

Item No. 3 (i)

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY held in the Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Barmston Mere on MONDAY 23 JUNE 2014 at 10.00am.

Present:

Councillor T Wright in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Burdis, M. Forbes, N. Forbes, Haley, Harrison, Mole, Mortimer, Ord, Padgett, Perry, Renton, Stephenson and Stockdale.

Part I

Appointment of Chairman

1. RESOLVED that Councillor T Wright be appointed as Chairman of the Authority for the ensuing period until the next Annual Meeting.

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the meeting, extending a particular welcome to Councillor Perry as a new Member of the Authority.

Members were advised that there would be a training session taking place immediately after the meeting focusing on IRMP Implementation and a forward look at Fire Authority business.

The Chairman was pleased to announce that next year's LGA Fire Conference would return to Tyne and Wear and he looked forward to seeing all Members there.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor Price.

Appointment of Vice-Chairman

2. RESOLVED that Councillor N Forbes be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Authority for the ensuing period to the next Annual Meeting.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes

3. RESOLVED that:-
 - (i) the minutes of the Authority, Part I held on 24 March 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record; and
 - (ii) the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 17 March 2014 be noted for information.

Membership of the Authority, Appointment to Committees and Appointment of Spokesmen for 2014/2015

The Deputy Clerk to the Authority submitted a report to notify the appointments of the Constituent Authorities to the Fire and Rescue Authority and to consider the appointments to the Committees and the spokesmen for 2014/2015.

The Deputy Clerk advised Members that the Authority had previously appointed Anthony Atkinson and Sheba Joseph to act as Independent Persons for the Authority, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The appointments had been made on 17 September 2012 for a period of two years with an option to extend for a further three years. Anthony Atkinson has advised that he does not wish to extend his term and, in view of the fact that no complaints had been received, it was proposed that the Authority retain one Independent Person, namely Sheba Joseph. Her appointment would be extended until midnight on 16 September 2017 on the same terms as those which currently apply.

The Authority had also established a Standards Committee when the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 came into force and there was some uncertainty about how these new arrangements would operate. It was now proposed that this Committee be disestablished and matters relating to ethical standards be included within the remit of the Governance Committee as was the previous arrangement. It was also proposed that the terms of reference of the Governance Committee be amended accordingly.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was: -

4. RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the membership of the Authority for the Municipal Year 2014/2015 be noted;
- (ii) the Members listed below be appointed to serve on the following Committees of the Authority for the Municipal Year 2014/2015 and be appointed as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen where indicated: -

(a) **Governance Committee**

Independent Chairman - Mr G N Cook
Independent Member - Mr M Knowles
Independent Member - Ms G Goodwill

Councillors Burdis, M Forbes, Mole, Ord, Padgett and Price.

(b) **Policy and Performance Committee**

Councillors M Forbes, N Forbes, Harrison, Padgett, Perry and Stockdale.

Chairman - N Forbes
Vice-Chairman - Padgett

(c) **Human Resources Committee**

Councillors Bell, Haley, Mole, Mortimer, Price, Renton, Stephenson and Wright.

Chairman - Bell
Vice-Chairman - Haley

(d) **Appointments Committee**

Councillors Bell, N Forbes, Haley, Mortimer, Ord, Stephenson and Wright.

Chairman - Wright
Vice-Chairman - N Forbes

(e) **Disciplinary Appeals Committee**

Councillors Bell, N Forbes, Harrison, Renton and Wright.

Chairman - Wright
Vice-Chairman - N Forbes

(f) **Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee**

Councillors Burdis, M Forbes, N Forbes, Padgett, Perry and Stockdale.

Chairman - N Forbes
Vice-Chairman - Stockdale

(g) **Emergency Sub-Committee**

Councillors N Forbes, Ord and Wright.

