

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 10 JUNE 2013
at 10.30 am.

Present:

Councillor T Wright in the Chair

Councillors Bell, M Forbes, N Forbes, Gambling, Harrison, Haley,
McAtominey, Mole, Mortimer, Ord, Price, Renton, Stockdale and
Stephenson.

Part I

Appointment of Chairman

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

The Chairman welcomed new Members to the meeting.

Members were advised that Newcastle City Council were naming a street
after former Councillor Cooney, who had also been a long standing Member
of the Authority. All Members were invited to attend the event at 11.00am the
following day.

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor
Padgett.

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:-

- (i) that the minutes of the Meeting of the Authority, Part I held on 25 March 2013, be confirmed and signed as a correct record;
- (ii) that the minutes of the Meeting of the Governance Committee held on 18 March 2013, be noted for information;
- (iii) the minutes of the Meeting of the Appointments Committee held on 1 May 2013, be noted for information; and
- (iv) the minutes of the Meeting of the Appointments Committee held on 1 May 2013, be noted for information.

Membership of Authority, Appointment to Committees and Appointment of Spokesmen for 2013/2014

The Deputy Clerk to the Authority submitted a report to notify the appointments to the Fire and Rescue Authority made by the Constituent Authorities and to consider the appointments to the Committees and the spokesmen for 2013/2014.

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

4. RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the undermentioned Members be appointed to serve on the Committees of the Authority indicated for the Municipal Year 2013/2014: -

- (a) Governance Committee

Independent Chairman	-	Mr G N Cook
Independent Member	-	Mr I Paterson
Independent Member	-	Ms G Goodwill

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

(b) Standards Committee

Councillors Bell, Haley, Padgett, Harrison, Renton and Mortimer.

Chairman – Councillor Haley
Vice Chairman – Councillor Bell

(c) Policy and Performance Committee

Councillors N Forbes, Stockdale, Padgett, McAtominey, Gambling and M. Forbes.

Chairman – Councillor N. Forbes
Vice Chairman – Councillor Padgett

(d) Human Resources Committee

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

Chairman – Councillor Bell
Vice Chairman – Councillor Haley

(e) Appointments Committee

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

Chairman – Wright
Vice Chairman – Councillor Haley

(f) Disciplinary Appeals Committee

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

Chairman – Councillor Wright
Vice Chairman – Councillor N. Forbes

(g) Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee

Councillors Stockdale, Padgett, N Forbes, McAtominey, Ord and M. Forbes.

Chairman – Councillor N. Forbes
Vice Chairman – Councillor McAtominey

(h) Emergency Sub-Committee

Councillors Wright, N Forbes and Ord

Chairman – Councillor Wright
Vice Chairman – Councillor N. Forbes.

- (ii) the undermentioned 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 Gambling
South Tyneside	-	Councillor Bell
Sunderland	-	Councillor Wright

- (iii) the undermentioned 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

- (iv) Councillors Wright, and Haley, with Councillor Gambling as a substitute, be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Local Government Association.

- (v) Councillor Wright be appointed to the Local Government Association Urban Commission.

- (vi) 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 venue of meetings of the Authority and its Committees, together with the Awareness and Development Programme for the Municipal Year 2013/2014.

5. RESOLVED that the cycle of meetings 2013/2014 as set out in the report be approved.

Revenue Budget Outturn 2012/2013 and Revenue Budget First Review 2013/2014

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a joint report to advise Members of the Revenue Budget Outturn position for 2012/2013 as it currently stood, outlining the 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 additional final accounts decisions beyond those included in the report. If any material changes occurred to the current position, these would be reported to the Authority.

The Finance Officer referred Members to the Revenue Budget Outturn detailed at Appendix A of the report and explained that a small number of issues were still to be resolved, therefore the Outturn position was likely to change although these changes were unlikely to have a material impact on the Authority's position.

Members were advised that the Revenue Budget Outturn for 2012/13 showed a net underspend of £1.588 million, at £53.981m compared with an original budget of £55.569m.

The Finance Officer explained that the main areas of variance were detailed within section 2.5 of the report with some assessment of ongoing impact into 2013/2014.

Appendix B of the report provided a statement showing the movement on earmarked reserves. The main movement related to the Budget Carry Forward Reserve with a net movement in 2012/13 of £468,260 due to Capital Programme slippage.

The Authority proposed to transfer £476,000 to the Carbon Management Plan Reserve in respect of new projects and proposed to appropriate £1,100,000 from the underspend to the Organisational Change Reserve in preparation for future reviews.

