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NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

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**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service HQ, Bestwood Lodge,
Arnold, NG5 8PD on 19 December 2014 from 10.30am to 11.25am**

Membership

Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)
Councillor Brian Grocock (Vice Chair)
Councillor John Allin
Councillor Chris Barnfather
Councillor Sybil Fielding
Councillor Michael Payne
Councillor Ken Rigby
Councillor Gordon Wheeler
Councillor John Wilmott
Councillor Liz Yates
Councillor David Smith
Councillor Malcolm Wood
Councillor Jon Collins

Absent

Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Stephen Garner
Councillor Roger Jackson
Councillor Eunice Campbell
Councillor Timothy Spencer

37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Campbell	-	annual leave
Councillor Clarke)	other Council business
Councillor Jackson)	
Councillor Garner)	personal
Councillor Spencer)	

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

39 MINUTES

Subject to the inclusion in 'Membership' of Councillor Sybil Fielding as 'Present', the Authority confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

40 CHAIRS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

- (1) 2014 had been a significant year for the Authority with:
 - the appointment of new Chief (John Buckley), Deputy Chief (Wayne Bowcock) and Assistant Chief (Craig Parkin) Fire Officers;
 - a reduction of around 200 in fire cover and support staff;
 - a new fire station at Retford, to be officially opened on 4 February 2015;
 - a debate on Monday 15 December 2014 in the House of Commons, following a motion to revoke the statutory instrument 'The Fire-fighters Pension Scheme (England) Regulations 2014' from Hilary Benn, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as he believes the "regulations are unfair";
 - individual days of industrial action through-out the year in protest at the cuts in services and the proposed new pension scheme, which resulted in the Chair and Chief Fire Officer lobbying MPs to try to resolve the issues;
- (2) the 3 year enforcement action case against a Wellow businessman has finally been resolved, with him pleading guilty to numerous charges and the Authority being awarded substantial costs;
- (3) Bestwood Lodge HQ hosted a mental health conference, aimed at discussing and raising the profile of mental health issues;
- (4) the Chair and the Chief Fire Officer have signed the 'No Bystanders' pledge, Stonewall's campaign to tackle bullying and abuse, and would suggest all members of the Authority also sign it if they haven't already;
- (5) a charity day was held on 18 December, raising over £1,500 for various charities, which saw, amongst other events, the Chief Fire Officer dressed as Santa and Officer Mark Mortimer spending over 7 hours on a rowing machine, covering a distance of almost 100 kilometres;
- (6) Councillor Roger Jackson has replaced Councillor Tony Roberts as a member of Fire Authority, Community Safety Committee and Strategic Finance Committee.

41 BUDGET GUIDELINES 2015/16

Neil Timms, Head of Finance and Resources, presented a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer, informing the Authority of the likely budget position for 2015/16 and requesting authorisation of the guidelines under which the Finance and Resources Committee will develop a detailed budget proposal for 2015/16 to 2017/18.

RESOLVED to approve the guidelines as follows as a framework for the Finance and Resources Committee to develop the Authority's draft budgets for 2015/16 to 2017/18:

- (i) set the council tax increase at zero and take the council tax freeze grant offered by the government;**
- (ii) reduce council tax and take the council tax freeze grant offered by the government;**
- (iii) increase council tax by an amount lower than the 2% referendum limit;**
- (iv) set a budget which would require a referendum.**

42 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF INTENT

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented his report which advised the Authority that the Fire and Rescue Service's written safety policy 'Statement of Intent' had been reviewed to ensure it remained current in terms of signatories and content. He reported that subsequent to publication of the report, Unison have now signed the Statement of Intent.

RESOLVED to endorse the Statement of Intent.

43 ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POST

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, introduced his report, which asked the Authority to approve the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee to establish a Communications Officer post within the Corporate Communications and Administration team.

During discussion, it was stated that consideration was being given to a nominated single point of contact for Councillors to enable them to be informed of any issues affecting fire stations, both in their local area and nationally, to ensure they could respond to queries from the local community.

RESOLVED to approve the establishment of the post of Communications Officer on the terms as set out in the report considered by the Human Resources Committee, appended to this report.

44 COMMITTEE OUTCOMES FOR NOTING

RESOLVED to note the minutes of the following Committees:

- (1) **Community Safety, held on 3 October 2014;**
- (2) **Finance and Resources, held on 10 October 2014;**
- (3) **Human Resources, held on 10 October 2014;**
- (4) **Policy and Strategy, held on 7 November 2014.**

45 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda items in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

46 EXEMPT MINUTES

The Authority confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2014 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

47 COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented his report, updating members on the progress of the joint working group with Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service and seeking approval to move forward with a Control function collaboration.

RESOLVED to approve:

- (1) **a combination of the Control functions for Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire at the Leicestershire site;**
- (2) **the formation of an appropriate governance structure to oversee the implementation and long term delivery of the Control function;**
- (3) **the commencement of planning and implementation with immediate effect, with initial outcomes expected during 2015.**