



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM
FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

MINUTES

of meeting of the Authority held on **24 JUNE 2011** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Nottingham from 10.30 am to 12.50 pm

Membership

Councillor D Pulk	(Chair)
Councillor B Grocock	(Vice-Chair)
Councillor C Arnold	(minutes 15-20 inclusive)
Councillor S Carroll	
Councillor B Cooper	
Councillor B Cross	
^ Councillor S Fielding	
Councillor K Girling	
Councillor J Hemsall	
Councillor E Kerry	
Councillor J Morris	
Councillor J Packer	
Councillor T Pettengell	
^ Councillor K Rigby	
Councillor D Smith	
Councillor T Spencer	
Councillor G Wheeler	
Councillor J Zadrozny	

Members absent are marked ^

15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fielding and Rigby.

16 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

17 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2011, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

18 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- (a) the Local Government Association Fire Forum had looked at continuity plans and, in particular, the ability to provide cover under difficult circumstances. The Prime Minister had specifically raised the issue of Fire Authorities being fit for purpose;
- (b) the Chair gave thanks to Lea-Anne Abbis, PA to the Chief Fire Officer for her hard work in assisting the Chair and the Chief Fire Officer on their recent visits to all fire stations in the County;
- (c) Nottinghamshire Ladies Driving Challenge event would be held at Newark Showground on 25 September 2011. All funds raised would go to the Firefighters Charity. The event would be opened by Lillian Greenwood MP. All members of the Fire Authority and their families were encouraged to support the event and attend.

19 FIRE COVER REVIEW- FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRE COVER REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Further to minute 8 dated 27 May 2011, the Chair of the Fire Cover Review Working Group updated the meeting on the work carried out by the Working Group. A final report had been submitted to the Chief Fire Officer.

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Working Group and the other members of the Group for their work on the Review.

RESOLVED that the work of the Working Group be noted.

20 FIRE COVER REVIEW - OPTIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE OUTCOMES OF THE FIRE COVER REVIEW 2010

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, presenting three options to the Fire Authority to address the findings of the Fire Cover Review.

A representative of the Fire Brigades Union asked the following questions of the Chair regarding this item,

Question 1. 'Section 9 of the report - could the Fire Authority confirm that with the proposed cuts to supervisory roles, safe systems of work and command and control procedures could still be implemented to the same level as currently employed by the organisation?'

The Chair responded to the question as follows:

'The outcomes contained within the Fire Cover Review 2010 report (FCR 2010) and extensive supporting evidence were predicated upon the allocation of resources that underpinned the continued application of safe systems of work for all employees.

As the meeting would be aware the safe systems of work and command and control procedures were not solely based upon the numbers of operational staff (including supervisory managers), but a mix of operational procedures, standard operating practices, predetermined first attendances and mobilising criteria.

As the FCR 2010 had clearly detailed, at no point was it implied the service or the Fire Authority would condone compromising its well established procedures and would reaffirm that the pre-determined attendances, and operational command and control, would be a key part of the future delivery model. Indeed, some of the proposed changes were to ensure a greater resilience across the County and to provide increased supervision.

Whilst the numbers of managers overall may be reducing in the options, the number available at any point in time would be governed by negotiated rotas and looked to better use capacity e.g. day duty staff or Retained Duty System support, thereby increasing appliance availability and therefore service, to the residents of the City and County.

The potential reduction in officer numbers took into account the decline in the number of incidents, but did not propose to compromise the response to the type and nature of incident that would normally receive greater supervision due to its complexity or scale.

He was sure that the Fire Brigades Union would be aware of the recent report by the Health and Safety Executive and the recommendations contained within it regarding breathing apparatus, core skills and incident command training. It was for this reason that the service had chosen to protect its training provision at this stage and would seek to build on existing arrangements that would ensure a high standard across the organisation.

As part of any consultation process the Fire Authority would engage with all of the representative bodies whose members may be affected by these proposals and ensure that all had confidence in any changes before they were implemented.'

Question 2. 'Paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4, could the Authority confirm that they had investigated fully potential savings to the budget that could be made by ceasing to provide non-statutory activities, for example co-responding.'

The Chair responded to the question as follows:

'Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service did not readily engage in responding to non-statutory activities. Under section 12 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 provision existed for a fire and rescue service 'to provide any employee or equipment maintained by it for any purpose that the Fire Authority deem appropriate.'

The normal process for consulting and agreeing arrangements under this provision was the Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) process and as the questioner had identified, co-responding, as well as flooding and other special services, fell into this category.

Anything the Service did under this provision had previously been agreed by the Fire and Rescue Authority through the IRMP process and any changes therefore must be agreed by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

With regard to co-responding specifically the service was in dialogue with other parties over the best way forward, and a future proposal on what options were available would be brought to the Fire and Rescue Authority at a future date.

