

WEST YORKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT FIRE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, BIRKENSHAW

Present: Councillors J Hughes (in the Chair), T Austin (as substitute for Councillor Smith), R Grahame, D Hall, P Harrand, D Hopkins, M Khan, A McKenna, D Ridgway, C Townsley (as substitute for Councillor C Bampton-Smith) and A Wallis

Apologies: Councillors C Bampton-Smith and B Smith

9 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death of Former Chair – Lawrence Conlon

It was with regret that the Chair advised Members of the recent death of a former Fire Authority Member, Lawrence Conlon, from Kirklees. Former Councillor Conlon had been chair of the Authority for 14 years prior to his departure from the Authority in June 2000. Members stood in silent tribute.

10 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 8 July 2011 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

11 URGENT ITEM – Attendance at Remembrance Day Ceremony, Ypres

The Chair had agreed to the inclusion of the item on the agenda on the grounds of urgency as a decision had to be taken at the earliest opportunity to facilitate practical arrangements. The item would be considered at agenda item 9 (Min no. 18 refers)

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

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

14 LOCAL GOVERNMENT YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER – FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which set out the Local Government Yorkshire and Humber future development plans which would result in a smaller and more cost effective organisation.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

15 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Finance officer which presented the latest financial forecast based on expenditure and income in the first quarter of the current financial year.

It was reported that an increase in underspend to £900,000 had been forecast on the revenue budget due, in the main, to capital financing charges. The current policy of short term loans would not be sustainable beyond 2014 and contribution to future savings in the medium term would be made through underspending on support staff budgets due to the freeze on external recruitment and lack of certainty about the retirement profile. Members were advised that there would be a £0.25m contribution to savings.

In respect of the capital budget, £2.2m had been paid to date which was a great improvement on previous years.

In terms of treasury management, the Chief Finance Officer advised that a £20m grant had been received in July 2011 to cover the cost of pensions. Members were further reminded of the agreed policy regarding Treasury Management and investments in particular.

Members commented in particular on the capital budget and specifically the expenditure related to IT equipment and licences.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the report be noted;
- (ii) That the revised revenue budget be approved;
- (iii) That approval be given to the revised capital plan; and
- (iv) That a Member finance awareness session be arranged to cover specifically aspects related to the capital budget.

16 CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE – LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which sought approval for the attendance of one Member at the Leadership Academy in autumn / winter 2011.

Members discussed the value and shared benefits of such training and were advised that the associated costs would be £1000 plus travel and subsistence allowances.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the attendance of one Member, to be nominated by the Chair of the Authority, at the Leadership Academy in autumn / winter 2011.

17 CONSULTATION ON FIREFIGHTERS PENSION SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Human Resources which sought approval for the suggested consultation response to the proposed amendments to the Firefighters Pension Scheme.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the proposed response detailed in the report now submitted.

18 ATTENDANCE AT REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY, YPRES

Members considered a report which sought approval for the attendance of the Chair of the Authority and Brigade Colour Party at the Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ypres on 10 – 12 November 2011.

It was reported that the estimated cost of the visit, including all travel expenses, accommodation and subsistence, would be £2,000 which would be met from within the existing revenue budget provision.

The Brigade band would also be attending but would do so on a self-funding basis.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the attendance of the Chair of the Authority and the Brigade Colour Party at the Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ypres, Belgium in November 2011.