

Notes of the Policy Planning Forum

9th November 2009, at 10.00 am
at Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: **Members of the Authority**

Councillors Alden, Ali-Khan, Chambers, Clinton, S Davis, Douglas-Maul, Eustace, G Davies, Gazey, Idrees, Jones, Mulhall, O'Neill, F Robinson, M Robinson (late), Singh, Skinner, Spence, Stevenson, Sutton, Tagger, Turner, and Ward;
Mr Denny and Mr Topliss.

Officers: **West Midlands Fire Service**

Chief Fire Officer – V Randeniya;
Deputy Chief Fire Officer – M Clark;
Assistant Chief Officers – A Brandon, J Brown and T Prosser (Acting);
D Johnson.

Clerk to the Authority

N Sharma, S Phelps, S Hancock and A Sahota.

Treasurer to the Authority

S Kellas.

Apologies: Councillors Hinton and Ryder.
Mr Ager.

28/09 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made a number of announcements as follows:

- Members stood in silent tribute in memory of Firefighter Paul Gibbons, of Canley Red Watch, who had tragically died following an attack on a night out in Coventry. Members conveyed their deepest sympathy to Paul's family and friends and in particular his wife and children.

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- A team from West Midlands had won 4th place at the World Trauma Challenge in Frankfurt. It was the first year that West Midlands firefighters had entered the challenge and despite being 'pipped at the post', the team had beaten a number of previous world champion teams and teams that were highly respected across the globe. Two members of the West Midlands team would be attending the Authority meeting on 30th November 2009.
- A team of personnel from the Technical Rescue Unit had achieved first place in a Technical Rope Rescue Contest in Belgium. The win represented a huge success for the team because this was the first year West Midlands firefighters had entered the contest; the first time a UK team had ever won; the first time any team had won on their first attempt and the first time the reigning champions from Belgium had ever been beaten.
- A request had been received from a Research Fellow at the University of Manchester asking if Members would be willing to take part in a study looking at how they had coped with the increase in their workload over recent years. It was proposed that the study would take place after the Authority meeting on 30th November 2009.
- There would be an additional Policy Planning Forum on 27th November 2009 (following the visit to the Regional Control Centre) to discuss the Authority's response to the proposals from Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service in respect of changes to their service delivery.

29/09 Employee Survey Results

The Director of Human Resources reported on the outcome of the Employee Survey.

There had been a 61% response rate to the survey. Actions had been put in place to address issues of concern raised by the responses and the impact of those actions would be measured in due course.

30/09 Ethical Standards

The Monitoring Officer gave an update on the requirements of the ethical standards regime.

31/09 **Future Service Strategy**

The Chief Fire Officer reported on the proposals contained in the forthcoming Service Strategy for the 2010/2011 financial year and onwards. There were no proposals to review front line services this time and instead savings would be sought from back office functions. It was anticipated that the majority of savings would be found through natural wastage and the re-deployment of staff, avoiding compulsory redundancies. Staff briefings were due to commence later that day.

(Meeting ended at 12.10 p.m.)

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