

<p><b>Minutes of the Executive Committee</b></p>
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**24th March, 2014 at 10.00 am  
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham**

**Present:** Councillor Edwards (Chair);  
Councillor Idrees (Vice-Chair);  
Councillors Aston, Davis, Douglas-Maul, Foster,  
O'Reilly, Quinnen and Shackleton.

**Apologies:** Councillor Finnegan;  
Councillors Chambers, Wright and Young.

**Observers:** Councillors Atwal, Auluck, Clinton, Collingswood,  
Delaney, Eustace, Hogarth, Mottram JP, Sealey,  
Singh, Spence, Tranter, Walsh and Yardley;  
Mr Ager.

4/14      **Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Aston declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 7/14 below (Partnership Arrangements between West Midlands Fire Service and West Midlands Ambulance Service).

5/14      **Councillor Foster**

The Chair announced that this was the last Executive Committee meeting which Councillor Foster would attend as he would be resigning as a Councillor from Coventry City Council in the near future. He thanked Councillor Foster, on behalf of the controlling group and all members of the Authority, for the constructive role he had performed as a member of the Fire Authority.

**Executive Committee**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

Councillor Foster thanked the Chair and informed members that he was leaving as he had been selected to stand for a parliamentary constituency in Devon for which an election was to be held on 22nd May this year and he would therefore resign from Coventry City Council in early May.

The Chief Fire Officer, on behalf of officers and staff of the Service also thanked Councillor Foster for his work on behalf of the Authority.

6/14

**Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 20th January, 2014, be approved as a correct record.

7/14

**Partnership Arrangements between West Midlands Fire Service and West Midlands Ambulance Service**

The Committee received a report on proposals to appoint Councillor Adam Aston as the Authority's Member liaison for the for the Chief Fire Officer and the Fire and Rescue Service officers (WMFS) in respect of matters relating to the partnership with the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS).

The Service set out in its corporate strategy, The Plan, how it would achieve its vision of 'Making West Midlands safer' through working in partnership to target and deliver services to those who were at risk. In support of this the WMFS had in place established partnership arrangements with WMAS. To date the partnership work had focussed on the following areas:-

- Co-location – an agreement was in place to enable WMAS response vehicles to work directly out of, or use as standby points, the majority of WMFS premises
- The identification of a joint prevention strategy between the WMFS and WMAS
- Exploratory investigation into whether WMFS could support WMAS with regard to attending their critical incidents

**Executive Committee**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

The partnership would benefit from ongoing member involvement to inform its direction of travel. Specifically it was proposed that Councillor Aston became the member liaison for the Chief Fire Officer and WMFS officers in matters relating to the partnership. As well as being an Authority member, Councillor Aston was a WMAS paramedic and staff governor on the WMAS Foundation Trust, so he was ideally suited to undertake this role.

Councillor Aston had contributed to the partnership previously through informing the relocation of the WMAS hub at Henrietta Street to Aston Community Fire Station and the future development of a shared facility. WMFS recognised the value of his contribution and in making this recommendation sought to maximise the benefits of the partnership and further improve outcomes for the West Midlands community.

Any matters requiring substantive decisions would continue to be undertaken in accordance with the existing decision making framework as set out in the Constitution.

In response to a member's enquiry as to increased partnership working, it was reported that the Service's area was not coterminous with that of the Police and that although low key partnership working was undertaken, it was not felt that the Authority's responsive nature was entirely affiliated with the more regulatory nature of the Police.

**Resolved** that Councillor Adam Aston be appointed as the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority member liaison for the Chief Fire Officer and WMFS officers in matters relating to the partnership with the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

8/14

**The Plan 2014-2017**

Approval was sought to 'The Plan 2014-2017' which outlined the strategic direction for the Authority and set out the key priorities and strategic objectives.

The Plan defined the range of services that would be provided, the outcomes that would be achieved and the commitment to partnership working.

**Executive Committee**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

The Committee was informed that following presentations to the Policy Planning Forum on 20th January, 2014, which provided an update on the latest financial situation and outlined the proposed priorities, outcomes and objectives to be set out in The Plan for 2014/2017, the Service entered into a period of consultation from 3rd to 28th February, 2014. The consultation responses to the refreshed and refined version had not raised any significant issues that would warrant any alteration or amendment to The Plan.

Consequently it was proposed that the priorities, outcomes and objectives from last year were rolled over into The Plan which was in accordance with the Service's three year planning cycle. Members noted that a new corporate indicator was being developed in respect of attendance standards.

The Plan had been received by members and further, proposed amendments had also been circulated.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the amended 'The Plan 2014-2017' be approved;
- (2) that the Corporate Performance Indicators and Targets for 2014-2015 be approved.

9/14

**Member Development**

At its meeting on 10th June, 2013, the Committee approved a revised Strategy for Supporting and Developing Members and that feedback from members Personal Development Reviews be reported to the Committee in the form of a draft learning and development plan for members (see Minute No. 13/13).

Following the recent Personal Development Review cycle a number of areas highlighted by members where further learning would be appreciated included the following:-

- budgetary process
- WMFRA structures and service
- governance arrangements
- member accountabilities and responsibilities

**Executive Committee**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

- equality and diversity
- The Plan
- ethical framework
- role within the Community

It was proposed to address these areas in a relevant and timely way through a range of delivery methods, for instance:

- Policy and Planning Forum schedule to accommodate regular update sessions, briefings and master classes, where appropriate;
- The Service could facilitate contact between member and officer where a one to one conversation was considered to be the most appropriate learning solution;
- The induction process also provided an excellent opportunity for new and existing members to receive background information and updates on key issues relating to member responsibilities. It was proposed that the next induction programme scheduled for July 2014 would encompass the areas highlighted from the Personal Development Reviews.

The consolidation of these relevant activities within the Training and Development Plan would involve:-

- incorporating the outcomes from Personal Development Reviews and translating these into meaningful learning activities;
- including updates about new training opportunities such as the Local Government Association in-house leadership day; seminars, conferences, etc.;
- evaluating feedback from training and development events and station visits and providing further support and learning where appropriate;
- members discussing any new and emerging learning needs with respective Group Leaders.

**Executive Committee**  
**24<sup>th</sup> March, 2014**

The Chair thanked those members who had taken part in the recent Personal Development Review process and asked for other members to also get involved; they could still have conversations with their respective Leader.

**Resolved** that the process for incorporating and delivering relevant learning activities within the Members' Training and Development Plan be approved.

10/14

**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 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

11/14

**Review of West Midlands Fire Service Business Safety Limited**

Further to Minute No. 5/13 (4th February 2013), the Committee received an update on the activities and trading performance of West Midlands Fire Service Business Safety Limited.

Members noted that although trading losses were forecasted for the first two accounting years (2012/13 and 2013/14), due to the initial set up costs of establishing any company, a bottom line profit position was forecasted for 2014/15.

**Resolved** that the recent activities and trading performance of West Midlands Fire Service Business Safety Limited be noted.

(The meeting ended at 10.30 am)

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