)
7. High Risk Team – update and priorities (p 46)
8. Home Fire Safety Check – grant scheme (p 50)
9. Independent living project – Leeds City Council (p 53)
10. Emergency Response and Recovery – consultation (p 56)
11. Emergency Flood Framework – consultation (p 66)
12. Backward looking Efficiency statement 2008 – 9 (p 77)

Items for decision

13. Cookridge Fire Station – transfer of land (p 84)
14. Quarterly Financial Review (p 87)
15. RIEP Bid – technical services (p 107)
- E16 Capital expenditure – slippage (p 111)

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 17 JULY 2009

AT FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW

Present: Councillors P Harrand (in the Chair with the exception of agenda item 12 Min no. 12 refers), M Akhtar, S Armitage, A Castle, J Dodds, D Ginley, D Gray (in the chair for agenda item 12 Min no. 12 refers), M Jamil, M Khan, G Kirkland, B Smith and A Wallis

In attendance : Councillor D Ridgway

1 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 13 March 2009 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

2 URGENT ITEM – RESPONSE TO FIRE CIRCULAR – FORMULA GRANT REVIEW

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which advised of the proposed response to the review of the Fire and Rescue Relative Needs Formula which formed a fundamental strand of the grant distribution system.

A copy of the proposed response was attached as an annex to the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

That the proposed response be approved for submission to Communities and Local Government (CLG).

[The report was considered urgent due to the late receipt of notice for response from CLG].

3 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC – SECTION 100a, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item of business specified below as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be

transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public and press were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of the descriptions specified.

AGENDA ITEM NO.	TITLE OF REPORT	MINUTE NUMBER	Description of exempt information by reference to the paragraph number in Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972
E16	Capital Expenditure – slippage	16	Paragraph 3 – financial or business affairs

4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in any matter under discussion at the meeting.

5 ARSON REDUCTION STRATEGY AND POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations which presented the updated Arson Reduction Strategy and Policy documents.

RESOLVED

That the updated Arson Reduction Strategy and Policy documents be noted.

6 BRAKE ROAD SAFETY CHARITY – PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations submitted a report which advised of the partnership progress made between the Brigade, the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) and Brake, the road safety charity, with a view to further reducing killed and seriously injured casualties on the roads in West Yorkshire.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7 HIGH RISK TEAM – UPDATE AND PRIORITIES

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations which provided an update on the development of the High Risk Team and its short term priorities.

Members were advised that the Authority had had great success in achieving a reduction in the number of fire fatalities utilising the current High Risk strategy and it was anticipated that increased resources (achieved through the approved restructuring of the Fire Safety directorate) would further improve on the success.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8 HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECK – GRANT SCHEME

The Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations submitted a report which highlighted the findings of the Home Fire Risk Check Grant scheme as funded by central government.

It was reported that the Home Fire Risk Check grant had enabled the completion of 270,548 Home Fire Safety checks in West Yorkshire and had contributed towards the reduction in the number of fire deaths and accidental dwelling fires in the county between 2004 / 05 – 2007 / 08.

Members were advised that the grant monies had been used for the purchase of smoke alarms and other fire safety equipment. The cost of Home Fire Safety Checks and installation costs had been met by the Authority.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

9 INDEPENDENT LIVING PROJECT – LEEDS CITY COUNCIL

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations which provided information on the proposed Independent Living project by Leeds City Council which aimed to transform the delivery of residential services to people with a learning disability or mental health needs.

RESOLVED

That a letter of support and congratulations be sent to Leeds City Council for their contribution to “Making West Yorkshire Safer”.

10 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY – CONSULTATION

The Director of Operations submitted a report which informed Members of the response to the consultation on the revised Emergency Response and Recovery non-statutory guidance which would be considered in conjunction with the Civil Contingencies Act.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11 EMERGENCY FLOOD FRAMEWORK – CONSULTATION

Members considered a report of the Director of Operations which advised of progress with the Government's response to the Pitt Review following the major flooding in 2007.

It was reported that it was very unlikely that any agency would be given the statutory duty of flood response and, therefore, any specialist equipment and training would have to be funded locally. West Yorkshire Fire Service had invested in its flood response capability and had the ability to respond to undertake rescues from canals, rivers and reservoirs but had no capability to undertake rescues and assist evacuation using boats where wide area flooding had occurred – this would be undertaken on a joint basis with other agencies.

Members were very concerned at the time Government had taken to reach this position and the fact that no funding would be made available from Government and sought assurance that West Yorkshire was doing everything possible to ensure an adequate response to localised flooding incidents.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That a report be submitted to a future meeting with detailed specifications for equipment and training and associated costs for wide are flood rescue.

12 BACKWARD LOOKING EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2008 – 9

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which advised of the efficiency gains made in 2008 / 2009 and those planned for the current year.

It was reported that the Authority had generated £3.8m in cashable efficiency savings in 2008 – 9 bringing the total to date to £17.36 million.

Members were advised that the savings anticipated in the current year would be a further £2.8m not including an additional £200,000 identified from within the Fire Safety budget.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That a report be submitted to a future meeting comparing this Authority's cashable efficiency savings over a three-year period with other Fire and Rescue Authorities.

13 COOKRIDGE FIRE STATION – TRANSFER OF LAND

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought approval for the dedication to Leeds City Council of a portion of Fire Authority land at Cookridge Fire Station for highways works.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the portion of land at Cookridge Fire Station, as detailed in the report now submitted, be dedicated to Leeds City Council; and
- (ii) That it be noted that the land at (i) above was strategic to the overall proposed highways improvement scheme.

14 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which presented the quarterly overview of the financial position of the Authority.

It was reported that the forecast for a revenue underspend of £0.5m was due to the following;

- Wholetime firefighters – forecast underspend of £294,000
- Retained firefighters – forecast underspend of £188,000
- Brigade Control staff – forecast underspend of £85,000
- Support staff – forecast underspend of £79,000
- Supplies and services – forecast increase in spending of £50,000, and
- Capital Financing charges – forecast increase of £68,000

Details of expenditure on capital schemes were detailed in an annex to the report now submitted and Members were further advised of issues relating to Treasury Management. The Chief Finance Officer responded in detail to queries raised by Members in respect of the information contained within the financial review report.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted;
- (ii) That the revised revenue budget be approved; and
- (iii) That the revised capital plan be approved.

15 REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP (RIEP) BID – TECHNICAL SERVICES

The Director of Operations and Director of Corporate Resources submitted a joint report which sought approval for the submission of a funding request for £80,000 via Yorkshire and Humberside Fire and Rescue Authorities' Regional Management Board to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) to facilitate a regional Fire Authority shared Technical Services feasibility study.

Members were advised that the feasibility study (should RIEP funding be successful) would focus on the possibility of shared regional fleet management, maintenance and procurement services, premises and ICT in particular.

RESOLVED

That support be given to the funding request of £80,000 to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership to facilitate a regional Fire Authorities' shared Technical Services feasibility study; and

E16 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE - SLIPPAGE

(This item was considered as exempt information under Schedule 12 A (3) of the Local Government Act 1972 – business or financial affairs)

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which identified those capital projects which had incurred some slippage (total £2.8m) and which also sought approval for new strategic refurbishment projects as detailed in the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the 2009 / 2010 Capital Plan be revised to include those schemes which have slipped from 2008 / 2009;
- (ii) That approval be given to the proposed capital expenditure on those property management projects detailed in the report now submitted; and
- (iii) That the requirement to obtain building control or planning authority permission as necessary for the schemes be noted.

Chair