

Please note that these minutes will remain as a draft until formally confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

10.30 am, Wednesday 17 February, 2010

Headquarters, 2 Kings Court, Charles Hastings Way,
Worcester. WR5 1JR

Present:

Herefordshire:

Mr J H R Goodwin, Mr D Greenow,
Brigadier P Jones CBE (Chair), Mr D C Taylor, Mr P J Watts.

Worcestershire:

Mr T J Bean, Mr J Campion, 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 C T Smith, Mr T Spencer, Mr K Taylor,
Mr J Thomas, Mr R M Udall, Mr G C Yarranton.

47. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. P. Andrews

48. 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.)

49. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman asked that any suggestions regarding the layout of the room be raised with Committee Services prior to the next meeting of the Authority.

50. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51. Appointment of Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive

The Chairman informed the Meeting that following notification from Paul Hayden, Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive of his intention to retire from the Service on 12 May 2010, the Appointments Committee undertook a selection process over two days, 11 and 12 February 2010, to select a candidate to succeed Mr. Hayden. The Chairman told the Meeting that the applications received were of a very high standard and that the Appointments Committee worked very hard on the selection process.

Having fully considered the merits of each candidate, the Appointments Committee recommended the appointment of Mr. Mark Yates with effect from a date to be agreed with him.

RESOLVED that the Fire and Rescue Authority ratify the appointment of Mr. Mark Yates as Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive as recommended by the Appointments Committee, subject to satisfactory medical reports.

Mr. Yates was then invited to observe the proceedings of the rest of the Meeting.

52. Questions from Members of the Public

None.

53. Service Report

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members of recent key developments and activities together with performance information for the period 1 October to 31 December 2009.

The Meeting noted the increased number of incidents attended by the Service over the quarter, largely due to the bad weather.

At the proposal of the Chairman, the Authority unanimously congratulated the Chief Fire Officer, Paul Hayden, who has been awarded the Queen's Fire Service Medal in the New Year's Honours List.

Cllr R. Udall proposed that the Authority request that the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal be presented to serving emergency services personnel in 2012 and this was agreed by the Meeting.

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on a recent incident at Evesham which was under investigation by the police. The Authority was satisfied that the Service had responded as well as possible in difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED that the Report be noted.

54. Budget & Precept and Medium Term Financial Plan

The Treasurer presented the Budget & Precept and Medium Term Financial Plan to the Meeting and he thanked the Authority staff and the Budget Committee for their hard work in preparing the budget over the previous three months.

The recommended 2010/11 core budget requirement was £31.123m, representing an increase of 2.2% over the previous year. The proposed budget required a precept increase of 2.9% to £73.64 Band D equivalent.

The Treasurer assured the Authority that to the best of his knowledge and belief the budget calculations were robust and had full regard to the Authority's budgetary policy and financial requirements.

It was proposed by Cllr. A. Hardman, seconded by Cllr. S. Clee and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Capital Budget and Programme totalling £3,980,000, as set out at Appendix 5 be approved;***
- (ii) the Revenue Budget (£31,123,000), Net Budget Requirement (£31,394,675) and consequential precept of £20,643,848, Band D equivalent £73.64, as set out in Appendix 6 be approved;***
- (iii) the Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix 7 be approved;***
- (iv) the Statement of Prudential Code Indicators set out in Appendix 8 be approved;***
- (v) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy for 2010-11 as set out in Appendix 9 be approved; and***
- (vi) the Budget Committee be designated to have oversight of Treasury Management activity.***

55. Revised Equality Scheme 2010-2013

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer told the meeting that the Authority was obliged by law to conduct a full review of its Equality Scheme and to publish a three year Scheme outlining its response to its duties.

RESOLVED that the draft Equality Scheme 2010-2013 be approved for consultation.

56. EU Funding Opportunity “EU Watersave”

The Chief Fire Officer informed the Authority of an offer of EU funding should Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service administer the UK’s contribution to a pilot project in connection with EU water rescue standards.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the funding offer be accepted, subject to approval by the Chief Fire Officer, the Treasurer and the Clerk;***
- ii) the grant agreement be reviewed by the Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer and Clerk to ensure that the arrangements put in place for delivery of the UK contribution, and the control measures to oversee delivery and protect the Authority’s interests, are robust; and***
- iii) these control measures to include systems to update the Authority on the project’s progress and outcomes.***

57. Audit Committee Report

Cllr. Derek Prodger, Chair of the Audit Committee told the Authority that the Committee Meeting on 21 January considered revised internal audit plans for 2009/10, the External Audit Opinion Plan for 2009/10, the Quarterly Risk Management update and the establishment of a Governance Review Group.

The Audit Committee received the Annual Audit Letter from the Audit Commission which assessed the Authority as “*performing well*” in its arrangements for Managing Finance, Governing the Business and Managing Resources.

The Audit Commission reported that the Authority maintained its track record as a high performing organisation and was among the best services in the country for promoting equality and diversity.

The Committee welcomed the Letter and recommended it for noting by the Authority.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The proceedings of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 21 January be noted; and***
- ii) The Annual Audit Letter 2008/09 be noted.***

The Chairman told the Members that this was the last Authority meeting at which Paul Hayden would be Chief Fire Officer and the Members expressed appreciation of Mr. Hayden’s work on behalf of the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The meeting ended at 11.20 am

Signed:.....

Chairman

Date:.....