



Minutes

Finance & Resources Committee

Date: 14 October 2022

Time: 10:30

Venue: Conference Room, FSHQ

Present: Cllr Steve Tulley (in the chair), Cllrs Riaz Ahmed, Gohar Almas, Peter Harrand, Zara Hussain, Nusrat Mohammed, Darren O'Donovan, Mike Pollard, Karen Renshaw (as sub for Cllr Illingworth), Adam Zaman

In Attendance: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Apologies: Cllr John Illingworth and Cllr Caroline Anderson

11 Minutes of meeting held on 15 July 2022

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2022 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

12 Matters Arising

None

13 Urgent items

None

14 Admission of the public

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

15 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter under consideration at the meeting.

16 Financial Management Code Compliance Update

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer presented a report to update members on the Authority's compliance with the Financial Management Code. It was noted that in the previous report presented to the Finance and Resources Committee in October 2021 there were three areas identified for improvement which were given amber RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings. This report indicates that there have been improvements in two of these areas: Financial Resilience Assessment and Value for Money Appraisal Methodology, and one area that remains amber: Stakeholder Consultation.

It was noted that the Financial Resilience index caters to Local Authorities and there is currently no index for Fire and Rescue Authorities. Further development of Stakeholder Consultation is planned with the Corporate Communications Department.

The report concluded that the other 14 areas assessed maintain their green rating and the full results of the self-assessment were summarised in an annex to the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

17 Information Governance Annual Report

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report to provide an annual update on the implementation of Information Governance and Security arrangements, highlighting compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

It was noted that there had been significant work and achievements gained including attainments against the information governance and security frameworks as follows:-

- Data Security and Protection toolkit - 98%
- Information Security Standard (ISO27001) - 99%
- HMG Security Policy Framework - 98%
- ICO Accountability Framework - 97%

Members were advised that these percentages were determined using standard criteria for self-assessment set by the Information Governance Group, which were verified by the Information Governance Strategic Group.

The Customer Service Excellence assessment in March 2022 confirmed that WYFRS had maintained the Compliance Plus standard.

In response to a question from members regarding CCTV access requests, it was confirmed that these mainly come from the police, insurance companies and from members of the public.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

18 Quarterly Financial Review

The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer presented a report providing an overview of the financial performance of the Authority in the first 5.5 months of the current financial year.

The report detailed the transfers in and out of the general contingency budget due to the budget review which has been undertaken since the last report and also identified that the Authority is currently forecast to underspend its revenue budget in 2022/23 by £90k, which will be offset by an overspend on utilities which are expected to rise. It was noted the green book employee underspend is due to the vacancies which are currently advertised.

A summary of the financial impact of Covid19 confirmed that it is expected that the grant received of £2.736m will cover all costs incurred in managing the pandemic, based on existing demands.

In addition, an update on the mini budget and its financial implications were included in the report.

Members requested further information on the Fire Link Grant (FLG) which pays for the Emergency Services Network (ESN) and has been received annually since 2009. The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer confirmed that she had been advised by the Home Office in July 2022 that it would be reduced by 20% per year over the next 5 years. It was noted that the ESN is being replaced by new technology but that it was not yet available.

RESOLVED

- a. That the report be noted.
- b. That members approve the revised revenue budget
- c. That members approve the revised capital plan

19 Reserves Strategy 2022/23 to 2026/27

Members considered a report of The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer which sought endorsement of the Reserves Strategy for 2022/23 – 2026/27 and requested approval to create a new Industrial Action Earmarked Reserve to fund any costs incurred during a period of industrial action.

Members were assured that the pension reserve could be used to fund the new Industrial Action Reserve and that it is expected that the injury to feelings pension payouts will be covered by the Home Office. The Chief Finance and Procurement Officer was unable to confirm how long the reserve would last but it was acknowledged that the Authority has a duty to put plans in place to meet their responsibility to keep West Yorkshire safe.

Further clarity was provided to members regarding the pay offer made by FBU and the contingency plans that are being made, including basic level training for new recruits and new procedures for triaging calls in control. It was emphasised that communication, engagement and prevention are key for any strike period and that local and national campaigns will be launched accordingly.

RESOLVED

- a. That the report be noted.

- b. That members approve the Reserves Strategy
- c. That members approve the creation of the Industrial Action Earmarked Reserve

20 Review of Standing List of Member Attended Conferences

The Director of Corporate Services presented a report requesting members to consider the standing approved list of member attended conferences, which is reviewed every 3 years.

The list, last approved in October 2019, comprised the following conferences.

- LGA Fire Conference (on a 1:1:1 basis)
- LGA Annual Conference (on a 1:1:1 basis)
- LGA Fire Leadership Academy (funded by the Local Government Association)

RESOLVED

- a. That the standing list of conferences be approved as follows;
 - LGA Fire Conference
 - LGA Annual Conference
 - LGA Fire Leadership Academy
 - AFSA Annual Winter Conference
- b. That relevant allowances be payable to attending Members as appropriate; and
- c. That the standing list of conferences be reviewed in September 2025.

21 Keighley Station Rebuild

Members were presented with a report by the Director of Service Support seeking approval for the capital expenditure to demolish the existing Keighley fire station and construct a new state of the art station in its place. This requirement has been identified in the CRMP as the existing station has exceeded its expected lifespan. Members were advised that the new site has been designed, planning approval has been granted, the proposed works have been compliantly tendered, and a preferred bidder has been identified to undertake the scheme.

Members were given a breakdown of the 40% increase in the budget since the capital plan was approved and also given a full breakdown of the costs as compared to the Wakefield Fire Station rebuild.

It was noted that the purchase of the adjacent land and garages is included in the revised budget.

Members welcomed the rebuild and were pleased to see that equality and diversity and the new hybrid working arrangements had been incorporated into the design.

RESOLVED

That members approve the rebuild cost of £6.651m

Chair