



HEREFORD & WORCESTER

Fire and Rescue Authority

Standards Committee

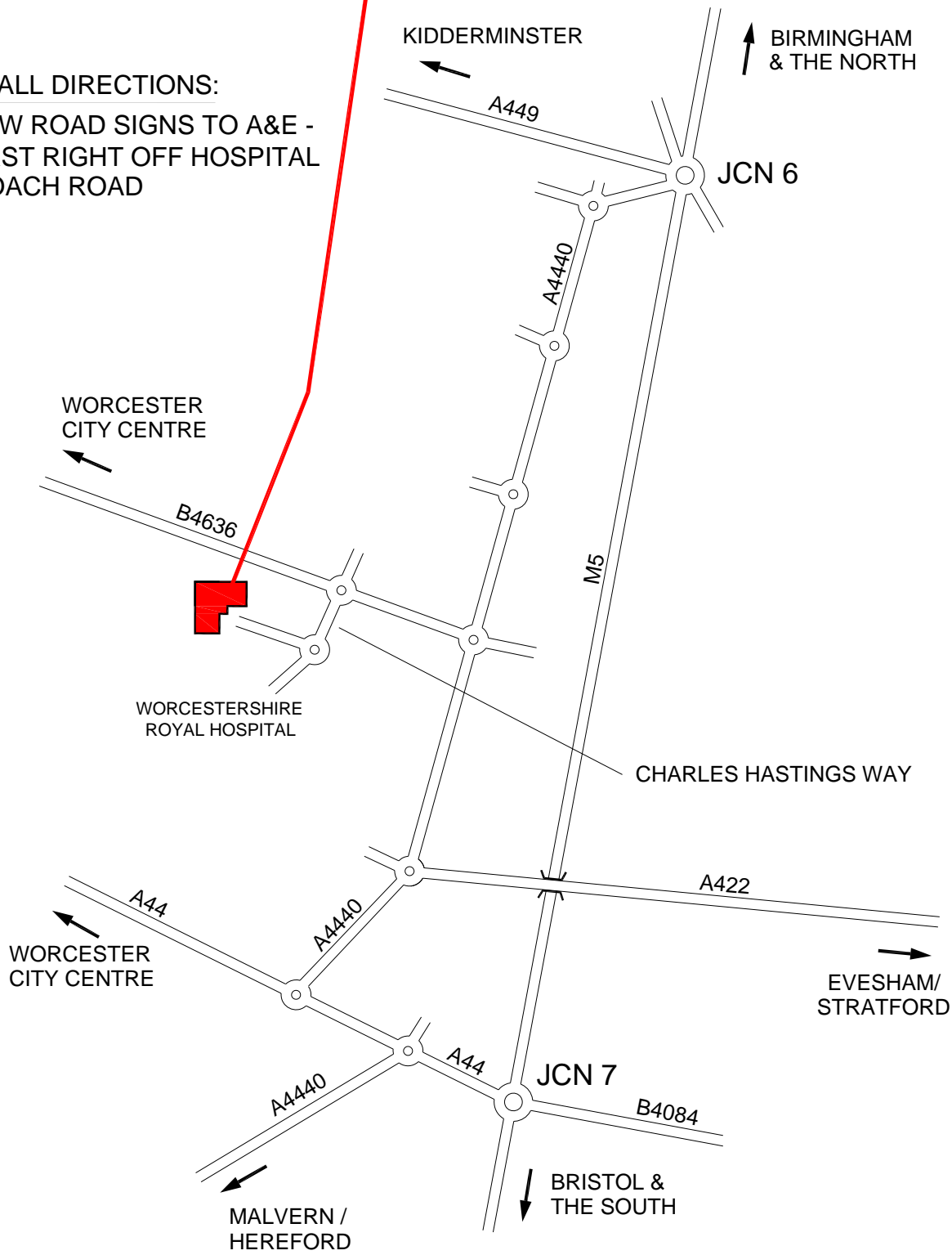
AGENDA

Wednesday 14 September 2011
10.30am

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

HEREFORD & WORCESTER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
HEADQUARTERS
2 KINGS COURT
CHARLES HASTINGS WAY
WORCESTER. WR5 1JR
TEL: 0845 12 24454

