

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

**26 June 2017 at 1100 hours at  
Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham**

Present: Councillor John Edwards (Chair)  
Councillor Mohammed Idrees (Vice Chair);  
Councillors Allcock, Aston, Atwal, Barlow, Barrie,  
Booth, Brackenridge, Cartwright, Clinton, Craddock,  
Davis, Douglas-Maul, Eustace, Hogarth, Male, Miks,  
Mottram, Sealey, T Singh, P Singh, Spence, Tranter,  
Walsh, Williams and Young

Observer: Mr Ager

## **40/17 Elect the Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year**

**Resolved** that Councillor Edwards be elected Chair of the Authority for the period ending with the annual meeting in 2018.

## **41/17 Elect the Vice Chair of the Authority for the ensuing year**

**Resolved** that Councillor Idrees be elected Vice Chair of the Authority for the period ending with the annual meeting in 2018.

## **42/17 Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Edwards and Brackenridge declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 54/17 below (Monitoring of Finances).

Councillors Edwards, Davis, Idrees and Eustace declared a non-pecuniary interest in Minute No. 51/17 below (Appointment of Representatives to Serve on Other Bodies).

## 43/17 Chair's Announcements

The Chair stated that there would be a one minute silence at 1200 noon, for victims of the Finsbury Park attack. The Authority meeting would adjourn and Members were requested to gather at the front of the Headquarters building.

The Chair welcomed the new Members:

Councillor Fiona Williams – Birmingham  
Councillor Peter Male – Coventry  
Councillor Catherine Miks – Coventry  
Councillor Brian Douglas-Maul – Walsall

The Chair confirmed he would write to those Members who were no longer on the Authority.

Section 41 Members were reminded that the new date for the Reward and Recognition Event was Tuesday 11 July at St Martins, Birmingham.

All Members were invited to attend the Annual Schools Quiz final on Saturday 15 July at 1030 hours at Safeside.

All Members were asked to complete their CMIS forms prior to leaving the meeting and return them to Julie Connor

The Chair thanked the Members for returning him to the position of Chair and returning Councillor Idrees to the position of Vice Chair and they looked forward to leading the organisation in one of its most complex years moving towards the Combined Authority and Elected Mayor.

Regular updates and meetings of Executive Committee and Policy Planning Forum would be required in this most interesting and exciting period. The Chair thanked all the Members of the Authority, the Chief Fire Officer, the members of Strategic Enabling Team, all the staff working at Headquarters and on all 38 stations including the cooks and cleaners.

The Chair also wished to record his thanks to the staff at the Command Development Centre and would ensure that a visit was arranged for Members during the year. The staff at the Technical Engineering Workshops were thanked for their work and in helping to raise funds in providing technical expertise to other organisations. The volunteers at Safeside and across the wider organisation were also thanked for their contribution.

The Chair wished to thank everyone for their contribution to excellent service to the community. It was noted that West Midlands Fire Service had the best response times in the country and had achieved this despite meeting savings of £38m through Prevention, Protection and Response. The Chair would update his Blog to record his thanks and looked forward to the forthcoming year working together with Unity and Strength.

#### 44/17 **Chief Fire Officer's Announcements**

Members were invited to join the Long Service and Good Conduct celebration scheduled to take place on Wednesday 28 June 2017 at 1900 hours.

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) gave an update on the Grenfell Tower Incident. There had been a huge amount of concern for the communities and Fire and Rescue Service involvement. The Service had met with the strategic housing managers across the seven Councils and the arrangements in the West Midlands were considered robust and fit for purpose and were in a strong position with no significant issues at the moment. There are approximately 400 high rise accommodation blocks (6 floors and above) within the West Midlands. Fire Safety Officers were originally notified of a possible 18 blocks fitted with ACM cladding and joint inspections were carried out at these blocks with the responsible person. Further work had also taken place within student accommodation, hospitals and educational establishments.

The West Midlands Fire Service, (WMFS) on behalf of the National Fire Chiefs Council, (NFCC), had been managing the flow of information regarding the testing which reflects the high esteem in which the Service is held.

The CFO expressed the importance of maintaining consistent messages across the local authorities and fire safety guidance. This information had been placed on the website [www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)

The information included the Stay Put guidance and advice on escape plans, night time routines and safe and well checks from West Midlands Fire Service. Officers would be working with local authorities in carrying out a review of high rise building in order that the local authorities and other agencies are in the best position to manage the current situation.

