

<p><b>Notes of the Policy Planning Forum</b></p>
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**19th December 2005 at 10.00 a.m.**  
**at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham**

**Present:**      **Members of the Authority**

Councillors Birbeck, Bowen, S Davis, Douglas-Maul, Eustace, Foster, Jones, Hinton, Hogarth, Howard, Hussain, Idrees, Jackson, Lawrence, Matchet, Mulhall, Pitt, Rogers, Ryder, Tagger, Underhill and Ward;  
Mr Topliss.

**Officers:**      **West Midlands Fire Service**

Chief Fire Officer – F Sheehan;  
Deputy Chief Fire Officer – V Randeniya;  
Assistant Chief Officers – R Hulland and M Park;  
M Griffiths and A Rotchell.

**Clerk to the Authority**

N Summers, S Hancock and G Wythes.

**Treasurer to the Authority**

L Bateman.

**Apologies:**      Councillors Ross and Stevenson.

29/05      **Councillor Laura Ross**

Members asked for their congratulations to be passed on to Councillor Laura Ross on the birth of her daughter.

30/05      **Romania Aid Charity**

The Chief Fire Officer undertook to provide regular updates on voluntary work being undertaken by West Midlands Fire Service firefighters in Romania.

## **Policy Planning Forum – 19th December 2005**

### **31/05 Industrial Relations Update**

Further to Minute No. 28/05, the Director (Human Resources) reminded Members of the background to the recent industrial action by firefighters in relation to the introduction of new duty systems and shift patterns.

The Fire Brigades Union had balloted their membership on the latest offer from the Authority. The results of the ballot had been announced on 16th December, 2005. The offer had been accepted and strike action had been postponed.

A joint review of shift patterns would now take place, to be completed by 31st March, 2006.

The Chief Fire Officer undertook to report back to members about the role of the 'Firepower' magazine in communicating with firefighters.

The Chair paid tribute to all those who had worked hard to maintain a robust service during the period of the dispute.

### **31/05 Budget 2006/07**

The Treasurer reported on the likely budget position for 2006/07.

A further update would be given to the Forum on 30th January, 2006. The Authority would be asked to fix its budget at the meeting to be held on 13th February, 2006.

(Meeting ended at 11.55 a.m.)

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