

Notes of the Policy Planning Forum

21st March, 2005 at 9.30 a.m.
at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: **Members of the Authority**

Councillors Birbeck, S. Davis, Eustace, Hinton, Hogarth, Howard, Idrees, Jackson, Lawrence, Mulhall, Rogers, Ross, Ryder, Singh, Underhill, Wallace and Ward.

Officers: **West Midlands Fire Service**

Chief Fire Officer – F Sheehan.
Deputy Chief Fire Officer – V Randeniya.
Assistant Chief Officers – A Brandon,
J Brown, R Hulland and D Smethurst.
M Griffiths

Clerk to the Authority

N Summers, G Wythes and S Hopcroft.

Treasurer to the Authority

L Bateman.

Observers: Mr M Chambers and Mr C Topliss.

Apologies: Councillors Afzal, Bowen, Foster, Kazi, Matchet and Pitt.

7/05 **Update on Business Plan Objectives**

The Chief Fire Officer reported on progress being made against the objectives set out in the Business Plan. Generally, good progress was being made, but there were some key objectives where difficulties had been encountered, and the Chief Fire Officer outlined how it was proposed to move forward on these areas.

With regard to Key Issue 2 [Integrated Risk Management Plan], Councillor Mulhall made the following statement:

‘I wish to have recorded the considered position of the Coventry Labour Group in respect of the revised Action Plan proposals. In their view, the additional pump at Foleshill still does not address their concerns in total and they have mandated me to object in principle to

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the proposals as they affect Coventry stations.

If the Authority is minded not to change the proposals I would want to ensure that there is thorough monitoring of the situation and to ensure that Risk Management work continues to be effective on reducing the number of fires.'

8/05 Standards Committee Matters

The Chair of the Standards Committee addressed the Forum on the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct, and in particular the position on declaration of interest for dual-hatted members.

A further presentation would take place for the benefit of any new members following the forthcoming annual meeting of the Authority.

9/05 Industrial Relations Update

The Director (Human Resources) reminded Members that notice had been received from UNISON that a ballot of its members was being held on a proposal to call a national one-day strike on 23rd March, 2005, in response to proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Negotiations were ongoing, and it was anticipated that the strike would not take place.

The Director (Human Resources) also reported on matters currently being negotiated nationally with the Fire Brigades Union, and outlined a number of disputes that had been registered at local level.

(Meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.)

<p><i>Contact Officer: Georgina Wythes Democratic Services Unit Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council 0121 569 3791</i></p>