The CFO confirmed that officers had met with council housing managers and a further meeting was being arranged with representatives from housing associations to look at any specific issues on 30 June 2017.

Results were unknown in regard to the specific ACM cladding and as there were 400 blocks this would be a long process.

In respect of buildings in private ownership and Wolverhampton, it was confirmed that Fire Safety officers would be carrying out risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform Order and would inform Managers

The speed of the testing was a matter for the Department of Communities and Local Government, but they were working with Local Authorities and the information was being feed through the NFCC.

A Member stated that a national hotel chain also had concerns about cladding and, whilst it was their responsibility to work with the Service, he wondered if the Authority should have a more proactive approach towards private sector properties.

It was noted that some Authorities are sending away samples, whilst others are not taking this approach.

One Member noted that in considering planning applications in the seven Local Authorities, it was rare to see comments from the Fire Service or the Police or appropriate bodies and asked whether sufficient investigations were carried out in large buildings when applications are received.

The CFO confirmed that WMFS fire engineers were well integrated into the planning process and commented on plans under the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) and provided a body of evidence to Planning Committees, but the Chief agreed to look into why this is not visible at Planning Committee meetings.

A robust risk based fire safety inspection programme was in place and business support vehicles are used to ensure that premises are managed through the Regulatory Reform Order. The Service was always looking to improve on safety and using lessons learnt and initiatives to improve communication.

Another Member thanked the Chief for his constructive answers to Members questions, but found it difficult to accept the situation. Previous governments had ignored pleas for the fitting of sprinklers and the construction industry had won the argument. It was felt that behaviours must change and the Fire and Rescue Service throughout the whole country should come together to influence the government and their professional opinions should be taken into account over the construction companies.

The CFO stated that WMFS consider the fitting and retro fitting of sprinklers is relevant as an act of fire safety. This is part of an Integrated risk management plan and there is a clear link to prevention and provides an assertive and effective safe response. There was a link in the report following the Operational Assessment and Peer Review where the assessors state that WMFS actions are grounded in the safety of the community.

“As an Authority, they are supportive of the service in delivering the Regulatory Reform Order in the best way possible”. Lobbying to improve the fitting of sprinklers will ensure that communities are safer.

It was stated that the Stay Put advice had been in place for many years. This advice remains but a Member enquired as to what extent has this been undermined by Grenfell Tower incident and what implications this would have for the future.

The CFO confirmed that the Stay Put advice is still currently the advice given in high rise building and good reasons for this advice was published in the guidance. A review of the advice would take place, but this was dependent on a number of circumstances, for example, where the fire starts and existing fire safety measures in the building.

The Chair stated that the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Services Management Committee had met on Friday 23 June 2017 and the Grenfell Tower incident had been discussed at the meeting.

A LGA working group had made an enthusiastic case to fit sprinklers in buildings at risk including high rise, schools, care homes and had held several meetings with the government, the Lords MPS.

Brandon Lewis, the Minister at the time, had conceded that sprinklers work and there had been no loss of life in any building throughout the world where sprinklers had been fitted and there was an onerous disadvantage on building industry and it was up to the fire sprinkler world to make the case.

The LGA had universal approval for fitting of sprinklers and retro fitting of sprinklers. It had been proved possible from an engineering point of view to retro fit sprinklers in Sheffield at a cost of £2,000 per flat. It was noted that action had not been taken following the coroner’s report of the Lakenhall House incident. A high rise building where lives had been lost following a fire.

Birmingham, Stoke on Trent and Leicester Authorities had all agreed to unilaterally fit sprinklers and the LGA would be keeping the sprinkler argument live with a view to securing government funding for the fitting of sprinklers. The LGA wishes to meet with the NFCC to discuss how they can raise the profile of the Fire Service, as their ability to influence had been diluted since the 2005 Public Safety Act and this would be an opportunity to change things positively and to honour those who have died as a result of the incident.

45/17 **Minutes of the Fire Authority held on the 10 April 2017**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2017, be confirmed as a correct record.

46/17 **Membership of the Authority 2017/18**

The Clerk reported on the membership of the Authority for 2017/18.