FROM ALL DIRECTIONS:
FOLLOW ROAD SIGNS TO A&E -
HQ FIRST RIGHT OFF HOSPITAL
APPROACH ROAD



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ACTION ON DISCOVERING A FIRE

- 1 Break the glass at the nearest **FIRE ALARM POINT**.
(This will alert Control and other Personnel)
- 2 Tackle the fire with the appliances available – **IF SAFE TO DO SO**.
- 3 Proceed to the Assembly Point for a Roll Call –
CAR PARK OF THE OFFICE BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.
- 4 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

ACTION ON HEARING THE ALARM

- 1 Proceed immediately to the Assembly Point
CAR PARK OF THE OPTIMUM BUILDING ADJACENT TO THE CYCLE SHED TO THE LEFT OF THE ENTRANCE BARRIER TO 2 KINGS COURT.
- 2 Close all doors en route. The senior person present will ensure all personnel have left the room.
- 3 Never re-enter the building – **GET OUT STAY OUT**.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS

Security

Upon arrival, visitors are requested to proceed to the barrier and speak to the reception staff via the intercom. There are parking spaces allocated for visitors around the front of the building, clearly marked. Upon entering the building, you will then be welcomed and given any further instructions. In particular it is important that you sign in upon arrival and sign out upon departure. Please speak to a member of the reception staff on arrival who will direct you to the appropriate meeting room.

Wheelchair access

The meeting room is accessible for visitors in wheelchairs.

Alternative formats

For information regarding requests for papers in alternative formats, please contact Committee Services on 0845 12 244554 or by email at committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk

Smoking is not permitted.

First Aid -please ask at reception to contact a trained First Aider.

Toilets – please ask at reception.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION – YOUR RIGHTS

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Your main rights are set out below:

- Automatic right to attend all Authority and Committee meetings unless the business if transacted would disclose “confidential information” or “exempt information”.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Authority and Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, on request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral divisions of members of the Authority with details of membership of Committees.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending the meetings of the Authority and Committees.

If you have any queries regarding this agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of these rights of access to information please contact Committee Services on 0845 12 244554 or by email at committeeservices@hwfire.org.uk.

WELCOME AND GUIDE TO TODAY’S MEETING

These notes are written to assist you to follow the meeting. Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Members** who are democratically elected representatives and they will be advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals. The Fire and Rescue Authority comprises 25 Councillors and appoints committees to undertake various functions on behalf of the Authority. There are 19 Worcestershire County Councillors on the Authority and 6 Herefordshire Council Councillors.

Agenda Papers

Attached is the Agenda which is a summary of the issues to be discussed and the related reports by Officers.

Chairman

The Chairman, who is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting, sits at the head of the table.

Officers

Accompanying the Chairman is the Chief Fire Officer and other Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authority who will advise on legal and procedural matters and record the proceedings. These include the Clerk and the Treasurer to the Authority.

The Business

The Chairman will conduct the business of the meeting. The items listed on the agenda will be discussed.

Decisions

At the end of the discussion on each item the Chairman will put any amendments or motions to the meeting and then ask the Councillors to vote. The Officers do not have a vote.

Agenda

Members:

Independent

Mr R Gething (Chairman)

Non-elected Members:

Mr C Emeny, Dr M Mylechreest, Mr R Rogers,
Mr D Stevens.

**Members appointed
by the Authority:**

Cllr D Greenow
Cllr G Hopkins

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. Named Substitutes

To receive details of any Member of the Authority nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.

3. Declaration of Interests (if any)

The Members' Code of Conduct requires Members to declare any interests against an Agenda item, the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. If a Member has a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay, take part and vote in the meeting. If a Member has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is and leave the meeting room for the duration of the item.

This item allows the Chairman to invite any Member to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 March 2011 (copy attached).

