

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority
10.30 am Friday 25 June 2010.

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



Present:

Herefordshire:

Brigadier P Jones CBE (Chair), Mrs P A Andrews, Mr J H R Goodwin, Mr P J Watts.

Worcestershire:

Mr S J Clee (Vice Chair), Mr T J Bean, Mrs M Bunker, Mr J Cairns, Mr J Champion, 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 Prodder MBE, Mr T Spencer, Mr K Taylor, Mr J Thomas, Mr R M Udall, Mr G C Yarranton.

Minute's Silence

The Authority observed a minute's silence in memory of Michael Bryan, workshop engineer, who was killed in service following a road traffic collision on Monday 15 March 2010.

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr D Greenow, Mr C Smith and Mr D Taylor.

2. 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.)

3. Election of Chairman

Brigadier Peter Jones, CBE, was proposed for Chairman by Mr S Clee and seconded by Mr P Watts. There were no other nominations and he was declared elected as Chairman.

4. Election of Vice-Chairman

Mr S Clee was proposed for Vice-Chairman by Mr G Yarranton and seconded by Mrs L Hodgson. There were no other nominations and he was declared elected as Vice-Chairman.

5. Chairman's Announcements

Retirements from Service:

The Chairman told the Authority that Mr Mike Redfern, Assistant Chief Fire Officer and Mr Paul Amos, Area Manager were both attending their last Authority Meeting as they were due to retire. The Members thanked them for their service and wished them well in retirement.

Members' Attendance at Authority Events:

The Chairman thanked the Members who attended the passing out parade of Young Firefighters in Droitwich on Saturday 22 May and those who visited the Urban Search and Rescue facility on 22 June.

Members' visit to the Fire Service College on 15 September 2010:

The Chairman reminded Members of this Event, which he said was very worthwhile and encouraged Members to attend.

Cllr Mary Drinkwater:

The Chairman, on behalf of the Authority, congratulated Cllr Drinkwater on her recent election as Chairman of Worcestershire County Council, and thanked her for her service on the Fire Authority.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman; and***
- ii) the minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 21 May 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.***

7. Questions from Members of the Public

None.

8. Allocation of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees and Other Bodies

The Authority considered the allocation of seats on Committees to political groups and reviewed the appointments to other bodies.

Resolved that:

- i) the current allocation of seats on Committees to political groups and the current membership of Committees and other bodies as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be retained until the Authority meeting on 28 September 2010. Any vacancies to be filled by the Clerk in consultation with Group Leaders;***

- ii) ***appointments to the offices of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Authority's Committees be considered at the Authority meeting on 28 September 2010 with the exception of the vacancies left by Cllr Mary Drinkwater, which were filled as follows:***
 - a. ***Mr J Campion appointed to the Best Value, Policy and Performance Committee as Chairman;***
 - b. ***Mrs G Hopkins was appointed to the Urgent Decisions Committee;***
 - c. ***Mr K Taylor was appointed to the Appointments Committee.***
- iii) ***the Clerk be authorised following consultation with Group Leaders to make amendments to the appointments to Committees and other bodies in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders, should the rules governing appointments require such changes to be made prior to 28 September 2010;***
- iv) ***appointments to the Member Champion roles for Asset Management, Equality & Diversity and Risk Management be considered at the Authority meeting on 28 September 2010;***
- v) ***the Authority adhere to its previous view that representation and voting on the Local Government Association be as follows:***
 - (a) the Authority's representatives on the Local Government Association should be the Group Leaders or their nominees;***
 - (b) that the 13 Service votes on the Local Government Association Assembly be allocated between its representatives on a politically proportionate basis; and***
 - (c) the corporate vote on the Local Government Association Assembly be exercised by the Chairman or his nominee.***
- vi) ***the Chairman or his nominee to hold the place and vote available to the Authority on the LGA's Fire Service Forum;***
- vii) ***the Leader of the Conservative Group, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat/Liberal Group and the Leader of the Independent/Labour Group should be the Authority's appointments to the Regional Management Board; and***
- viii) ***the Chairman of the Authority be appointed as a Director of the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Services Regional Control Centre Company.***

9. Service Report

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) informed Members of recent key developments and activities together with performance information for the period 1 January to 31 March 2010.