47/17 **Questions on the Discharge of Functions**

**Resolved** that the following Councillors be nominated under Section 41 of the Local Government Act, 1985, to answer questions raised in the course of proceedings of constituent councils on the discharge of the Authority's functions:

	<u>Lead Councillor</u>	<u>Substitute Councillor</u>
Birmingham	Idrees	Clinton
Coventry	Walsh	Miks
Dudley	Aston	Mottram JP
Sandwell	Edwards	Tranter
Solihull	Davis	Hogarth
Walsall	Young	Douglas-Maul
Wolverhampton	T Singh	Brackenridge

## 48/17 Governance of the Authority 2017/18

The Authority considered a report on governance of the Authority. The report set out the terms of reference for committees and panels; member role description and a calendar of meetings.

As part of the Authority's 'route to future governance' approved on 20 February 2017, the Authority would open its membership to three co-opted members and the Police and Crime Commissioner as a full member of the Authority. The co-opted members will be invited from the Ambulance Service, Public Health and a Mayoral representative

A request was still awaited from the Police and Crime Commissioner. The change forms the beginning of implementing proposals for a Reformed Fire Authority as agreed by the Authority on the 10 April 2017.

Amendments were made to:

### Article 2 – Members of the Authority

The Terms of Reference for the Joint Consultative Panel would be inserted into the Constitution as a recognition of the role members contribute in providing guidance to the Employee Relations Framework.

There had been minimal increases in local government pay, it was proposed to reaffirm the stance taken previously to defer any review of the members' allowances scheme for a further 12 months, and to refrain from increasing the level of members' allowances.

### **Resolved:**

- (1) that amendments to the Constitution regarding co-opted and full members of the Fire Authority as set out in section 3.3 and the inclusion of the terms of reference for the Joint Consultative Panel be approved;



- (2) that the calendar of meetings for 2017/18, as set out at Appendix 2, be approved;
- (3) That no percentage increase be made in Members' Allowances in 2017/18 by way of indexing or otherwise;
- (4) That the Members' Allowances scheme for 2017/18, as set out at Appendix 3, be approved;
- (5) That in the light the current financial situation, no action be taken for the time being with regard to convening an independent remuneration panel to review the Members' Allowances Scheme and that the situation be review in 12 months' time;
- (6) That the Clerk be authorised to make any necessary consequential amendments to other constitution documents in light of decisions made with regard to governance arrangements for 2017/18.

#### 49/17 **Review of Statutory Monitoring Officer Provision**

The Authority received a report from the Clerk to the Authority outlining the options for the delivery of the Monitoring Officer role and to determine the most appropriate option for provision to be implemented prior to September 2017.

Since the formation of the Authority in 1985, the role of Statutory Officers and Democratic Services for the Authority had been provided through Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. Following a change in April 2014, the role of Section 151, Officer, Clerk and Democratic Services were brought in-house saving at the time £60,000 per annum. The role of Monitoring Officer for the Authority continued to be provided by the Sandwell MBC through the then Assistant Chief Officer. During 2016/17 the then Monitoring Officer for the Authority left the employment of Sandwell and the role of Monitoring Officer was temporarily assumed by the Deputy Monitoring Officer and the role continued to be maintained through Sandwell MBC.

The temporary arrangement was put in place mid Authority year with the intention for a review at the June 2017 AGM.

The Authority's Constitution Article 13 and part 3, Scheme of Delegations sets out the roles and delegations of the Monitoring Officer.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) developed following the change in provision in 2014.

A key consideration when evaluating each of the options is the direction of governance for the Authority in the future.

The Authority, as its meeting on the 20 February 2017, agreed its future governance route toward Mayoral WMCA governance and this was further supported by the WMCA at its Board meeting on the 3 March 2017.

The reform of the Fire Authority was a key element in the route to Mayoral WMCA governance and was unanimously agreed at the meeting of the Fire Authority on 11 April 2017.

The process has begun through engagement with the seven local authority leaders, invites to proposed co-opted members and the Police and Crime Commissioner. A formal request has also been sent to the Secretary of State to enable an amendment to the Local Government Act 1985 which currently dictates the size of the Authority.

Engagement has already begun with the West Midlands Mayor to enable early understanding of the direction of the Authority in its route to future Mayoral governance.

