

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY 16 OCTOBER 2009 AT 10.30 A.M. IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW

AGENDA

1. Minutes of meeting held on 17 July 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. Quarterly Financial Review (p 9)
6. Unwanted Fire Signals (p 30)
7. Safer Cigarettes (p 38)
8. IRMP Review of Specialist Appliances (p 41)

Items for decision

9. Emergency Flood Framework (p 63)
10. Attendance at independent Standards Committee Members' Conference (p 88)
11. Total Place – update (p 90)

- 12. National Procurement Strategy (p 94)
- E13. Virement - Occupational Health Unit pod upgrade (p 100)
- E14. Command Support Unit (p 102)
- E15. Counter Terrorist Strategy (CONTEST) (p 105)
- E16. Sale of former Nelson Street Fire Station (p 111)
- E17. Fire hydrants – repair and maintenance (p 114)

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2009

AT FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW

Present: Councillors P Harrand (In the Chair), M Akhtar, A Castle, J Dodds, D Ginley, T Hardwick (as substitute for Councillor M Khan), D Hollingsworth (as substitute for Councillor D Gray), M Jamil, M Khan, G Kirkland and B Smith

Apologies: Councillors S Armitage, D Gray, M Khan and A Wallis

17 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 17 July 2009 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

18 URGENT ITEMS

None.

19 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 items 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 these items, 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
E13	Virement – Occupational Health Unit pod upgrade	29	Paragraph 3 – financial or business affairs

E14	Command Support Unit	30	Paragraph 3 – financial or business affairs
E15	Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST)	31	Paragraph 7 – crime prevention, investigation or prosecution
E16	Sale of former Nelson Street Fire Station	32	Paragraph 3 – financial or business affairs
E17	Fire hydrants – repair and maintenance	33	Paragraph 3 – financial or business affairs

20 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

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

21 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

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

It was reported that the forecast revenue underspend of £1 million was due to the following key issues;

- Provision for pay and price increases
- Firefighters salaries (latest figures reported to the meeting of a variance of - £195,000)
- Support staff salaries (latest figures reported to the meeting of a variance of -£32,000)

Members were advised that the current forecast for the year end would be balances in excess of more than £7m.

With regard to the capital plan, it was reported that £2.8m had been spent and, there was also a projected overspend in capital financing charges due to increased expenditure on capital and lower interest on investments. There had been no long term borrowing to date though some variable term loans had been taken out or were anticipated due to the grant system and the award of monies in the first part of the financial year.

£2.7m had been invested but not in the DMO, as previously discussed, due to the availability of better rates elsewhere. These investments had been made in accordance with the Treasury Management policy.

In terms of debt collection, it was reported that £70,000 remained outstanding beyond the 60 day terms – the majority of these were lift rescues and were in dispute by the debtors.

RESOLVED

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

22 UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS

The Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations submitted a report which provided an update on the new policy for dealing with unwanted fire signals adopted in January 2009.

It was reported that there continued to be a downward trend in the unwanted fire signals within commercial premises (-27% compared with same period last year) due to the introduction of the risk assessed filtering system which enabled the responsible person to arrange for a check of the premises prior to calling the Fire Service.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

23 SAFER CIGARETTES

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations which provided an update on the campaign for safer cigarettes.

It was anticipated that the European standard would be introduced by mid 2010 and it was anticipated that its introduction would result in a 75% reduction in fire deaths – this would equate to 16 lives saved in West Yorkshire over a 5-year period.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

24 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) REVIEW OF SPECIALIST APPLIANCES

The Director of Operations submitted a report which advised of the response to consultations to date from the IRMP review of specialist appliances and specialist

rescue resources.

The review had evaluated the current contribution made by each specialist resource toward the operational capability in West Yorkshire and had identified some inefficiencies. The review concluded that there was scope to change and had made five broad proposals;

- Extension of USAR capability
- Rationalisation of the number of demountable units
- Rationalisation of the existing prime mover fleet
- Redeployment of demountable units to alternative locations, and
- Improvement in specialist skills levels

It was reported that the consultation exercise had proved very useful so far and subtle changes would be made to the IRMP as a result. Confirmation was still awaited from some of the West Yorkshire District councils with regard to the status of their response. Members were advised of the response from Kirklees Council which had been updated since the publication of the report with regard to potential concerns about the impact of the proposals on fire cover in Dewsbury.