The following points were noted:

- The Service performance for the quarter was very good, with the exception of the rise in chimney fires, which was largely due to the bad weather during the quarter.
- The number of health and safety incidents remained low although the figures reflected the issues which arose following the introduction of the new breathing apparatus; these issues had been resolved.
- It was decided that it was no longer in the best interests of the Authority to take on the EU WaterSave Project, which had been handed over to Merseyside FRS;
- The Authority congratulated Area Manager, Paul Amos, who was recently awarded a Certificate by the executive of Mountain Rescue England and Wales recognising his efforts to improve relations between Fire and Rescue Services and Mountain Rescue Services.
- Some Members had attended workshops with staff on "Meeting the Challenge" which addressed the financial issues facing the Service. The CFO said that there would continue to be consultation with staff on any proposed changes.
- The Authority congratulated CM Simon Hawkins, who was stationed at Bromsgrove, and was announced as The Firefighter of the Year at The Spirit of Fire Awards at Wembley on 4 June.
- The Authority heard that work on the replacement/upgrading of Pebworth Fire Station commenced on 14 June and was expected to be completed towards the end of the year.
- The Members of the Authority congratulated the CFO on his recent Honour of the Queen's Fire Service Medal.
- As well as the local incidents in the Service Report, the CFO told the Members of 3 recent incidents; a fire at flats in Hereford, a fire at the Virgin Tavern in Worcester and a woodland fire at Tedstone Delamere.

RESOLVED *that the Report be noted.*

10. Financial Results 2009/10

The Treasurer told the Meeting that the Statement of Accounts was due for formal approval by the Audit committee on 30 June and he briefed the Authority on the financial results for the year ended 31 March 2010.

The overall revenue budget for 2009/10 was £30.450.000 which had been under spent by £33,000, less than 1/10 of 1%.

There had been some slippage on the Capital budget, but this could be carried forward and there had been no loss of purchasing power.

RESOLVED *that the Authority:*

- i) notes the financial results for 2009-10;***
- ii) notes that the Audit Committee will consider the annual Statement of Accounts in detail; and***
- iii) notes the Treasury Management position.***

11. Integrated Risk Management Plan - Draft 2011/12 Action Plan for Consultation

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the draft 2011/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan for approval for consultation, which comprised the seven following recommendations:

1. During 2011/12 we will conduct a review of the impact of the recent changes in Technical Fire Safety arrangements to ensure that the anticipated benefits are being fully realised.
2. We will review the allocation of our community safety resources to ensure the best fit of activities to risk. This will maximise our ability to reduce risk in our communities.
3. We will reduce our attendance at Automatic Fire Alarms through a review of our policies and procedures and the implementation of our findings.
4. We will review our fire cover and response arrangements with a focus on:
 - The requirement for a third appliance at Hereford, Worcester and Redditch.
 - The current crewing arrangements at Bromsgrove.
 - The appropriate number of personnel on each watch at wholetime and day crewed stations.
5. We will ensure our Property Strategy is fully aligned to our IRMP proposals including Recommendation No.4 and other aspects of Service Delivery, such as the provision of effective operational training.
6. We will consider our current operational training strategy and provision to identify any potential for improvement in both effectiveness and efficiency, and implement any appropriate changes.
7. We will review our approach to environmental issues to ensure that we are maximising the potential partnership working in this area, reducing our energy usage and identifying further opportunities for cost efficiency.

The CFO told the meeting that approval was being sought to consult on these recommendations over a 12 week period and that the outcome of the consultation would be brought to the Authority when the 2011/12 Action Plan would be presented for approval at the December meeting of the Authority.

RESOLVED that the Authority approve the Draft 2011-12 Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Plan for consultation.

12. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue draft Authority Plan 2010/11

The Chief Fire Officer presented the draft Plan and pointed out that the title had changed from "Service Plan" to "Authority Plan" to emphasise the ownership and responsibility of the Members for the content and the policy drafted in the Plan.

He told Members that this was a key document for the Authority as it stated the values and principles of the Service and set out its future direction and plans.

RESOLVED that the draft Authority Plan 2010/11 be approved and published, as presented.

13. Equality Scheme 2010-2013: Consultation Results and Publication

The Chief Fire Officer told the Meeting that the draft Equality Scheme had been approved for consultation at the February meeting of the Authority and that the 12 week consultation ended on 4 June. The CFO summarised the consultation responses which were reflected, as appropriate, in the Scheme.