There were three options for the future provision:

Option 1: Maintaining current Monitoring Officer provision through Sandwell MBC

Option 2: Monitoring Officer provided through a constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority – Wolverhampton City Council

Option 3: Independently sourced Monitoring Officer role

The preferred Option 2, Monitoring Officer provided through a constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority, Wolverhampton City Council, meets all the key requirements and would be implemented in sufficient time to enable the new provider to come into post for the September Authority meeting and would allow the Clerk to close off the current arrangement and establish a MoU for new arrangements in agreement with the new provider.

The Managing Director of Wolverhampton City Council, is the current Monitoring Officer of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Authority would be able to harness this experience, intelligence and knowledge in the move towards Mayoral governance. A further report on the new arrangements would be provided to the Authority at its meeting in September 2017.

**Resolved:**

- (1) that the preferred option, of a Monitoring Officer provided through a constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority – Wolverhampton City Council for the year June 2017 and June 2018 and the provision to be reviewed prior to the June 2018 AGM be approved.
- (2) that the Clerk to the Authority to make the changes required to the constitution and Monitoring Officer Memorandum of Understanding, following approval of the Authority's preferred option be approved.

**50/17 Political Balance and Membership of Committees and Panels**

The Authority considered the Constitution and political balance of committees and assignment of members to committees and panels for 2017/18.

It was noted that the current independent member, Mr Ager, had agreed to continue in the role for a further year and had been appointed as an independent member of the Audit Committee for a term of office expiring with the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2018.

The Authority had approved an arrangement whereby the independent persons approved by Sandwell Council would also be used by the Authority. This role had been undertaken by Mr Frederick Bell until his recent resignation. Mr Ray Tomkinson had been successful in applying for this role with Sandwell Council and he had also agreed to undertake this role on behalf of the Authority. In view of the low level of complaints activity at the Authority, it was felt sufficient to appoint one independent person.

**Resolved:**

- (a) that the political balance and membership of committees and panels for 2017/18, as set out at Appendix 1, be approved;
- (b) that the appointment of Mr M Ager as an independent non-voting member of the Audit Committee be affirmed;
- (c) that the appointment to the roles of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees and panels, as set out at Appendix 1 be approved;
- (d) that the appointment of Mr R Tomkinson to the role of independent person, appointed in pursuance of Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011, for the term of office expiring 20 June 2018, be approved.

**51/17 Appointment of Representatives to Serve on Other Bodies**

The Authority considered the appointment of representatives to serve on other bodies during 2017/18. The Authority noted the principles of proportionality apply where the Authority makes more than three appointments to bodies specified in the Act. An indication was given in the appendix where proportionality applies.

**Resolved** that the appointment of representatives to serve on other bodies, as set out in the Appendix, be approved.

52/17 **Member Attendance at Conferences, Seminars and Visits**

The Authority considered a report setting out the arrangements for authorising attendance at conferences, seminars and visits.

It was noted that the Leader of the Opposition Group had been added to the list of attendees for the Asian Fire Services Association Conference.

In response to a question about the visit to Houses of Parliament to meet West Midlands MPs and an opportunity to lobby Members of Parliament, the Chair confirmed that this item appeared on the list of events every year, but felt it would be more relevant this year to arrange a visit.

It was felt to be appropriate to arrange a visit with West Midlands MPs to lobby on the latest issues including finance and capital funding.

**Resolved** that the events for 2017/18, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved for the purposes of the payment of travel and subsistence allowances and conference fees (where appropriate) subject to the necessary budgetary provision being available.

53/17 **Governance Statement 2016/17**

The Authority considered a report seeking comments and consideration of the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Audit Committee had received the draft Governance Statement for 2016/17 at their meeting held on 12 June 2017.

Under the Local Government Act 1999 the Authority has responsibility for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded.

The Authority also has responsibility for proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Authority's Governance Statement required the signatures of the Chair of the Authority and Chief Fire Officer and would be available to view at the end of June 2017.

The Internal Auditor had given the Authority its highest rating available of reasonable assurance.

The 2016/17 statement of accounts were currently being audited.

**Resolved:** that the Authority's Governance Statement 2016/17 be received.

#### 54/17 **Monitoring of Finances**

The Authority noted the report to the end of May 2017.

