

<p>Notes of the Policy Planning Forum</p>
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18th December, 2006 at 10.00 a.m.
at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: **Members of the Authority**

Councillors Alden, Bowen, S Davis, Douglas-Maul, Eustace, Foster, Gazey, Hinton, Hogarth, Hussain, Idrees, Jackson, Jones, Mulhall, Rogers, Ross, Ryder and Ward;
Mr Topliss.

Officers: **West Midlands Fire Service**

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

Clerk to the Authority

N Sharma, S Phelps, S Hopcroft and G Wythes.

Treasurer to the Authority

L Bateman.

Apologies: Councillors Birbeck, G Davies, Howard, Singh, Stevenson and Tagger.

27/06 **Introductions and Announcements**

The Chief Fire Officer announced the sad news of the sudden death of Jean Hadley, a non-uniformed member of staff at Headquarters working in the Registry Section.

He indicated that long-awaited guidance had now been received from the National Joint Council with regard to the implementation of Continuing Professional Development payments, which would replace long service increments. A consultation period with stakeholders would now follow.

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Consultation had also commenced on the pay award for uniformed staff.

28/06 Corporate Risk Management

Members received a presentation on the process used to determine corporate risks for inclusion in the Authority's Corporate Risk Management Strategy. Members endorsed the five major risks identified in the current draft for a revised Strategy.

Members referred to the current resilience arrangements, and a number of questions were asked. The Chief Fire Officer indicated that a briefing would be provided for Members on this as part of their training package.

Members also expressed concerns about continued reluctance to install sprinkler systems in buildings where a large number of people would be present, such as schools and residential homes for older and vulnerable people. Members referred to their efforts to raise these concerns in the local authority planning process, but under current legislation the absence of sprinklers was not a valid planning consideration.

The Chief Fire Officer undertook to arrange for fire prevention officers to attend a Policy Planning Forum meeting to hear Members' concerns about these issues, and to investigate the possibility of strengthening fire prevention officers' responses to planning applications where in their view the installation of sprinkler systems would enhance containment of fires and means of escape.

Members confirmed that they had received a suitable level of training/appreciation on this topic from the combined efforts of their constituent authorities and the Fire Authority.

The full Risk Management Strategy would be submitted to the Authority for approval in February 2007.

29/06 Budget 2007/08 to 2009/10

Members received a presentation with regard to the likely precept for 2007/2008 and a forecast of the next three years' revenue and capital budgets. There was broad support for a precept increase of 2.9%. Budget preparation work was continuing and further reports would be made to the Policy Planning Forum on 29th January, 2007 and the Authority on 12th February, 2007.

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(Meeting ended at 11.45 pm)

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