In terms of potential savings these would be fully assessed if the service proposed to recommend to the Fire and Rescue Authority any changes to existing arrangements which they had previously agreed.'

Question 3. 'Could the Authority explain why savings that could be made by ceasing to carry out non-statutory duties were implemented before cuts to statutory front line services?'

The Chair responded to the question as follows:

'I refer to my previous response with regard to the provision of statutory arrangements for the delivery of other services under section 12.

In terms of savings the Service would always seek to make those where possible in such a way that does not impact on the Fire Authority's statutory duty. He was assured that the options put forward today by the Chief Fire Officer would ensure that the Fire Authority continued to meet its statutory provisions and that the service to the community as well as the health and safety of its employees would not be compromised.'

A motion to amend the recommendations contained in the report was moved by Councillor Wheeler and seconded by Councillor Zadrozny as follows:

'Under Section 10, remove the full stop at the end of recommendation 10.2 and add the following:

'but does not accept the proposal to close Station 15 Collingham'

Under Section 10, remove the full stop at the end of recommendation 10.3 and add the following:

'of option 2 but removing the proposal to close Station 15 Collingham'

The amended recommendations would then read:

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Fire Authority receive the three options put forward which addressed the findings of the Fire Cover Review;
- (2) that the Fire Authority receive the Chief Fire Officer's recommendation that Option 2 would provide a sound basis and best option on which to begin a comprehensive consultation process but did not accept his proposal to close Station 15 Collingham;
- (3) that the Fire Authority agree on the way forward with regard to consultation and the options presented, taking into account the Chief Fire Officer's recommendation of Option 2 but removing the proposal to close Station 15 Collingham;

- (4) that the Chief Fire Officer be tasked with beginning internal consultation on any managerial changes contained within the Fire Cover Review;
- (5) that consultation with the wider public and stakeholders begin at the earliest opportunity and run for a period of no less than 12 weeks;
- (6) that the outcomes of the consultation process be presented back to a full meeting of the Fire Authority at the earliest opportunity post the consultation period closing.

The Chair adjourned the meeting for 20 minutes to allow members to consider the proposed amendment. When the meeting re-convened, the Chief Fire Officer summarised the risk implications of the proposed amendment to the recommendations. He explained that by retaining Collingham, the Authority would be maintaining levels above the levels required to meet risk and that the impact would be felt in year 3 when the cost would be, at a maximum, approximately £200,000 per annum.

The meeting then voted whether to consider the proposed amendment to the recommendations. The motion was carried.

The Chief Fire Officer recommended Option 2 in the report as the preferred option on which to consult.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Fire Authority receive the three options put forward which addressed the findings of the Fire Cover Review;**
- (2) that the Fire Authority receive the Chief Fire Officer's recommendation that Option 2 would provide a sound basis and best option on which to begin a comprehensive consultation process but did not accept his proposal to close Station 15 Collingham;**
- (3) that the Fire Authority agree on the way forward with regard to consultation and the options presented, taking into account the Chief Fire Officer's recommendation of Option 2 but removing the proposal to close Station 15 Collingham;**
- (4) that the Chief Fire Officer be tasked with beginning internal consultation on any managerial changes contained within the Fire Cover Review;**
- (5) that consultation with the wider public and stakeholders begin at the earliest opportunity and run for a period of no less than 12 weeks;**
- (6) that the outcomes of the consultation process be presented back to a full meeting of the Fire Authority at the earliest opportunity post the consultation period closing.**

21 OPTIONS FOR DELIVERY OF FUTURE FIRE CONTROL SERVICES

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, presenting the options for the continued delivery of fire control services for

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service. The Chair presented to the meeting a copy letter from Bob Neill MP dated 13 June 2011 updating on the process following the close of the consultation on the future of fire and rescue control services in April.

RESOLVED that the Chief Fire Officer be tasked with providing detailed business case options in respect of Options 2 and 3, with a further report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Fire Authority.

22 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM BUSINESS PLAN

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, updating the Authority on the progress made against priorities identified within the 2010/2011 plan and to outline the priorities identified by the Strategic Management Team for the period 2011/12.

RESOLVED that the areas of focus identified by the Strategic Management Team for the forthcoming period be noted and supported.

23 ANNUAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, informing the Authority of the review of its governance arrangements that had recently been carried out by the Strategic Director of Finance and Resources.

RESOLVED that the content of the annual governance statement be approved.

24 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011/12

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer to the Fire Authority, copies of which had been circulated, on the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12 and seeking approval of the Authority's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2011/12.

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy 2011/12, as set out in the report, be approved.

25 PROVISIONAL OUT-TURN FOR 2010/11

Consideration was given to a joint report of the Treasurer and Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, reporting on the financial performance of the Service in 2010/11.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and approval given to the acceleration of Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay into 2010/2011 to gain the advantage of reduced revenue implications in 2011/12.