

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 8 JUNE 2015 at 10.00am.

**Present:**

Councillor T Wright in the Chair

Councillors Bell, Burdis, M. Forbes, N. Forbes, Haley, Harrison, Maughan, Mole, Perry, Price, Stockdale and Stephenson.

**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 Maughan as a new Member of the Authority. A letter of thanks would also be forwarded from the Chairman, to Councillors Mortimer and Ord, as retiring members, for all their hard work and commitment to the Authority over the years.

Members were advised that there would be a Strategic Planning Session taking place immediately after the meeting.

The Chairman advised that the two day Asian Firefighter Conference had been held at Tyne and Wear and had been a huge success with people attending from all over the Country. Feedback had been extremely positive therefore a request was made that thanks be extended to members of staff involved.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Lauchlan and Renton.

### **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 23 March 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record;
  - (ii) the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Committee held on 23 February 2015 be noted for information;
  - (iii) the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 16 March 2015 be noted for information; and
  - (iv) the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 23 April 2015 be noted for information.

### **Membership of the Authority, Appointment to Committees and Appointment of Spokesmen for 2015/2016**

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 2015/2016.

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

4. RESOLVED that: -
  - (i) the membership of the Authority for the Municipal Year 2015/2016 be noted;
  - (ii) the Members listed below be appointed to serve on the following Committees of the Authority for the Municipal Year 2015/2016 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, Pickard, Mole, Maughan, Lauchlan and Price.

(b) **Policy and Performance Committee**

Councillors N Forbes, Harrison, Lauchlan, Perry, Renton and Stockdale.

Chairman - N Forbes  
Vice-Chairman - Lauchlan

(c) **Human Resources Committee**

Councillors Bell, Haley, Mole, M. Forbes, Price, Renton, Stephenson and Wright.

Chairman - Bell  
Vice-Chairman - Haley

(d) **Appointments Committee**

Councillors Bell, N Forbes, M Forbes, Haley, Pickard, 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, Maughan, N Forbes, Lauchlan, Perry and Stockdale.

Chairman - N Forbes  
Vice-Chairman - Stockdale

(g) **Emergency Sub-Committee**

Councillors N Forbes, M Forbes and Wright.

Chairman - Wright  
Vice-Chairman - N Forbes

(h) **Pension Board of Tyne and Wear Fire Authority**

Councillor - Perry

- (iii) 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

- (iv) 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

- (v) Councillor Wright and Haley be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Local Government Association; and
- (vi) Councillors Wright and Haley, with Councillors N Forbes and Mole 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 2015/2016.

5. RESOLVED that the cycle of meetings 2015/2016 as set out in the report be approved.

### **Revenue Budget Outturn 2014/2015 and Revenue Budget First Review 2015/2016**

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report to advise Members of the Revenue Budget Outturn Position for 2014/2015, as it currently stood, outlining main areas of variance and any related proposed actions. It was proposed that the Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman of the Authority, be given delegated Authority to take any further additional final accounts decisions beyond those included within the report. If any material changes occurred to the current position, these would be reported to the Authority.

Members were referred to the Revenue Budget projected Outturn at Appendix 1 of the report. Whilst a small number of issues were still to be resolved, any changes were unlikely to have any material impact on the overall position for the year.

The third review identified a net underspend of £0.362 million compared to the Revised Budget position after the Authority agreed that the proposed use of earmarked reserves of £1.133m was no longer required to support the budget.

The Revenue Budget Outturn for 2014/2015 position now showed a net underspend of £0.024m and the variances were explained to Members. A statement showing the movement on earmarked reserves in 2014/2015 was provided at Appendix 2 of the report.

Members commended Officers for a positive report in times of austerity and acknowledged the impact of the IRMP in generating savings and minimising the use of reserves.

6. RESOLVED that:-
  - (i) The Revenue Budget Outturn position for 2014/15, set out at paragraph 2.4 of the report, be noted;
  - (ii) The position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2015/2016, detailed at section 4 of the report, be noted;
  - (iii) The General Balances position detailed at paragraph 3.1 of the report be noted; and
  - (iv) Approval be given to delegated authority to 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 2014/2015 and Capital Programme First Review 2015/2016**

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report to present the provisional capital outturn for 2014/2015, highlighting main variances from the 2014/2015 Capital Programme Third Review; and to review the current year's programme to reflect the actual outturn 2014/2015 position and other changes since the original programme for 2015/2016 was approved.

Members were advised that the Capital Programme outturn for 2014/2015 reflected a reduction in spending of £2,333,110 from £5,891,506 to £3,558,396 which had arisen as a result of variations, as set out within the report.

The Capital Programme for 2015/2016 set out at Appendix A, had been increased by £2,338,155 from £5,301,852 to £7,640,007 as a result of costs slipping from the 2014/2015 programme and from an acceleration of some minor police integration scheme costs from 2015/16 into 2014/15. Members were advised that there were no issues or concerns to report at this early stage.

7. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The projected outturn position for 2014/2015 be noted;
- (ii) The transfer of the anticipated slippage (£2,341.955) into 2015/2016 be approved; and
- (iii) The revised Capital Programme for 2015/2016, as set out at Appendix A, in light of the capital outturn position for 2014/2015 be approved.

### **Operational Assessment Peer Challenge**

The Chief Fire Officer submitted a report informing Members of the Operational Assessment Peer Challenge which took place from 30<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2015, and presenting Members with an actions plan based on the review.

Members were reminded that the process consisted of a self-assessment against seven Key Assessment Areas, followed by an on-site peer review. The seven areas were detailed within the report.

The peer review focused on specific areas namely:- Protection, Response and Training and Development. The Peer Assessment report was attached as Appendix 1, and from this, an action plan had been created and attached as Appendix 2 of the report.

The Vice-Chairman commented the peer assessment review was an extremely useful method of receiving an external opinion as to how the Authority was performing.

A discussion then ensued in relation to clearly communicating messages to staff, to ensure that key messages from leadership were readily understood, which would be a benefit to the organisation as a whole, if the reasons for decisions were cascaded

across the organisation. As effective communication was a two-way process, it was acknowledged that it was also important for the Authority to receive information in relation feedback from staff about the decisions which had been taken.

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) The contents of the report be noted;
- (ii) The implementation of the action plan be noted and endorsed;
- (iii) The report be referred to the Policy and Performance Committee for detailed consideration; and
- (iv) Further reports be received as appropriate.

### **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.