5. Exclusion of Public and Press

In the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority, the meeting will not be, or is likely not to be, open to the public and press at the time item 8 below is considered, for the reasons stated:

- (a) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and
- (b) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

6. Applications for Dispensations

Pages

1-3

Separate
enclosure

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority

Standards Committee

17 March 2011



MINUTES

Present: Mr R Gething (Chairman)
Mr C Emeny, Dr M Mylechreest, Mr D Stevens,
Cllr J Goodwin and Cllr G Hopkins

1. Apologies for Absence

Mr R Rogers

2. Named Substitutes

None

3. Declaration of Interests (if any)

The Chairman invited any Member to declare an interest in any of the items on this Agenda.

Cllrs Goodwin and Hopkins declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item No. 8 on the agenda **Applications for Dispensations.**

4. Confirmation of Minutes of Standards Committee Meeting on 21 September 2010

The minutes as circulated were amended to remove Mr D Stevens and add Mr C Emeny to Apologies for Absence. The minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2010, as amended, were confirmed by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

5. The Future of the Local Government Standards Framework

The Clerk presented a report on the outlook for standards and ethics in local government and the future role of the Committee following government announcements and the publication of the Localism Bill. She highlighted the following two provisions for the attention of the Committee:

- i. The 'predetermination' rules – The Bill will end the situation where Councillors are prevented from acting on local issues because of the risk of challenge that they are biased (this is particularly important in the case of councillors who are elected in support of specific issues).

(The Committee noted that under the Bill as drafted, this provision would not apply to stand-alone Fire Authorities.)

- ii. The Standards Board regime – The Bill will abolish the regime and allow authorities to make their own arrangements to govern propriety and behaviour.

The Committee noted that the Bill proposed to make it a criminal offence to fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with obligations imposed by regulations under clause 17 to register or declare personal interests or to take part in authority business when prevented from so doing by such regulations. The Bill also proposed that that the Authority may voluntarily adopt a Code of Conduct for Members and that breaches of same could be dealt with by training and/or censure (while suspension from the Authority would no longer be an option, censure could include removal from a Committee).

RESOLVED that the Standards Committee recommends:

- i. That the Authority adopts a voluntary Code of Conduct for Members when the current Standards regime expires;*
- ii. That the voluntary Code should mirror the current Code, save where amendments are required arising from the provisions of the Localism Act;*
- iii. That the Authority should have regard to the response of the constituent bodies when dealing with this matter; and*
- iv. That Members should continue to receive appropriate training in standards and ethics.*

6. The Code of Conduct and Standards - Recent Decided Cases

The Committee noted the outcomes on recent case decisions regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. Exclusion of Public and Press

The Clerk to the Authority told the meeting that item 8 on the agenda: **Applications for Dispensations** was likely to disclose:

- (a) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Authority); and
- (b) Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

and recommended therefore that the meeting should not be open to the public and press at the time item 8 was considered.

RESOLVED that the public and the press be excluded from the meeting when the Committee considered item no. 8: Applications for Dispensation.

- 8.** The Clerk recommended to the Committee that a dispensation be granted to Members of the Authority to enable them to consider matters as set out in the attached report.

The Committee considered the nature of the issues in question and the applications for dispensation which had previously been received from the following Members:

Mrs P Andrews, Mr T Bean, Mrs M Bunker, Mr J Champion, Mr J Cairns, Mr S Clee, Mrs L Duffy, Mrs L Eyre, Mr J Goodwin, Mr D Greenow Mr A Hardman, Mrs L Hodgson, Mrs G Hopkins, Brigadier P Jones CBE, Mrs F Oborski, Mrs J Potter, Mr D Prodger MBE, Mr C Smith, Mr T Spencer, Mr. D Taylor, Mr K Taylor, Mr J Thomas, Mr R Udall, Mr P Watts and Mr G Yarranton.

RESOLVED that:

- i) dispensations be granted to each of the Members named above. The dispensation will allow Members to take part in and vote on the issues set out in the report; and*
- ii) the dispensations be granted until 31 March 2012.*

The meeting finished at 11.55 am

Signed: _____

Chairman

Date: _____

DRAFT