

# **WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD AT FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW, ON 3 FEBRUARY 2012**

Present: Councillors T Austin (in the chair), V Binney, R Brown, J Cole, R Grahame (as substitute for Councillor J Dodds) and J Illingworth

In attendance:       Graham Kettles                   -       Audit Commission  
                          Simon Straker                       -       Internal Audit

Apologies:   Councillor J Dodds

### **10           MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2011 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **11    URGENT ITEMS**

None.

### **12    EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC – SECTION 100A, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

### **13    DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest in any matter under discussion at the meeting.

### **14    EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which introduced the Annual Audit Letter 2010 / 11.

The Audit Letter summarised the findings of the 2010 / 11 Audit in relation to the financial statements of the Authority and the Authority's arrangements to deliver value for money. Detail of the Audit fee was also included in the report now submitted.

Members were advised that the Authority had received an unqualified audit opinion and had proper arrangements in place to secure value for money. Key issues drawn to the attention of Members which may present future challenges for the Authority were identified as follows;

- Economic downturn and pressure on the public sector
- Cutting costs whilst maintaining and improving key services

## **RESOLVED**

That the report and content of the Annual Audit Letter 2010 / 11 be noted.

## **15 EXTERNAL AUDIT – AUDIT OPINION PLAN 2011 / 12**

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance Officer which presented the Annual Audit Opinion Plan for 2011 / 12.

The report set out the audit work that would be carried out on the 2011 / 12 financial statements together with detail of the audit fee which represented an 8% reduction from that charged in the previous year. One of the significant risks identified as relevant to the audit was the increase in the capital programme arising from the proposals within the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and particularly the rationalisation of Fire Stations.

## **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

## **16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which informed Members where key targets were not being achieved or where West Yorkshire had the poorest performance in any given area when compared with all seven metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Members were advised that the two areas below target related to injuries from accidental dwelling fires and the number of children killed or seriously injured in Road Traffic Collisions. It was reported that the accidental dwelling fire injury figures represented the second best performance of the Metropolitan Fire Authorities and they may be the result of West Yorkshire setting particularly ambitious targets in this area. Road Traffic Collisions was not a primary responsibility of the Brigade which had taken the role of educator in this respect and therefore had little direct impact on the accident statistics.

## **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

## **17 COMPLAINTS**

Members considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which set out detail of operational and attitude complaints received between 1 April 2011 to 31 December 2011.

It was reported that the number of complaints had increased over the previous year's figures with the maximum increase being in matters related to operational activity. Members were advised that, of these 11 complaints, three were upheld, six were not upheld and two were withdrawn.

Complaints about staff attitude had also increased to 12 over the same period – five of these were upheld, four were not upheld, one was attributed to a third party and two were withdrawn.

### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

## **18 INTERNAL AUDIT QUARTERLY REVIEW**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which provided a summary and reported findings of the audit activity for the period from October to end December 2011.

Members were advised that three audits had been completed, all of which provided substantial assurance.

### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

Chair