



# Minutes

## Executive Committee

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Date: 26 November 2014

Time: 9.30 a.m.

Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Birkenshaw

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Present: Councillor J Hughes (in the chair), T Austin (for agenda item nos. 6 – E7 only, Min nos. 23 – 24 refer), J Cummins, P Harrand, B Smith (as substitute for Councillor J Dodds) and C Townsley

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillor J Dodds

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### **18 Minutes of the last meeting**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 17 October 2014 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### **19 Urgent items**

None.

### **20 Admission of the public**

#### **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 description specified.

AGENDA ITEM NO	TITLE OF REPORT	MINUTE NUMBER	Description of exempt information by reference to the paragraph number in scheme 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
E7	Public Information Team - structure	24	Paragraph 1 – relating to an individual

## 21 Declarations of interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest were made in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

## 22 Scrutiny function – identification of areas for review

Members received a report of the Chief Legal and Governance Officer which invited consideration of issues to be put forward for scrutiny by a task and finish group.

The recently revised Constitution allowed for a number of provisions to facilitate effective scrutiny and it was proposed that one of the issues to consider may be an area, as recommended by the Human Resources Committee on 14 November 2014, relating to long term, mental health, sickness absences. A copy of a draft proposed Terms of Reference for such a review was circulated at the meeting.

### RESOLVED

- a) That long term mental health sickness absence be subject of a scrutiny review;
- b) That a Task and Finish group be established in respect of a) above to comprise two Labour Members, one Conservative and one Liberal Democrat Member;
- c) That Councillor Smith be appointed Chair of the Task and Finish Group and the remaining Member nominations be made by the Group leaders as appropriate;
- d) That officers be invited to attend the Task and Finish group in an advisory capacity as appropriate; and
- e) That the scrutiny review be reported back to the Executive Committee three months after its commencement.

## 23 Firefighter fitness : standards and assessment – consultation on amendment to the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework

The Director of Service Support submitted a report which invited consideration of the draft response to the Firefighter Fitness Standards and Assessment – Consultation relating to a proposed amendment to the current national Fire and Rescue Framework document.

Members were reminded that the National Framework set out the Government’s objectives and priorities for fire and rescue authorities in England but did not prescribe operational matters.

It was reported that a set of fitness principles for inclusion in the Framework had been consulted on the previous year. Since that time discussions had taken place with key stakeholders regarding the measurement of fitness and capability in the fire service including the following issues;

- firefighters' ability to maintain a reasonable and safe standard
- appropriate methods of fitness measurement and monitoring, and
- any possible legislative change

The consultation document issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government covered two alternative revisions to the National Framework and Members were invited to consider the proposed response as detailed in the report now under consideration.

## **RESOLVED**

That, subject to a redrafting of the response to Proposal 2 to reflect Members' concerns about the cost impact on the Authority and the subjective nature of "authority initiated retirement", the response to the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England on Firefighter Standards and Assessment consultation be approved as detailed in Annex A to the report now submitted.

## **24 Public Information Team Structure**

(This item was considered as exempt information under Schedule 12A (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 – relating to an individual)

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Legal and Governance Officer which sought approval for a change of structure for the Public Information Team which included the deletion of a currently vacant part-time Administrative Officer post and the creation of a part-time Public Information Officer post for the delivery of a more effective proactive and reactive internal and external communications service.

It was reported that the cost of the restructure would be £5,000 in a full financial year.

## **RESOLVED**

That Members approve the deletion of a part-time Administrative Officer post (18.5 hours) and the creation of a part-time Public Information Officer post (16 hours) within the Public Information Team.

Chair