Chairman - Wright
Vice-Chairman - N Forbes

- (iii) the retention of one Independent Person, namely Sheba Joseph, whose appointment will be extended until midnight on 16 September 2017 on the same terms which currently apply (annual allowance £200 plus reasonable expenses) be agreed;
- (iv) the Standards Committee be disestablished and the previous arrangement be reverted to, where matters relating to ethical standards were within the remit of the Governance Committee;
- (v) the amendment of the terms of reference of the Governance Committee to enable it to undertake those functions currently delegated to the Standards Committee be approved and the Clerk to the Authority be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman, to amend the Standing Orders/Terms of Reference accordingly;
- (vi) the following Members be appointed as Spokesmen for the purpose of answering questions from Members of the Constituent Councils on the discharge of the Authority's functions: -

Gateshead - Councillor Mole
Newcastle - Councillor N Forbes
North Tyneside - Councillor Burdis
South Tyneside - Councillor Bell
Sunderland - Councillor Wright

- (vii) the following Members be appointed as Lead Members and Support Members: -

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Lead Member - Councillor Bell
Support Member - Councillor Haley

Diversity and Equality

Lead Member - Councillor N Forbes
Support Member - Councillor Stockdale

Performance Management

Lead Member - Councillor Wright
Support Member - Councillor N Forbes

- (viii) Councillor Wright and Haley be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Local Government Association; and
- (ix) Councillors Wright and Padgett, with Councillors N Forbes and Haley as substitutes, be appointed to the Association of Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities (AMFRA).

Date, Time and Venue of Future Meetings

The Chief Fire Officer, Clerk to the Authority, Finance Officer and Personnel Advisor submitted a joint report setting out the proposed dates, times and venues of meetings of the Authority and its Committees, together with the training sessions for the Municipal Year 2014/2015.

The Chairman informed Members that it was proposed that the Authority meeting scheduled for Monday 20 October 2014 be cancelled.

5. RESOLVED that the cycle of meetings 2014/2015 as set out in the report be approved, subject to the cancellation of the meeting scheduled for 20 October 2014.

Revenue Budget Outturn 2013/2014 and Revenue Budget First Review 2014/2015

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report advising Members of the Revenue Budget Outturn position for 2013/2014 as it currently stands, outlining the main areas of variance and any related proposed actions.

It was also proposed that the Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman of the Authority, be given delegated authority to take any further additional final accounts decisions beyond those included in the report. If any material changes occurred, these would be reported to the Authority. The Authority's Statement of Accounts was currently being prepared and would be presented to the Authority's Governance Committee on 30 June 2014.

The third review of the Revenue Budget, reported to Members in January 2014, had identified an overall underspend of £0.842m as a result of savings in relation to employee costs. Since the third review, additional savings of £776,000 had been

made, resulting in a net underspend of £1.618m. The savings had been achieved mainly due to an underspend in contingencies and the receipt of additional government grant funding.

Members were referred to Appendix 3 of the report which showed the movement in earmarked reserves in 2013/2014. It was proposed that the identified underspend be used to help replenish the Development Reserve, which had been reduced by a transfer of £6m to the Organisational Change Reserve. The Development Reserve would be used to identify areas of one-off spend which would help to reduce the revenue budget on an ongoing basis. General fund balances were to be sustained at a similar level and the movement of balances within 2013/2014 and the estimated balances at both 31 March 2014 and 2015 were detailed at Appendix 4.

Regular monitoring of the budget continued to take place and there were no particular issues to highlight at the First Review stage.

Having considered the report, the Authority

6. RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the Revenue Budget Outturn position for 2013/2014 set out at paragraph 2.4 be noted;
- (ii) the proposed transfer to earmarked reserves outlined at paragraph 2.7 be approved;
- (iii) the position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 be noted;
- (iv) the General Balances position shown at paragraph 3.1 and at Appendix 4 be noted; and
- (v) delegated authority be approved for the Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman of the Authority, to take any additional final accounts decisions in order to maximise the financial position of the Authority.

Capital Programme Outturn 2013/2014 and Capital Programme First Review 2014/2015

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report presenting the provisional capital outturn for 2013/2014, highlighting the main variances from the 2013/2014 Capital Programme Third Review, reviewing the current year's programme to reflect the actual outturn position and other changes since the original programme for 2014/2015 was approved.

