

<b>Minutes of the Executive Committee</b>
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**14<sup>th</sup> December, 2009, at 12.30 pm**  
**at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham**

**Present:** Councillor Ward (Chairman);  
Councillor S Davis (Vice-Chairman);  
Councillors Alden, Clinton, Douglas-Maul, Eustace,  
Gazey, Hinton, Idrees, O'Neil and Ryder.

**Observers:** Councillors Jones, M Robinson, Singh, Skinner, Spence  
and Tagger.

35/09 **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2009, be confirmed as a correct record.

36/09 **Organisational Assessment 2008/2009**

The Committee was informed that as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Framework, all public services in England were subject to an annual Organisational Assessment (OA) by the Audit Commission.

The OA determined how well the Service had delivered against its priorities and objectives contained in the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework. It also assessed how effective the Service was at delivering its prevention, protection and response functions. The OA for 2008/2009 encompassed three separate assessments:-

- Managing Performance
- Use of Resources
- Operational Assurance

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The scores arising from the 2008/2009 assessment process were as follows:-

Use of Resources – 3 out of 4  
Managing Performance – 3 out of 4  
Organisational Assessment – 3 out of 4

Overall, the Authority performed well.

Members raised concerns about the impact the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service proposals set out in its Improvement Plan consultation document would have on the performance of this service and requested that the Chairman of the Regional Management Board be approached with regard to having a special meeting of the West Midlands Regional Management Board to discuss the issue further.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) that the findings of the Authority's Organisational Assessment for 2008/2009, be noted;
- (2) that the Clerk be requested to approach the Chairman of the West Midlands Regional Management Board with regard to having a special meeting of the West Midlands Regional Management Board to discuss the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service public consultation document on its Service Improvement Plan 2009.

**37/09     Transfer of Ownership of New Dimension Assets**

It was reported that in April 2009, the Authority responded to a consultation document issued by Communities and Local Government (CLG) relating to the proposed transfer of New Dimension Assets (NDAs) to Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs). The response, although agreeing in principle to the proposed transfer, identified a number of areas of concern about which the Authority sought clarification to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether or not they would formally agree to the transfer of the NDAs to the Service.

NDAs were currently owned by CLG. A number of options relating to the future ownership of the NDAs had been explored by CLG, but in their opinion the one which made the most sense for FRSs was that ownership of these new resilience assets be transferred to the FRSs.

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CLG was now seeking formal sign up from Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs), with a view to setting the date for transfer of the New Dimension Assets to the FRAs in early 2010. FRAs were invited to consider the final draft of the transfer agreement, and to indicate to CLG by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009 whether they were content to sign. Fire and Rescue Service Circular 59/2009 had set out the position of the CLG with regard to this matter.

The Authority's Legal Advisors, based upon the information and assurances that had been provided by CLG, were satisfied that the issues and concerns raised in relation to the Transfer Agreement had been addressed with the exception of a few points.

In terms of value for money, Firebuy was establishing and managing the framework contracts to cover the majority of New Dimension equipment to ensure CLG and FRAs received the best price from suppliers.

Clarity had been provided as to the funding issues relating to the replacement of New Dimension (ND) vehicles over time. CLG had confirmed that the National Assurance Body, which was the Fire and Rescue Service National Resilience Board, led by the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA), had already been provided with £1.5m, which would continue to be paid on an annual basis, to deal with routine upgrades and changes to the ND Fleet. With regard to the replacement of the ND vehicles, CLG had restated that whilst this would be a decision for the Government of the day, they would expect major refreshes to be tied to a spending review.

CFOA remained supportive of the sector-led approach to managing and maintaining ND assets that supported national resilience. They were of the view that this would ensure that ND capability could be fully integrated into FRS core business and, from an FRA perspective, would ensure that both control and ownership lay with those bodies charged with protecting their communities.

If the Authority was not prepared to sign up to the transfer of NDAs, the CLG could transfer the assets to another FRA which was willing to take ownership and maintenance obligations, in which case the Authority would lose the current £960k annual grant.

**Resolved** that the proposed transfer of New Dimension Assets to the Authority from Communities and Local Government be approved.

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38/09     **Migrant Impact Fund**

Approval was sought to the acceptance of external funding to support the development and delivery of a specialist package to engage with and improve safety and citizenship in migrant communities.

The Committee was informed that the key objective of the Migrant Impact Fund was to reduce the existing pressures on statutory organisations caused by the influx of migrant communities.

In 2008, 82,000 new National Insurance Number allocations to migrants were registered within Birmingham. Many remained within the city and the wider West Midlands area. 72% of domestic dwelling fires and a disproportionately high number of the victims of road safety incidents in Birmingham occurred within ethnic communities. West Midlands Fire Service had the opportunity to make a significant impact upon the well-being of these new citizens and their communities.

The initial programme was for delivery within financial year 2009/10, however, due to delays in approval by Government Office West Midlands, confirmation was received that this year's funding was ring fenced and would not be subject to claw back. A second year's funding had been agreed in principle but was subject to a Government review.

**Resolved** that the acceptance of external funding in the sum of £192.05k in 2009/10 and, subject to Government financial review, a further £192.05k in 2010/11 from the Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) Migrant Impact Fund as lead partner for the Be Birmingham Local Strategic Partnership, be approved.

39/09     **Community Cycle Scheme External Funding**

Approval was sought to the acceptance of external funding to support the next phase of the community cycle scheme trial.

The Committee was informed that following the success of the first phase of the community cycle scheme, a further £40,000 grant had been provided by the Birmingham Fire Reduction Partnership.

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The project would be extended to the areas of Aston, Ward End, Sutton Coldfield, Perry Barr and Northfield and would be piloting equipment, clothing, training, branding and evaluating the outcomes of this scheme with a view to continued expansion.

**Resolved** that the acceptance of external funding in the sum of £40,000 from the Birmingham Fire Reduction Partnership to support the next phase of the Community Cycle Scheme trial, be approved.

40/09     **Performance Against 2009/2010 Operational Indicators up to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2009**

The Committee noted the progress against performance indicators set out in the Authority's Annual Service Plan up to and including 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

41/09     **Analysis of Progress Towards Key Objectives – Second Quarterly Report for 2009/2010**

The Committee noted the progress made towards delivering the Departmental and Operations Command Areas 2009/10 Action Plans. Members also noted that a detailed review of progress was carried out at a meeting between officers and the Leader Member for Performance Management.

42/09     **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 amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including any individual and the authority holding that information).

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43/09    **Appliance Bay Door Maintenance Contract Award**

The Committee was informed that tenders were opened on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2009 in respect for both routine maintenance and emergency repairs to appliance bay doors, roller shutter doors, barriers and gates, for a period of four years. The results of the tender evaluation exercise were reported.

The proposed contract would result in savings compared to the current contract prices. The cost of the proposed contract would be met from within existing budgets.

**Resolved** that BID Group Limited be awarded the contract for the routine maintenance and emergency repairs of appliance bay doors, subject to the statutory ten day standstill period.

(Meeting ended at 1.04 pm)

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Contact Officer: Amarjit Sahota Democratic Services Unit Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council 0121 569 3189</i></p>
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