

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

3.30 pm Monday 14 September 2009

Herefordshire Council, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford, HR1 1SH



Present: **Herefordshire:**
Brigadier P Jones CBE (Chair),
Mrs P A Andrews, Mr J H R Goodwin, Mr D C Taylor, Mr P J Watts.

Worcestershire:
Mr T J Bean, Mr J Champion, Mr S J Clee (Vice Chair), Mr A Ditta,
Mrs M L Drinkwater, Mrs L Duffy, Mrs L Eyre, Mr A I Hardman,
Mrs L Hodgson, Mrs G Hopkins, Mrs F Oborski, Mrs J Potter,
Mr D W Prodger MBE, Mr T Spencer, Mr J Thomas,
Mr G C Yarranton.

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr D Greenow, Mr C Smith, Mr R Udall, Mr K Taylor.

17. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Mr T Spencer declared a personal interest in the Young Firefighters' Association and Mr P Watts advised the Authority that if the Firefighters' Pension Scheme was discussed in such detail that it affected his personal position, he would declare a personal and prejudicial interest. (That proving not to be the case, there was no need for Mr Watts to leave the room during the Meeting.)

18. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Cllr John Champion to his first Meeting of the Authority.

The Chairman introduced Mr Ian Edwards, the Authority's Head of Asset Management, to the Meeting.

The Chairman informed Members of the Emergency Services Show which would take place on Tuesday 24th and Wednesday 25th November, at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry, at which the Chief Fire Officer would present the Combined Air Rescue Pump.

On a point of information, raised at the last Meeting of the Authority, the Chairman reported that the Membership of the Standards Committee was not subject to the requirements for political balance.

The Chairman informed Members of the following appointments:

Member Champions & Working Groups

IRMP Steering Group (comprises Group Leaders and Committee Chairs and PMM)	Cllrs: Brig P Jones CBE T Bean D Taylor S Clee R Udall M Drinkwater A Hardman D Prodger MBE
Equality & Diversity Steering Group	Cllr F Oborski Cllr R Udall
Asset Management Champion	Cllr D Prodger MBE
Equality & Diversity Champion	Cllr R Udall
Risk Champion	Cllr P Watts
Young Firefighters Association Executive Committee Chair	Cllr L Hodgson

Fire Authority Representatives on Outside Bodies

Local Government Association (LGA)	Cllr Brig P Jones CBE Cllr T Bean Cllr D Taylor
LGA Fire Services Forum	Cllr Brig P Jones CBE
West Midlands Regional Management Board	Cllr Brig P Jones CBE Cllr T Bean Cllr D Taylor
Director of Regional Control Centre Company	Cllr Brig P Jones CBE
Herefordshire Partnership Board	Cllr Brig P Jones CBE

19. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolved that: the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None

21. SERVICE REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer reported on key developments and activities, together with performance information for the period 1 April 2009 to 30 June 2009.

In response to a query from Cllr Watts regarding personnel aggravating previous injuries, the CFO replied that injured personnel absent from work required clearance from their own GP and were then cleared by Occupational Health for the Service (PTH), before being permitted to return.

The CFO pointed out that the Equipment update was an important development for the Service, and that some of the new equipment would be displayed to Members at the next Authority Meeting.

Resolved that the report be noted.

22. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Chairman of the Audit Committee, Mr. Derek Prodger MBE, informed the Members of the proceedings of the Audit Committee Meeting on 26 June 2009. He reported that the Committee considered and approved the Statement of Accounts 2008/09 and the Authority's Annual Governance Statement, which had been published on 30 June.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

23. BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. A Hardman, Chairman of the Budget Committee, informed the Authority of the proceedings and recommendations of the Budget Committee Meeting held on 30 July 2009 and thanked all 11 Members of the Committee for their attendance at the Meeting. The Committee noted the report on Revenue and Capital budgets for the first quarter of 2009/10 and considered the review of the Authority's Asset Management Plan together with proposals for the refurbishment of Kidderminster Fire Station.

The Committee proposed that Members should be invited to inform the Authority of Stations in which they had a particular interest, and that this Register could also be used to notify Members of events in those particular areas; forms for that purpose were distributed for completion at the Meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Authority approves the release of £40,000 from the IRMP Strategy to fund pre-design works on the IRMP building schemes;***
- ii) The Authority approves the Asset Management Plan as recommended by the Committee;***
- iii) The Authority approves the proposed refurbishment works at Kidderminster Fire Station be brought within the scope of the IRMP capital programme, and***
- iv) The report be noted.***

24. FIRE CONTROL RESILIENCE UPDATE

The Chief Fire Officer told the Meeting that the Regional Fire Control Project had been further delayed, and that the earliest cut-over date was now projected as March 2012. He outlined the substantial risks that the delay represented for the Authority in relation to current control arrangements and recommended options to address these risks.

RESOLVED that the report be noted, and

That options are identified to eliminate, remove or mitigate the highlighted risks and to deliver a solution within the existing capital expenditure programme having particular mind towards:

- (i) Opportunities for strategic collaboration with neighbouring authorities.***
- (ii) Alternative possible locations.***
- (iii) Processes to enable procurement of a replacement Command and Control system.***

(The Fire and Rescue Authority recognised that issues might arise that sat outside of the cycle of full Authority meetings and would support the Chief Fire Officer through use of its Urgent Decisions Committee if necessary.)

25. RISK IMPLICATIONS OF THE CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN ON THE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

The ACFO Service Delivery presented the report, which gave headline indicators to the potential impacts of the current economic downturn on the Service, and the response to same.

He reported that to date neither the Service nor the Police Authority had any statistical evidence of increased arson or other incidents which would be expected as a result of the downturn.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The Authority notes the contents of the Report, and***
- ii) The IRMP Steering Group be tasked with keeping developments under review and incorporating any findings into future draft Integrated Risk Management Plans.***

26. REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE REGULATORY REFORM ORDER

The ACFO Service Delivery told the Meeting that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 was one of the primary pieces of legislation governing the Authority, and reported on the initial evaluation of its effectiveness.

RESOLVED that the Report be noted.

27. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION FRA EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CHARTER.

The Chairman offered Members the opportunity to support the five point Charter for Equality and Diversity for Fire and Rescue Authority Members produced by the LGA in its role in providing political leadership on the issue of Equality and Diversity.

The Chairman of the Authority recommended that Members sign up to the Charter individually.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date:.....