

Notes of the Policy Planning Forum

26th January, 2009, at 10.00 am
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham

Present: **Members of the Authority**

Councillors Chambers, Clinton, Douglas-Maul,
Eustace, Gazey, Hinton, Howard, Idrees, Jones,
Mulhall, O'Neil, Robinson, Ryder, S Davis, Singh,
Skinner, Spence, Stevenson, Tagger, Turner and
Tweddle.

Mr Ager, Mr Denny and Mr Topliss.

Officers: **West Midlands Fire Service**

Acting Chief Fire Officer – V Randeniya;

Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer – M Clark;

Assistant Chief Officers – A Brandon, J Brown and M
McGregor;

Head of Finance and Procurement – M Griffiths;

Head of Human Resources – D Johnson;

B Deeks and S Richards.

Clerk to the Authority

N Sharma, S Phelps, G Wythes and A Sahota.

Treasurer to the Authority

L Bateman.

Apologies: Councillors Sutton and Ward.

6/09

Acting Chief Fire Officer's Announcements

The Acting Chief Fire Officer welcomed Members to the meeting.

The Acting Chief Fire Officer referred to an article in a Coventry newspaper which reported that four youths who had been through a community fire awareness programme, saw a fire in a flat and assisted in the rescue following the training they received.

He also reported that the Audit Commission had given the Fire Service a Level 3 rating for its achievements in respect of operational performance indicators. This was an improvement against the previous Level 2 rating.

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Members and officers of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority had visited the Brigade recently to see the facilities at Headquarters, Handsworth Training Centre and Safeside.

Reference was also made to a Parliamentary seminar on fire safety and water sprinklers to be held on 2nd February, 2009, where Watch Commander Steve Mills would be receiving a national award for his continuous work on promoting sprinklers systems.

7/09 Budget 2009 - 2010

The Treasurer updated Members on the Authority's current financial position and the likely precept for 2009/2010 and the following two financial years, based on a forecast of the next three years' revenue and capital budgets and the likely three year financial settlement from the Government.

Budget preparation work was continuing and a final report would be made to the Authority on 9th February, 2009.

Members indicated support for a 2.5% precept increase in 2009/10.

8/09 Equality Assessment Level 3

The Head of Human Resources gave Members an update on the Authority's application to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

Members were informed that the Authority would be assessed on four areas:-

- leadership and corporate commitment;
- community engagement and accountability;
- service delivery and customer care;
- employment and training.

The Head of Human Resources also informed Members of the strengths the Authority had in each of these four areas and the timetable of events leading up to the formal assessment.

(Meeting ended at 11.03 am)

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