

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the  
West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority**

**23 November 2015 at 11.00 am  
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham**

**Present:** Cllrs Afzal, Singh Atwal, Barrie, Barlow, Clinton, Craddock, Davis, Dehar, Douglas-Maul, Edwards (Chair), Eustace, Idrees (Vice Chair), Miks, Mottram, Quinnen, Sealey, Shackleton, B. Singh, P. Singh, T. Singh, Skinner, Spence, Tranter, Ward and Young

**Apologies:** A. Aston, P. Hogarth

**Observer:** Mr Ager  
Members of the FBU

**81/15      Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Edwards declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 84 below (Monitoring of Finances).

**82/15      Chair's Announcements**

The Chair announced that a visit was scheduled to Fire Control at 1200 hours following the Authority meeting.

The Chair also announced that a further Member's Development opportunity had been arranged to visit the High Rise Training Facility in Oldbury on the 14 December at 1400 hours. A note was circulated to Members informing them of the event with a reminder to wear sturdy footwear and outer wear.

The Chief thanked the Members of the Authority who had attended the Rewards and Recognition Event on Friday 13 November 2015 which was attended by both uniformed and non-uniformed members of staff. The Chief stated that the event was successful and the attendance of the Members of the Authority had enhanced the overall enjoyment of the evening.

83/15      **Minutes of the Authority meeting held on 21 September 2015**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2015, be confirmed as a correct record.

84/15      **Monitoring of Finances**

The Authority noted a report on the monitoring of finances to end of October 2015, which included revenue expenditure and the capital programme.

Appendix A, Revenue Monitoring Summary to October 2015, showed a favourable variance of £370,000. There were a number of variances detailed in the report and an overspend in the People and Performance budget of £237,000. It was explained that this was as a consequence of the actual operational staffing numbers being higher than the budgeted establishment earlier in the year and it was anticipated to change due to the current suspension of recruitment.

Appendix B, Firefighters' Pension Schemes. The Treasurer stated that he had previously provided this non-financial information, but presented further context to the details on the Appendix.

Appendix C, Capital Monitoring Statement, showed expenditure at the end of October as £1.5m. The main variance within the Capital Programme related to the Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) and was due to tender prices for the seven pump rescue ladders being lower than estimated, combined with the replacement of the Detection, Identification and Monitoring (DIM) vehicle being deferred following notification that national funding may come from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

The Chair thanked the Treasurer for presenting his report and felt that the information in respect of pensions was particularly helpful. In response to Members' questions, the Treasurer stated that ill-health pensions are paid depending of the severity of the circumstances and the opinion of medical practitioners

In respect of the deferment of the procurement of the DIM vehicle, the Treasurer confirmed that the DCLG are conducting a review to be completed in March 2016. As the DIM vehicle may become part of the national review, it was felt prudent to await the outcome of the review.

The Chief added for clarity that the DIM vehicle formed part of the national assets which were centrally funded and then managed locally. Dialogue was ongoing with the DCLG regarding funding arrangements for national resilience, but the Authority may not be able to fund national assets in the future.

86/15

**Notes of Joint Consultative Panel held on 21 September 2015**

The Chair of the Joint Consultative Panel thanked both the management and unions in respect of the discussions regarding the Trade Union request for the re-introduction of Elected Member Appeal Panels at this meeting. The final decision had not been an easy one to make and added that the members of the Union would have liked a different outcome. However, the management had listened and acted on the concerns raised and figures now showed that the training was being undertaken and making a difference and would allay the fears of union members.

87/15

**Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 12 October 2015**

The minutes of the Executive Committee held on 12 October 2015 were received. It was noted that Cllr Davis was present at the meeting although not listed.

88/15

**Notes of the Policy Planning Forum held on 12 October 2015**

The notes of the Policy Planning Forum held on 12 October 2015 were received.

89/15

### **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 October 2015 were received. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee stated that a further meeting of the Scrutiny Committee had been held on the 16 November 2015 where the Review of Service's Partnerships arrangements had been approved. The Executive Committee would be asked to approve the Review of Partnerships at their meeting scheduled for 14 December 2015.

90/15

### **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) and information relating to any action taken, or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution or crime).

91/15

### **Planned Procurement Exercises**

The Chair explained the reason for members of the public to be excluded from the room was to discuss contracts and the commercial sensitivity around this subject.

Approval was sought for the planned tender exercise for the provision of goods and services in accordance with the Procurement Standing Order 1/8.

In respect of the planned procurement of the 999eye, there was uncertainty of its commercial viability and potential to create income. In answer to a Members question, it was confirmed that evaluations of tenders and negotiations will take place during December 2015 and subject to the response from suppliers a further report would be presented to the Authority in 2016.

In answer to a Members' question regarding Hi-Visibility Jackets, it was confirmed that the Authority would pay £46,000 of the total estimated national framework value of £800,000 that all Fire and Rescue Authorities would use.

**Resolved** that the tender exercise for the provision of:

- 1 Construction of Training at Height Facilities
- 2 Rebuild of Coventry Fire Station
- 3 Hi-Visibility Jackets
- 4 Support for the Development of 999eye

be approved.

As the meeting closed and the Chair reminded members that the next meeting of the Authority was the Policy Planning Forum scheduled for 14 December 2015.

(The meeting ended at 1127 hours)

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