

## **Minutes of the Executive Committee**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at 12.30 pm**  
**at Walsall Fire Station, Blue Lane West, Walsall**

**Present:** Councillor Hinton (Chair);  
Councillor Hogarth (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Bowen, Eustace, Gazey, Howard, Idrees and Ward.

**Observers:** Councillors S Davis, G Davies, Douglas-Maul, Foster, Gazey, Hussain, Jackson, Rogers, Ryder; Singh and Tagger.  
Mr Topliss.

### **1/07 Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> November 2006 be approved as a correct record.

### **2/07 Consultation with Non-Domestic Ratepayers**

No representatives of non-domestic ratepayers attended the meeting.

### **3/07 Best Value Performance Indicators – Data for 2006/2007 up to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

The Committee noted a report on the Brigade's performance against performance indicators contained in the Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/2007.

### **4/07 Consultation on the Future Funding of Firebuy Limited**

The Committee considered the Authority's draft response to Fire and Rescue Service Circular 65-2006, which sought views on the future funding options for Firebuy Limited.

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It was the Committee's view that any management charges should be made on the basis of level of use. There was concern that there needed to be more clarity about the level of management charge to be levied.

The Committee also expressed a view that the best location of office accommodation for Firebuy would be at the Fire Service College in Moreton-in-the-Marsh and that this issue should be communicated in more detail separately.

The Committee was informed that a suggestion had been made at the West Midlands Regional Management Board at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2007 that it would be preferable to phase the withdrawal of Government funding of Firebuy to achieve a smoother transition. The Committee endorsed this suggestion.

**Resolved** that the draft response be approved with the inclusion of the additional points set out above.

5/07     **Disability Equality Scheme**

The Committee was asked to approve a Disability Equality Scheme, which the Fire Service was required to produce in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment Regulations) 2003.

The scheme had been put together in partnership with internal and external stakeholders and covered the period up to 2009.

**Resolved** that approval be given to the Disability Equality Scheme, as now submitted.

6/07     **Fire Conference 2007 and Local Government Association (LGA) Annual Fire Conference 2007**

The Committee was informed of the arrangements for the Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference 2007, taking place on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007 in Peterborough, and the Fire Conference 2007, taking place from 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at the NEC.

**Resolved** that approval be given for the Chair and Vice-Chair (or their nominees) to attend the Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007, and the Fire Conference 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007, and that such attendance be regarded as approved duty for the purposes of Members'

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allowances.

**7/07      General Income Write Offs**

The Committee noted the half-yearly report of general income items written off as irrecoverable, up to the value of £1,000, for the six months ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006.

The Treasurer recommended that the current quarterly reports be replaced with a single annual statement.

**Resolved** that the report be noted and that current quarterly reporting process be replaced with a single annual statement as part of the Closedown of Accounts report.

**8/07      Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**Resolved** that the public and press be excluded from the rest of the meeting to avoid the possible disclosure of exempt information under Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as follows:

In respect of Minute No 9/07 below, relating to any consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees or, or officer holders, under the Authority;  
In respect of Minute No 10/07 below, relating to exempt information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

**9/07      Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Payments**

The Committee noted current proposals from the National Joint Council (NJC) in respect of Continuous Professional Development payments.

The calculations for the proposed level of payments had been based on incorrect data and would result in significant additional ongoing budgetary demands. In addition, there was a significant difference in the range of payments proposed to individual Fire and Rescue Authorities. The Chief Fire Officer had made representations to the NJC and sought the Committee's views.

**Resolved** that the Chief Fire Officer's views on the proposed level

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and structure of Continuous Professional Development payments  
be reinforced in writing to the National Joint Council.

10/07 **Retention of Technician's Post within the Equipment Maintenance  
and Servicing (EMS) Section**

Approval was sought to retain a post of Technician within the Equipment, Maintenance and Servicing Section, following a review of the section.

The Equipment, Maintenance and Servicing section had been established in 2005. Since its establishment there had been a reduction in the staffing level. A previous report on Supply Chain Modernisation (Minute No. 69/04 of the Authority refers) had proposed a further reduction of one post of Technician.

However, following a recent review there were significant concerns that a further reduction would impact upon the section's ability to maintain its level of operational resilience, supported by the availability of risk critical equipment which was essential to maintain safe systems of work for operational personnel within the Brigade. It was therefore proposed to retain the post of Technician.

The salary related costs of retaining the post could be met from within existing budgets.

**Resolved** that approval be given to retain the post of Technician, within the Equipment, Maintenance and Servicing section, previously identified for deletion (Minute No. 69/04 of the Authority refers).

(Meeting ended at 1.02 pm)

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| <i>Contact Officer: Stephnie Hancock<br/>Democratic Services Unit<br/>Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council<br/>0121-569-3189</i> |
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