

## **Minutes of the Executive Committee**

**26<sup>th</sup> August, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.**  
**at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham**

**Present:** Councillor Hogarth (Vice-Chair in the Chair);  
Councillors Eustace, Kazi, Lawrence and Underhill.

**Apologies:** Councillors Hinton and Howard.

### 79/04 **Statement of Accounts**

The Committee received a report seeking approval of the Authority's Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004.

Governed by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 it was a requirement to: close the accounts by 31<sup>st</sup> August and publish them by 30<sup>th</sup> November; submit the accounts to Members for their approval by the end of August and inform Members of any material changes required by external auditors KPMG. The accounts had not yet been audited.

In receiving the report Members raised a number of questions including the impact of the pay award upon employees' emoluments and the level of pensions liability. In response, officers reported that the increase in costs could be attributed to the pay award. Regarding pensions, there were difficulties at a national level and a consultation paper was expected before the end of the year.

**Resolved** that the Statement of Accounts for 2003/2004 be approved.

### 80/04 **Approved Duty – Corporate Risk Management Awareness Session for Members**

The Committee received a report seeking approval for Members to attend a Corporate Risk Management Awareness Session.

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Guidance issued from both the Audit Commission and the Office of Government Commerce recommended that Members be aware of corporate risks and be involved in the actions being undertaken to manage them.

The cost of attending the session would be met from the existing budget for Members' allowances.

**Resolved** that Members be authorised to attend the Corporate Risk Management Awareness Session and that the visit be classed as an approved duty for the purposes of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

81/04     **Brigade Contingency Planning Team – Interim Progress Report**

The Committee considered a report informing Members of the activity and progress made by the Contingency Planning Team in its first year since establishment.

Approval for the Team was given in June 2003 for an initial period of two years. The team comprised three temporary uniformed officers and had carried out many key activities including:-

- Co-ordinating and introducing equipment, training and procedures in support of the New Dimension Programme;
- Compiling specific training and procedure documentation in support of operational tactics associated with Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) terrorist related incidents;
- The preparation and delivery of presentations and seminars to both Fire Authority Members and other regional civil resilience support agencies;
- Co-ordinating exercise planning and delivery at Brigade and Regional level;
- Blue Light inter-agency liaison.

Further key additions to the team's future work activities were outlined.

Members expressed concern about the temporary nature of the posts but were reassured that the work had attracted high quality staff who were fully committed to the work. A further report would be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the funding of the Team.

The Committee noted the report.

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### **82/04     Minutes of the West Midlands Regional Management Board**

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the West Midlands Regional Management Board held on 30th July, 2004 were noted.

### **83/04     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 follows:-

Minute Nos. 84/04 & 86/04 - relating to the identity of a tenderer for the supply of goods or services.

Minute No 85/04 – relating to a particular employee.

### **84/04     Action on a Matter of Urgency – Tenders for the Provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Storage Facilities and Refurbishment of Ablutions at Binley Fire Station**

With reference to Minute No. 77/04, the Committee considered a report seeking approval to accept the lowest tender received in respect of building works at Binley Fire Station in Coventry and reporting procedural steps taken in respect of a matter of urgency relating to two tenders for the above works which were opened on 13th August, 2004.

Tenders had been received in the following amounts:-

£114,890.00  
£142,492.00  
£158,104.00  
£168,783.00  
£169,642.00  
£192,333.00

Checking of the lowest tender received revealed that the tenderer had not fully realised the extent of the work required in relation to the price tendered. In accordance with Contract Standing Orders the tenderer was given the options of standing by the tender figure or withdrawing it. The tenderer chose the latter.

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The next lowest tender submitted by William Gough was considered to represent best value for money to the Authority.

Costs for the works could be met from the authorised 2004/05 capital programme.

**Resolved** that, subject to the preparation of a formal contract by the Clerk, the tender submitted by William Gough in the sum of £142,492.00 be accepted.

85/04     **Amendment to the Establishment within the Performance and Planning (P & P) Department**

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to re-designate the uniformed post of the Government Office for the West Midlands Seconded Station Officer to that of a non – uniformed post of Service Delivery Improvement Manager within the Performance and Planning Department.

Following an assessment of the post, three specific challenges had been identified for the Performance and Planning Department to deal with as priorities. In order to cope effectively with the additional workloads generated by the challenges, a third Service Delivery Improvement Manager was required. To assist the Service Delivery Improvement Manager it was suggested that the hours worked by two part – time receptionist/clerical officers be increased by 12 hours a week in total.

If approved, savings of approximately £5,000 per annum could be achieved. These savings would be utilised by increasing the working hours of the part time receptionist/clerical officers.

**Resolved** that:-

- (i) the uniformed post of Station Officer be disestablished;
- (ii) the non – uniformed post of Service Delivery Improvement Manager (Grade 13) be established;
- (iii) the hours of two existing posts of part – time receptionist/clerical officers be increased by 12 hours per week in total.

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86/04     **Community Fire Safety Facility at Foleshill Community Fire Station**

Further to Minute No. 76/04 the Committee considered a report on the tenders received for the Community Fire Safety Facility at Foleshill Community Fire Station.

The tender submitted by Weaver P.L.C was considered to represent best value for money to the Authority. Funding for the scheme could be accommodated in the Authority's overall three-year Capital Programme due to expenditure reductions on other approved schemes.

The Committee expressed concern that the estimated cost of schemes included in the current capital programme was often exceeded when the tender process was undertaken with a deleterious effect on the planned programme. Officers explained that this was the result of market forces and undertook to report back regularly on the progress of the capital programme so that the Committee could keep the position under review.

**Resolved** that, subject to the preparation of a formal contract by the Clerk, the tender submitted by Weaver P.L.C. amounting to £244,070.00 be accepted.

(Meeting ended at 10.55 a.m.)

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