The Capital Programme outturn for 2013/2014 reflected a reduction in spending of £1,733,271 from £4,072,739 to £2,339,468. This reduction was as a result of the following:

- Net underspends of £57,675 from a number of schemes completed during 2013/2014;
- Acceleration of £69,843 from the 2014/2015 Capital Programme into 2013/2014 to cover payment of components for replacement of ICT hardware;
- Addition of £1,552 from the P&E revenue budget to cover remaining costs for the new Fire demonstration units;
- Net underspending of £77,772 on the Vehicle Replacement Programme; and
- Net slippage of £1,669,219 to 2014/2015.

The slippage in 2013/2014 had been taken into account at the First Review of the Capital Programme and the value of the programme for 2014/2015 had increased to £7.1m. The Finance Officer highlighted that there were no major areas of concern to note at this stage.

The Chairman asked if the service was satisfied with the new control and command centre. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the centre had gone live on 25 November 2013 and officers were currently working with IT to address a small number of glitches. Project management arrangements were still in place and the system had the potential to do everything which the service wanted it to and they were happy with it.

The Chairman also asked about the PFI reserve and the Finance Officer advised that the Authority was in the ninth year of a 25 year agreement and would contribute to this reserve for another three years. There would be low costs within the first few years for maintenance but funds were put into the smoothing reserve during the early period of the agreement as it was acknowledged that costs would increase in the later period of the PFI.

Upon consideration of the report, it was: -

7. RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the projected outturn position for 2013/2014 be noted;
- (ii) the transfer of the anticipated net slippage of £1,669,219 into 2014/2015 be approved; and
- (iii) the revised Capital Programme for 2014/2015, as set out at Appendix A, in light of the capital outturn position for 2013/2014 be noted and approved.

Integrated Risk Management Plan Update

The Chief Fire Officer submitted a report providing the Authority with an update in respect of the implementation of the current Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) actions.

Members were reminded that the Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process was the vehicle used to make significant changes to the shape of the service and was a national process required under the Fire and Rescue National

Framework. Since 2010, the process had been carried out against a background of spending reductions and the live IRMP actions were set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) Brindle outlined the progress which had been made on the IRMP actions. With regard to the review of operational response, two appliances were due to be removed from the fleet during the week beginning 30 June 2014 and the implementation of day crewing, which had been planned alongside this, would be implemented during the following week.

Processes had been designed to monitor and review the actions being taken and would start from the implementation of the first removal of an appliance. The review of staffing profiles would also be incorporated into the implementation plan to support a phased reduction in staff numbers.

The principles for the review of diversionary activities had been agreed by the Authority in March 2014. A further report would be presented to Members in the Autumn which would present the outcomes of discussions with partners and partnerships to determine the appetites for the continuation of diversionary activities.

The review of catering had been given outline approval by the Authority in January and subsequently a period of formal consultation had been carried out with staff. The outcome of this consultation would be presented to the Authority for final decision at a future meeting.

The review of cleaning had been completed and the investigation into the feasibility of a Trading Company was nearing completion. The Authority would receive reports on the outcomes of both of these pieces of work in the near future.

ACFO Brindle highlighted that there were no direct human resources implications arising from the report but staffing implications would be considered as part of each individual IRMP review. Comprehensive HR procedures had already been agreed by the Authority for the implementation of staffing reviews.

Members were advised that the savings from the 2013-2017 IRMP actions had not yet been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). As the savings and timings of each of the actions were known, these would be built into the budget and the MTFS would be updated accordingly. Attention was also drawn to the ongoing shortfall position outlined in paragraph 7.4 and the need to develop further IRMP actions to address this.

Councillor Mole commended officers on the excellent work which was being done to progress the IRMP actions.

Having considered the report, it was: -

8. RESOLVED that: -

(i) the progress report be noted for information; and

- (ii) it be agreed that the Chief Fire Officer begin a process of determining future IRMP actions, to be the subject to further discussion with Authority members.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

9. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) or to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 3 and 4).

(Signed) T WRIGHT
Chairman

Note:

The above minutes comprise those relating to items of business during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.

