

Minutes of the meeting of
the TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND
RESCUE AUTHORITY held in the
Fire and Rescue Service
Headquarters, Barmston Mere on
MONDAY, 26TH APRIL, 2010 at
10.30 a.m.

Present:

Councillor T. Wright in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Boyes, Charlton, Clark, M. Forbes, N. Forbes, Haley, Jordan,
Mortimer, Renton, Scaplehorn and Woodwark.

Part I

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ball, Clare and Mole.

One minutes silence was held for Firefighter Alan Bannon and Firefighter James Shears of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service who had recently died bravely fighting a fire. Thoughts of both Members and Officers were with their families at this very sad time.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Bell and Haley declared a Personal Interest in relation to item 4 – Regional Fire Control – Update, as a member of the North East Fire Control Company Limited.

Minutes

103. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 29th March, 2010 – Part 1 be confirmed and signed as a correct record;
- (ii) the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 22nd March, 2010 – Part 1 be received and noted; and
- (iii) the minutes of the meeting of the North East Fire and Rescue Regional Management Board held on 2nd March, 2010 – Part 1 be received and noted.

Regional Fire Control – Update

The Chief Fire Officer, the Finance Officer and the Clerk to the Authority submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an update in respect of developments with the FiReControl project and the Regional Control Centre (RCC) in the North East.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer highlighted the recent Communities and Local Government (CLG) Parliamentary Select Committee Hearing and National Audit Office enquiry into the project. He drew attention to the findings of the enquiry which recommended that the project should continue, with the conditions stated in the report, given the levels of public investment and costs which would accrue in order to cancel it. The formal response of Government to the Select Committee was not expected until after the General Election on 6th May, 2010.

Councillor Boyes expressed concern in relation to how the £8 million identified costs to cancel the project had been calculated and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer responded stating that the costs were detailed in the National Audit Office report issued in February 2010 and were based upon expenditure to date and CLGs estimated costs to wind up the project..

Councillor Woodward advised that if the project failed it would take two years to go through the tender and procurement process. He added that an urgent decision would need to be made in the near future.

In response to Councillor M Forbes' concerns in relation to EADS and CLGs potential failure to deliver against anticipated outcomes, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that progress been made at a regional level to define the minimum requirements for the North East Fire and Rescue Services to maintain and improve command and control facilities.

He added that other local work had been undertaken to provide options for the Authority should there be a total failure of the project for whatever reason.

104. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the content of the report be noted; and
- (ii) further reports be submitted as appropriate.

Integrated Risk Management 2009/10 Action Plan Final Update

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority and the Finance Officer submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide a final update for Members in respect of the implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Annual Action Plan for 2009/10, approved by the Authority in March 2009.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the delivery of the 2009/2010 IRMP Annual Action Plan had progressed well with all of the actions contributing to an overall improvement in the service delivered to the public whilst also ensuring that efficiencies were realised that assisted the Authority to meet the targets set by Central Government and reduced pressure on the precept increase each year. He added that the ongoing work associated with the initiatives would now be monitored through the performance management framework operating within the service.

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

105. RESOLVED that the progress made in relation to the implementation of the 2009/10 IRMP action plan be approved.

Protection and Technical Inspection Strategy 2010/2011

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report (copy circulated) on the premises inspection strategy and associated work undertaken by the Protection and Technical (P. & T.) department, which sought to reduce the economic, social and environmental impact of fire on the community, the risk to fire-fighters and the risk in heritage buildings.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Arising from the discussion of the report, Councillor M Forbes enquired what safety measures were required in relation to the storage of calor gas cylinders on private property. The Chief Fire Officer advised that this was an area national groups were trying to address to ensure a register of locations was maintained and safety checks and systems were in place for such storage facilities.

Councillor Scaplehorn drew attention to the inspection work in 2009/2010 identified in paragraph 3.3 of the report. He advised that there were some concerns outstanding in relation to one of the premises inspected. The Chief Fire Officer agreed to look into Councillor Scaplehorn's concerns.

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

106. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (ii) further reports on the matter be submitted to future meetings as appropriate.

Draft Strategic Community Safety Plan 2010/2013

The Chief Fire Officer, the Clerk to the Authority and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report (copy circulated) on the content of the draft Strategic Community Safety Plan 2010/2013.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted that Strategic Community Safety Plan, which now incorporated the Integrated Risk Management Plan, continued to effectively link the business and budget planning process and to provide a framework for the Authority to ensure that it continued to deliver its services in an efficient and effective manner. He added that this, in turn, would provide a key element of support with regard to the Fire and Rescue Authority's commitment to performance management.

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

107. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Draft Plan be approved; and
- (ii) subject to any amendments, agree that the Chief Fire Officer publishes the Plan as detailed in this report.

Correspondence List for Information

The Chief Fire Officer submitted a list of items of correspondence that had been received since the last meeting of the Authority, and were not subject to a separate report.

108. RESOLVED that the correspondence list be received for information.

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

109. 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 contains exempt information relating to any individual or information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3).

(Signed) T. WRIGHT,
Chairman.

Note:

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

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