A discussion then ensued in relation to the level of reserves and Members acknowledged that these should be proactively and prudently managed in order that they were utilised with best effect on the Authority's long term finances. This being particularly relevant with the further proposed cuts in government funding. Members therefore asked that these be maintained where possible, in order to react to future uncertainties.

The Finance Officer agreed and explained that Reserves would also be used to deal with peaks and troughs in the Localisation of Business Rates.

Appendix C of the report showed the movement of balances within 2012/2013 and the estimated balance as at 31 March 2013 of £3,227,000.

The Vice Chairman commented upon the positive budget position given the significant financial constraints and explained that this was a real achievement for the Authority.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Revenue Budget Outturn for 2012/2013, detailed at paragraph 2.4 of the report be noted;
- (ii) the sums earmarked within the Budget Carry Forward Reserve at paragraph 2.7 and the proposed transfers to earmarked reserves at paragraphs 2.8 to 2.9 of the report be noted (Appendix B shows the estimated reserves position for 2012/13);
- (iii) the position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 detailed at section 3 of the report be noted;
- (iv) the Balances position detailed at paragraph 4.2 and at Appendix C of the report be noted;
- (v) delegated authority be given to the Finance Officer, in consultation with the Chief Fire Officer and the Chairman of the Authority to take any additional final accounts in order to maximise the financial position of the Authority.

Capital Programme Outturn 2012/13 and Capital Programme First Review 2013/14

The Chief Fire Officer and the Finance Officer submitted a report to present the provisional capital outturn for 2012/2013, highlighting the main variances from the 2012/2013 Capital Programme Third Review; and to review the current year's programme to reflect the actual outturn 2012/2013 position and other changes since the original programme for 2013/2014 was approved.

The Finance Officer advised that the Capital Programme outturn for 2012/2013 reflected a reduction in spending of £932,075 from £5,123,816 to £4,191,741. The report provided Members with detail of all variances.

Appendix A of the report detailed the capital position for 2012/2013 and members noted that the Capital Programme had been increased by £1,056,688 from £3,448,090 to £4,504,778.

Councillor Mole commented upon the installation of sprinklers at some buildings in Gateshead and commended the Service for the way in which this work had been carried out. He added that this should be promoted and asked that a discussion take place in relation to this, at a future meeting.

The Chief Fire Officer responded by advising that the use of some Reserves for Community Safety work on social housing was currently being considered and that this would be presented to a future meeting.

In response to a question from Councillor Harrison relating to whether or not the underspend had been planned, the Chief Fire Officer explained that some underspend was due to the Authority's long term recruitment freeze in order to prepare for future reductions in funding. Other measures had also been put in place to meet the year on year challenges facing the Authority. In addition to this, slippage in capital projects was shown as an underspend in revenue.

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Brindle went on to say that regular meetings of the Asset Management Group took place to manage the budget of projects together with their timescales and that best endeavours were used to ensure that budgets balanced in year. Where a slippage was reported, this was normally beyond the control of the service and the reasoning behind it was considered.

7. RESOLVED that the revised Capital Programme for 2013/2014, as set out at Appendix A of the report be approved, in light of the capital outturn 2012/2013.

LGA Conference and Member Training

The Chief Fire Officer submitted a report to propose Authority representation at the forthcoming annual conference (2nd-4th July 2013) and the LGA Leadership Academy fire and rescue programme (11th-12th September 2013).

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the conference would be held in Manchester on 2nd to 4th July 2013. The conference would discuss and debate the central role that local authorities play in promoting economic growth, jobs and prosperity, delivering public service reform and ensuring that financing for local government was sustainable and fair. The cost of the conference was £495 per person.

With regards to the Fire Leadership Academy, Members were advised that this event was scheduled to take place on 11th and 12th September 2013 at Warwick Business School Conference Centre.

The main objectives of the programme were to develop the nature of political leadership in FRAs, ensure elected members were kept up to date on the key

strategic issues facing the sector, appreciate how different leadership styles could assist in organisational change and exploring tools and techniques for working with communities, partners, and the media. As this would be the first year of this reinvigorated programme, the LGA were offering up to 12 places on a free basis.

Members acknowledged the importance of the Authority being represented at both events.

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given to the attendance of one member of the Authority at the LGA Conference 2013, and
- (ii) Councillor Haley be nominated to attend the Leadership Academy on behalf of the Authority.

Correspondence List

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.

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

(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.