

**Minutes of the Executive Committee
Special Meeting**

7th November, 2005 at 1.00 pm
at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: Councillor Hinton (Chair);
Councillor Hogarth (Vice Chair);
Councillors Bowen, Howard and Idrees.

84/05 **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 negotiations or consultation on labour relations matters and disclosure would be likely to prejudice those negotiations.

85/05 **Notification of a Trade Dispute – Consequential issues arising from the outcome of the meeting of the Technical Advisory Panel - Update**

Further to Minute No. 83/05, the Committee was reminded that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) had declared a trade dispute regarding three issues referred for local negotiation by the National Joint Council Technical Advisory Panel in June 2005, and that a ballot for strike action was underway with the results due to be declared on 4th November, 2005.

The result of the ballot had now been published by the FBU, with a majority of the votes cast in favour of industrial action.

A meeting with FBU representatives was due to be held on 8th November, 2005. Details of options for a revised offer to resolve the dispute, and the financial implications thereof, were reported and discussed.

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Further information on contingency plans to secure emergency fire cover in the event of strike action was given. All costs of contingency arrangements would have to be met by the Authority, including training, equipment and interim deployment arrangements for which costs were already being incurred. Unfortunately, some Fire Service activities had needed to be curtailed to accommodate the contingency arrangements.

Elected Members had received e-mails alleging that fire cover was being compromised around the time of shift changes. The Chief Fire Officer reassured members that this was not the case. Response times had been adhered to, fire cover was more than adequate, and a number of major incidents had been handled effectively during the period referred to. He undertook to respond to all Members on these points.

The Chief Fire Officer thanked the Committee for their continuing support in dealing with the dispute.

Resolved:-

- (1) that the outcome of the FBU ballot for strike action be noted;
- (2) that the contingency arrangements made to secure emergency fire cover in the event of a strike be approved;
- (3) that the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to make an offer to the FBU along the principles now outlined with a view to resolving the dispute;
- (4) that the early indications of the financial implications of the actions taken to date be noted.

(Meeting ended at 2.20 pm)

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