

MEETING: 19 JULY 2010

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF ESTABLISHMENT LEVELS**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND FINANCE OFFICER**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A review of the current and future operational establishment level is undertaken on a monthly basis, to ensure that the Authority can continue to meet its statutory obligations in respect of the provision of a Fire and Rescue Service.
- 1.2 The review considers the number of firefighters and officers required to crew the operational fleet of fire appliances 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Included within the review process are projections for retirements and resignations anticipated for current and future years. The latest review clearly suggests that by December 2010, the Authority will be substantially below authorised establishment levels primarily due to an increase in the number of operational staff exercising their right to retire at the age of 50 with 30 years service.
- 1.3 Therefore, in order to ensure the Authority is able to achieve appropriate staffing levels to maintain the operational response commitment, Members are advised that an initial training course for 30 trainee firefighters will need to commence in September 2010.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The cost of providing a trainee course for 30 staff will be in the region of £264,000.
- 2.2 Provision of £176,000 was made in the current revenue budget for a training course however the estimates at the time were for a course of 20 trainees. The revised estimates based upon known future retirements and resignations have indicated that a course of 30 trainees will be required.
- 2.2 The additional cost of providing this trainee course can be met from within the operational employees' budget due to the fact that the Service is currently operating below establishment levels, as discussed in paragraph 1.2 above.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Authority is requested to endorse the commencement of a Trainee Firefighter Course in September 2010.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The undermentioned Background Papers relate to the subject matter of the above report: -

- Service Staffing Levels