

Minutes of the Executive Committee

10th November 2008 at 12.15 p.m.
at Fire Service Headquarters, Vauxhall Road, Birmingham

Present: Councillor Howard (Chairman);
Councillor Ward (Vice-Chairman);
Councillors S Davis, Eustace, Idrees, Hinton, Ryder
and Stevenson

Observers: Councillors Chambers, Clinton, Douglas-Maul, Gazey,
Jones, Mulhall, Robinson, Skinner, Spence, Tagger
and Turner;
Mr. Bagley and Mr. Topliss

49/08 Sedgley Fire Station

Further to Minute No. 39/08, the Committee received a report with regard to the proposal to remove the fire engine based at Sedgley Fire Station from the fleet of Pump Rescue Ladders (PRL). The proposals had been subject to a 12-week public consultation. The Committee considered the responses to the consultation replies and gave further consideration to the proposal to remove the PRL.

There was not a consensus on this issue and the Committee took a vote on the proposals set out in the report and the recommendations as follows:

- The proposal that the Authority reduce the Service's fleet of Pump Rescue Ladders from 62 to 61 by removing the fire engine based at Sedgley Fire Station was put to the meeting. There was an equality of votes for and against and the proposal was carried by the Chairman's casting vote by 5 votes to 4.
- The proposal that the Authority receive a further report considering the potential uses to which the service and its partners can put Sedgley Fire Station was carried by 5 votes to 2.
- The proposal that the Authority responses to the consultation replies be approved was carried by 4 votes to 3.

Councillor Ryder requested that his name be recorded as having

Executive Committee
10th November 2008

voted against the proposal to remove the PRL.

It was accordingly **resolved**:

- (1) that the Service's fleet of Pump Rescue Ladders be reduced from 62 to 61 by removing the fire engine based at Sedgley Fire Station;
- (2) that a further report be submitted in due course on the potential uses to which the Service and its partners could put Sedgley Fire Station;
- (3) that approval be given to the responses to the consultation replies received as part of the 12-week consultation process about the proposal to cease to provide fire engine emergency response from Sedgley Fire Station.

50/08 **The National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service 2008-2011 Consultation**

The Committee received a report with regard to the content and timescales of the consultation on the 2008-2011 Fire and Rescue National Procurement Strategy. A proposed response to the consultation document was set out for the Committee's consideration.

Resolved that the proposed responses to the consultation document be approved for submission to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

51/08 **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 the authority holding that information).

Executive Committee
10th November 2008

52/08 **National Firelink Project: First Line Maintenance**

The Committee considered a report which set out an overview of the proposed Firelink First Line Maintenance (FLM) options available for the maintenance of the national Firelink Radio Scheme and sought approval to continue to use the existing West Midlands Fire Service Radio Engineers to support the ongoing FLM of the new Firelink radio equipment.

The Committee noted that the contract between the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) and Airwave Solutions Limited relating to the new wide area digital radio system required each Fire and Rescue Authority to determine whether it wished to engage Airwave (Option 1) or continue to use its own Radio Engineers (Option 2) to support the ongoing FLM of the new Firelink radio equipment.

The Committee was also provided with the details of the financial outcomes, following the application of the FLM cost model provided by CLG. The total cost of Option 1 was likely to be £1.453m over 10 years. The total cost of Option 2 would be £1.298m over 10 years, representing a saving of £155,000 over the 10 year period.

Apart from the responsibilities included within full FLM, the continued service supported by the West Midlands Fire Service Radio Engineers provided added value in respect of additional services on internal systems and equipment which Airwave would not provide as part of the contracted Service Level Agreement.

Resolved that approval be given for the continued use of the Brigade's existing Radio Engineers in relation to FLM (Option 2).

(Meeting ended at 12.37pm)

<i>Contact Officer: Andrea Cowley Democratic Services Unit Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council 0121-569-3171</i>
--