Appendix A indicated a modest favourable variance of £0.008 million in the revenue budget. Appendix B provided statistical data relating to the Firefighters Pension Scheme.

The scheme analysis shown at Appendix C for the capital programme indicated expenditure at the end of May 2017 as £0.681 million. The main forecast variances within the capital programme related to delays with the demolition at Coventry Fire Station predominantly due to asbestos related issues and Aston Fire Station where the listed status required extensive consultation.

The Chair thanked the Treasurer and his team for managing the budgets so tightly and efficiently during difficult and austere times.

55/17 The meeting adjourned for a one minute silence in respect of the Finsbury Park Incident.

## 56/17 **Operational Assessment and Peer Challenge Report**

The Authority noted the Operational Assessment and Peer Challenge Report. It was the last of the Peer Challenges to be undertaken by the LGA prior to the introduction of the Inspectorate.

The Authority noted the approach to implementing and monitoring the areas for consideration details within the Peer Challenge Report.

The Authority noted the Service's approach to the publication of the Peer Challenge Report in accordance with the recommendations of the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association.

The report would be published on the WMFS website and on the Fire Peer Challenge section of the LGA website.

The report included some positive areas and some opportunities to further improve and enhanced the service to the community. A thorough and wide ranging review had been undertaken, the results were covered in the main body of the report.

A summary of the key statements were:

- WMFS is a Service that places its communities at the heart of everything and every decision it takes
- The CFO provides clear leadership for the Service and the Chair is clearly respected by the Authority and wider constituent partners.
- The Service has a strong focus on its long term financial sustainability and future funding streams.
- Response times to incidents are impressive. And that the integrated service delivery model has enabled WMFS to be more responsive to the needs of its community

- The Service's strong brand earns it immediate respect and often entry into the community and people's homes.
- Equality is embedded at all levels and staff understand the links to serving a diverse community, their prevention work and delivering within a health agenda.

It was noted that without the review of frontline services, the Brigade would not be able to provide the services that it now provides. It was felt that this had been achieved at a time when further investment was required in the Fire Service. The Authority would develop an improvement register to meet the recommendations and building upon effectiveness using a programme and project management approach. The Authority would continue with the move towards the West Midlands Combined Authority and work in the delivery of services to reduce vulnerability. The Service would continue to have a risk based 5 minute attendance standard that was evidence based and had clear links to survivability and would continue to build upon the emergency response brand as a platform for prevention, protection and be proactive in upstream firefighting.

Section 41 Members were asked to bring the contents of the report to the attention of their individual Authorities.

The CFO and his team were thanked for their leadership and that the Review Team's comments around the approach taken to its 5 minute response time for high risk (life and property) incidents was impressive and unique in fire service in the UK

One Member did not accept that Authority Members didn't ask enough questions. It was felt that the Service was well run and the Scrutiny Committee had not been required to investigate any issues. Another Member stated that questions were asked if necessary.



The CFO thanked the Members for their comments on leadership and it was good to recognise that through the Authority, the Service delivered the 5 minute attendance time. WMFS have different appliances that were not constrained by type of incident and strong Scrutiny was visible.

The CFO stated that WMFS was at the forefront of transformation in the way it delivered its service and would continue to transform. However, risks change but the risk from fire remained and there were new risks, unforeseen risks and the threat of terrorist attacks.

The CFO thanked the Authority for the strong scrutiny function and supporting transformation.

In the spirit of being more challenging another Member asked if there were standard operating procedures across the two services in Fire Control and if there were sufficient resilience in fall back arrangements.

The DCFO explained that there were standard operating procedures, albeit there was one metropolitan brigade and a combined authority. Harmonisation had been achieved and the National Operations Group were also looking at other areas. The procedures had been aligned where possible. The response to life risk had been amended.

A Secondary Fire Control in Smethwick provided fall back arrangements. The Fire Controls in the North West and London would provide fall back arrangements until West Midlands Fire Control the move to the secondary control had taken place.

The Peer Review Team had questioned the resilience of the fall-back arrangements in the event of a catastrophic system failure and a more technical solution was being sought.

Further work was being undertaken to ensure that the upgrade of Vision 4 mobilising system was implemented and innovative and technological opportunities were being considered.