It was agreed, following a suggestion by Cllr Bunker, that Mental Health and Limiting Lifetime Illnesses should be incorporated in the Equality Action Plan. These areas had already been identified in the IRMP as key risk groups. The Scheme will be reviewed to ensure that these issues are adequately covered either through the IRMP or through the Scheme.

RESOLVED that the Authority approve 'Delivering Equality for All: The Scheme 2010 – 2013' for formal publication.

14. Review of the Service's Organisational Structure

The Chief Fire Officer sought Authority approval to review the organisational structure of the Service. He told the meeting that the review would focus on improving the managerial structure and preparing to meet the forthcoming financial challenges.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Authority agrees to the Chief Fire Officer carrying out a 12 months' rolling review of the organisational structures of the Service; and***
- ii) the Authority instructs the Chief Fire Officer to present a paper(s) to the Authority containing any major proposed structural changes and once they have been through the appropriate consultation to seek Authority permission to implement.***

15. Regional Fire Control

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on progress and issues regarding the FiReControl Project, including the outcome of the CLG Select Committee Inquiry into the FiReControl Project and Local Government Association evidence, which concluded that urgent action was required if the project was to be viable. The CFO told the meeting that there may be a further announcement at the Fire Conference the following week.

RESOLVED that the Authority note the update on the Regional FiReControl project.

16. Retained Duty System (RDS) Implementation Plan

The CFO provided Authority Members with an overview of the Retained Duty System (RDS) Review and Implementation Plan. He told the meeting that the Review was a significant piece of work and the outcome was the 3 year Implementation Plan, on which progress would be reported annually to the Authority.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Authority notes the extensive research that officers of the Service conducted to produce the Retained Duty System Review.***
- ii) the Authority supports the contents of the Retained Duty System Review three year Implementation Plan; and***
- iii) the CFO reports back to the Authority at the conclusion of each phase (annually) to update Members on the progress against the three year Implementation Plan.***

17. Worcestershire Partnership Terms of Engagement for Statutory Partners

The Chief Fire Officer told the Authority that the Worcestershire Partnership Board had approved a set of terms of engagement for public sector agencies in recognition of the major budget pressures facing public sector organisations over the next 4 to 5 years. These terms of engagement set out a number of commitments to discuss major budget decisions with one another, to consider service redesign across organisational boundaries and to consult businesses, the third sector and other stakeholders where appropriate.

The CFO told Members that the Terms of Engagement represented a major statement of principle by partner agencies to work together to minimise the impact of the major public expenditure pressures facing the county. Alongside this, the Total Place initiative provided a 'whole area' approach to public services aimed at delivering better services at less cost.

RESOLVED that

(i) the Authority gives its formal approval to the terms of engagement for statutory partners, as agreed by the Worcestershire Partnership Board; and

(ii) the Authority notes the progress and next steps for Worcestershire Partnership Total Place initiative.

18. Annual Report from the Standards Committee to the Fire and Rescue Authority

The Annual Report was presented by Mr Richard Gething, Chairman of the Standards Committee. Mr Gething told the Authority that the Committee was pleased to report that no complaints had been made against any Member of the Authority alleging breach of the Code of Conduct during the past 12 months.

He also reported that all of the 11 new Members who joined the Authority in June 2009 had completed their statutory undertakings regarding the Code of Conduct and that all of the Authority Members had updated their Registers of Financial and Other Interests up to 30 June 2009.

It was further noted that no Member had registered receipt of any gifts or hospitality during the past year.

The Chairman thanked the Standards Committee for all the work they had undertaken on behalf of the Authority.

RESOLVED that the Authority notes the Standards Committee's Annual Report.

19. Best Value, Policy and Performance Committee Report

RESOLVED that the Authority notes the proceedings of the Committee Meetings held on 25 March and 3 June 2010.

20. Audit Committee Report

RESOLVED that the Authority notes the proceedings of the Committee Meeting held on 25 May 2010.

21. Urgent Decisions Committee Report

RESOLVED that the Authority notes the proceedings of the Committee Meeting held on 12 May 2010.

The meeting ended at 12.20 pm

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....