

Minutes of the Executive Committee

21st March, 2005 at 12 noon
at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: Councillor Hinton (Chair);
Councillor Hogarth (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Eustace, Howard, Lawrence and Underhill.

Apology: Councillor Kazi.

Observers: Councillors Birbeck, S Davis, Jackson, Mulhall, Rogers,
Ryder, Singh and Ward.
Mr Topliss.

21/05 **Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Action Plan**

Further to Minute No. 4/05 of the Policy Planning Forum, the Committee received the final Integrated Risk Management Plan 2005/2006 for approval.

The draft plan had been subject to a 12 week consultation period, in accordance with Fire Service Circular 7/2003 and Cabinet guidelines. Responses received as a result of the consultation process had been analysed and the plan had been amended in light of those responses. The Committee received a further petition from the Fire Brigades Union objecting to the Plan.

Essentially, the plan contained a single initiative that built on the first year's IRMP and the use of a 'strategic reserve' of fire engines and proposed to reduce the number of fire engines available between midnight and 8am by 13. As a consequence, there would be a need to reduce the number of staff accordingly, which would require a new duty system and shift pattern for operational based personnel. Options were currently being considered for alternative duty systems that would meet fluctuating demand. Anticipated future salary savings would be the subject of a further report.

Members were pleased that the views of members of the public had been considered in the final plan and welcomed the changes.

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Resolved:-

- (1) that the proposed response to the consultation comments received during the IRMP Action Plan consultation period, (10th November 2004 to 1st February 2005), be noted;
- (2) that the 2005/2006 Integrated Risk Management Plan Action Plan be approved as now submitted.

22/05 **Romania Charity Team**

The Committee was informed of the work undertaken by the Romania Charity Team in providing humanitarian aid to underprivileged children in Romania. The Team, since its formation in 1992, had carried out many projects in Romania refurbishing orphanages and providing much needed supplies to orphans.

The Team held regular fund raising events to buy building supplies and provisions and each team member had devoted their own time to ensure that the projects were successful.

In recognition of the hard work and ongoing commitment of the Team, it was recommended that they be awarded the West Midlands Fire and Civil Defence Authority Humanitarian Award.

Resolved that the Romania Charity Team be awarded the West Midlands Fire and Civil Defence Authority Humanitarian Award.

23/05 **Consultation on Proposals for a Sustainable Local Government Pension Scheme**

The Committee was informed that the Government had commenced a review of the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales in 2001, which had led to a number of changes being proposed to the scheme with effect from April 2004 and April 2005.

On 4th October, 2004 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had issued a Green Paper 'Facing the future – Principles and propositions for an affordable and sustainable Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales'. The Green Paper stated that the Government was committed to introducing new pension arrangements from 2008.

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A consultation period on the proposals was due to end on 31st March, 2005 and the Committee was asked to approve the Authority's response to the ODPM.

With reference to Minute No. 1/05 of the Authority, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Human Resources) reported that the Authority had been notified by UNISON that the strike action planned for 23rd March, 2005 would no longer take place due to an offer by the ODPM to hold further discussions on the proposed pension changes due to come into force in April, 2005.

Resolved that the Authority's response to the consultation document 'Facing the future – Principles and propositions for an affordable and sustainable Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales' be approved.

24/05 **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 relating to :-

Minute No. 25/05 - terms proposed for the disposal/acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services and disclosure would be likely to prejudice the Authority;

Minute No. 26/05 - particular employees and negotiations or consultation on labour relations matters and disclosure would be likely to prejudice those negotiations.

25/05 **Procurement of Human Resources Computer Rostering System**

Approval was sought to procure a Human Resource (HR) computer roosting system from Smart Human Logistics using the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Products and Services Catalogue (G-Cat) procurement route.

The Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) had identified that a review of the current shift systems was necessary in order to meet its new business requirements. The initial stages of the review had established the requirement for a computerised HR

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rostering system that had the capability of undertaking time and attendance, leave and skills management, roster cover, return to work information and a full reporting facility.

Following a series of demonstrations, technical and business workshops and reference site visits, a project team, led by Human Resources and supported by staff from Information Communication Technology, had identified Smart Human Logistics as the preferred supplier.

In order to meet the critical deadline of 1st September, 2005 and realise the projected savings from the new shift system, officers had secured a fixed contract price with Smart Human Logistics. The procurement and installation costs of the system were estimated at £287,600, and would be met from the approved capital budget. Annual maintenance and support costs were estimated at £39,000 and would be met from the existing technical services budget.

Resolved:-

- (1) that approval be given to the procurement and implementation of a human resources computer rostering system from Smart Human Logistics, at a fixed cost £287,600 and utilising the Office of Government Commerce Products and Services Catalogue (G-Cat) procurement route;
- (2) that the necessary exception be made to the Authority's Contract Standing Orders to enable the course of action set out in (1) above to proceed.

26/05 **Pay settlement for Principal Officers**

The Clerk updated the Committee on progress with negotiations on the pay settlement for Principal Fire Officers.

The Committee was also informed of a number of issues upon which the National Joint Council for Principal Officers of Local Authorities' Fire Brigades (NJCPFO) wished to consult Fire Authorities, and was asked for its views on the said issues.

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Resolved that the Committee's response to the issues raised by the National Joint Council for Principal Officers of Local Authorities' Fire Brigades be submitted to the Employers Organisation.

(Meeting ended at 12.36 p.m.)

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