The DCFO confirmed that the fall-back arrangements are resilient and West Midlands was one of the 3 biggest controls in the country who provided resilience for other Brigades.

The Chair stated that the Authority was grateful for an outside perspective and the Peer Review Team had presented a good report that provided some challenges and criticisms.

It was noted that the Service had volunteered for the Peer Review for a third time and welcomed the report. The prestigious Peer Review Team had been led by the CFO of Scotland. The Service accepted the challenge and plaudits to the delivery model and service to communities. The Chair thanked the CFO, Strategic Enabling Team and firefighters for meeting the 5 minute response times and helping the community. The Chair thanked the FBU and firefighters for entering into the voluntary local agreement to ensure the delivery of the Service Delivery Model. The Chair thanked all staff on behalf of the Authority and would place this on record in his Internal Blog on the Intranet.

The Chair thanked the CFO for the transparent management of the Authority and for arranging regular events that provided the necessary scrutiny of the Authority and Service. The Chair noted that although the Service was run in a slightly different way, every member of staff was committed to being the best they can be from firefighters to cleaners and making the community safer, stronger and healthier.

The CFO thanked the Authority for their direction.

#### 58/17 **Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee**

The Chair stated that the Scrutiny Committee had a successful year and Annual Report from the Scrutiny Committee was received.

#### 59/17 **Annual Report of the Audit Committee**

The Chair of the Audit Committee thanked the Officers, Internal and External Auditors for their hard work over the previous year. The Committee wished to record its thanks to the Independent Member, Mr Ager, for the valued contributions, attendance and loyalty to the Audit Committee.

It was noted that Councillor Paul Singh was unable to attend the Audit Committee on 12 June 2017 as he was required to substitute at the Scrutiny Committee.

The Annual Report of the Audit Committee was received.

#### 60/17 **Result of Recent Fire Safety Prosecutions**

The Authority noted a report of prosecutions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Two companies were prosecuted as a result of the vigilance of Fire Safety Officers who felt it was appropriate to take the action which was a successful.

In response to a Member's enquiry it was confirmed that one of the businesses was a professional service to which the public had access.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer agreed to provide details of the other company to the Councillor.

It was noted that the Service only undertook prosecutions as a last resort and endeavoured to keep "Businesses in Business", but companies needed to observe the law.

#### 61/17 **Minutes of the Executive Committee**

The minutes of the Executive Committee held on 27 March 2017 were received.

62/17 **Notes of the Policy Planning Forum**

The notes of the Policy Planning Forum held on 27 March 2017 were received.

63/17 **Minutes of the Audit Committee**

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 27 March 2017 were received.

64/17 **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on the 27 March 2017 were received.

65/17 **Notes of the Joint Consultative Panel**

The Chair of the Joint Consultative Panel thanked all the Members of the Panel and officers for their work during a challenging year.

The notes of the Joint Consultative Panel held on the 10 April 2017 were received.

66/17 **Minutes of the Appeals Committee**

The minutes of the Appeals Committee held on the 15 May 2017 were received.

67/17 **Notes of the Policy Planning Forum**

The notes of the Policy Planning Forum held on the 12 June 2017 were received.

68/17 **Minutes of the Audit Committee**

The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 12 June 2017 were received.

69/17 **Minutes of the Executive Committee**

The minutes of the Executive Committee held on 12 June 2017 were received.

70/17 **Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee**

The minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 June 2017 were received.

71/17 **Exclusion of 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).

72/17 **Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme**

The Authority noted the national Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) project to replace the Airwave radio system. The ESMCP would provide the next generation communication system for three Emergency Services (Police, Fire and Rescue, and Ambulance Services) and other public safety users.

The costs will be met by way of a Section 31 grant from the government and will not cost any more than the existing system. Nationally, transition to the Emergency Service Network will commence in the Summer of 2018, with the West Midlands region scheduled for early 2019.

The Section 31 grant can only be used for work on this programme. The Chair stated this was a large and expensive piece of work, but would result in a more cost effective system.

**Resolved** that officers proceed with the procurement to spend the Section 31 grant funding received in support of the replacement of the Airwave system.

The meeting closed at 1234 hours.

Contact Officer:  
Julie Connor  
Strategic Hub  
0121 380 6906  
Julie.Connor@wmfs.net