The final outcome of the exercise would be considered at the full meeting of the Authority to be held on 18 December 2009.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

25 EMERGENCY FLOOD FRAMEWORK

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Operations which advised of the proposals to enhance flood response capability in the county.

Members were advised of alternative options which included no change to the existing resources. Option 2 however did propose the purchase and use of a number of different types of boats in specific locations and scenarios which was considered more appropriate in the light of Environment Agency flood projections.

It was reported that the capital cost of implementing Option 2 would be £156,000 and would be the subject of a bid to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. If unsuccessful, the cost would be funded from the 2010 / 2011 capital plan. Revenue costs associated with maintenance and training would be met from savings funded from the IRMP review of specialist appliances.

RESOLVED

- (i) That support be given to the implementation of Option 2 (purchase of specialist boats) with regard to the enhancement of flood response capability; and
- (ii) That support be given to the submission of a bid to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) in respect of (i) above.

26 ATTENDANCE AT INDEPENDENT STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEMBERS' CONFERENCE AND LGA ANNUAL FINANCE CONFERENCE

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which sought approval for attendance at a Standards Committee independent Member training event on 11 November 2009 and the LGA Annual Finance Conference on 3 December 2009.

The cost of attendance would be met from within existing budgetary resources.

RESOLVED

- (i) That approval be given to the attendance of Mr Ahmed, independent member of the Standards Committee, at a bespoke training event on 11 November 2009 at Islington Town Hall; and
- (ii) That approval be given to the attendance of the chair of Finance and Resources committee at the Local Government Association Annual Finance Conference at Local Government House on 3 December 2009.

27 TOTAL PLACE - UPDATE

Members considered a report of the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations which advised of the progress and involvement with the Total Place pilot scheme in West Yorkshire.

It was reported that the project had resulted from a Government initiative which sought to reduce costs through collaborative working and local leadership across the county's public bodies. A number of pilots were being introduced nationally and were due to report in March 2010.

The West Yorkshire project would focus on the following community groups (all of which were target groups for the Fire Service);

- Children leaving a care environment
- Older people leaving a care environment, and
- Offenders leaving prison

The cost of participation would be met from within existing resources.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted;
- (ii) That approval be given to the appointment of the Bradford District Manager as the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service representative on the Total Place project steering group, supported by the Director of Fire Safety and Community Relations and the Chief Finance Officer; and
- (iii) That reports on the progress of the project be submitted to future meetings of this Committee.

28 NATIONAL PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which updated Members on the National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service in England 2009 – 12.

Members were advised of the progress that had been made in respect of Communities and Local Government (CLG) expectations with regard to collaborative procurement.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted; and
- (ii) That approval be given to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review the National Procurement Strategy via the Regional Procurement Working Group.

29 VIREMENT – OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH UNIT POD UPGRADE

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

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which sought approval for the virement of capital from the accident database replacement scheme to the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) mobile pod upgrade scheme for use in the 3-year medical screening programme for all operational firefighters commencing January 2010.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the virement as detailed in the report now submitted from the underspend of the accident database replacement scheme to the Occupational Health Unit (OHU) pod upgrade scheme.

30 COMMAND SUPPORT UNIT

(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 Operations which sought approval for capital expenditure on the Command Support Unit information and communication technology (ICT) provision.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the capital expenditure as detailed in the report now submitted on the Command Support Unit information and communication technology (ICT) provision in accordance with the capital plan 2009 / 10.

31 COUNTER TERRORIST STRATEGY (CONTEST)

(This item was considered as exempt information under Schedule 12 A (7) of the Local Government Act 1972 – crime prevention, investigation or prosecution)

The Director of Operations submitted a report which informed Members of the implications for the revised counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) and the contribution made by West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

32 SALE OF FORMER NELSON STREET FIRE STATION

(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 advised Members that, due to the ongoing decline in the property market conditions and lack of interest by owners of neighbouring sites for a joint development plan, it was proposed that the Nelson Street site be retained to allow for an assessment of alternative uses.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

33 FIRE HYDRANTS – REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

(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 Operations submitted a report which advised of the price increases for the repair and maintenance of fire hydrants and associated works by Yorkshire Water Ltd.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the increase in prices imposed by Yorkshire Water Ltd be noted; and
- (ii) That approval be given to the increase in expenditure in the 2009 / 10 Capital Programme on the repair and maintenance of fire hydrants and the works associated with new hydrant schemes

Chair