



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

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

of meeting held on **30 MARCH 2012** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge from 10.00 am to 11.25 am.

**Membership**

Councillor S Carroll (Chair)  
Councillor C Barnfather  
^ Councillor B Cross  
Councillor E Kerry  
Councillor D Smith

Members absent are marked ^

**35 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Cross.  
The Chair welcomed Councillor Barnfather to his first meeting of the Committee.

**36 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

**37 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 January 2012, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair subject to amending resolution 1 of minute 27 to read as follows:

**'that the provision of public consultation mechanisms regarding the budget proposals and options for council tax, on a cost neutral basis, be further investigated by the Strategic Director of Finance and that the budget proposals be published on the Authority's website'**

**38 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2012**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, reporting on the Capital Programme progress in the year 2011/12 to the end of January 2012.

The Head of Finance and Resources reported to the meeting that the capital budget monitoring statement was showing an underspend to date of £2,189,000 against a budget for the year of £4,349,000. The budget for the year included slippage of £1,545,000 brought forward from 2010/11. A projected underspend of £1,214,000 was shown for the Programme by the end of the year.

The Authority had received a capital grant of £1,486,000 from the Government and this would be used to finance an element of the Capital Programme.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

### **39 REVENUE MONITORING REPORT TO 31 JANUARY 2012**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, reporting on the financial performance of the Service in the year 2011/12 to the end January 2012.

The Head of Finance and Resources advised the meeting that the budget monitoring statement for January 2012 was showing an underspend to date of £3,520,000. This was made up of several key variances, the most significant of which were set out in the report. The projected outturn variance for the year was an underspend of £3,057,000.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

### **40 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 29 FEBRUARY 2012**

Consideration was given to the report of the Treasurer, copies of which had been circulated, giving details of performance up to 29 February 2012 relating to the prudential indicators for capital accounting and treasury management.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

### **41 VALUE FOR MONEY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, outlining the proposed programme for achieving and demonstrating Value for Money in 2012/13 and reporting on progress against the Value for Money Programme for 2011/12.

The Head of Finance and Resources explained to the meeting that the challenge going forward was not only to maintain, but to improve services with less money. Various initiatives had been planned for 2012/13 to bring about wider benefits to help ensure that the Organisation was efficient and effective. Collaboration with partners was important in order to be able to achieve economies of scale.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

### **42 GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS FOR COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, informing the Committee of the Government's proposals for the localisation of Council Tax Support schemes and the potential impact this would have on the Fire Authority.

The Head of Finance and Resources explained to the meeting that the Government was proposing that Council Tax Benefit became a localised rebate scheme from 1 April 2013 so that each council would be free to devise and implement its own policy for distributing financial assistance for households that were not able to afford to pay all or part of their Council Tax liability. This would potentially have an effect on the Fire Authority as detailed in paragraphs 2.18-2.20 of the report.

The Chair of the Fire Authority was to be invited to participate in the Members Forum to represent the Fire Authority in discussions with local Councils.

The Fire Authority would need to consider how to make financial provision for the risks associated with the change from 2013/14.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and that future reports be received on this matter when further information became available.**

#### **43 PROPOSED BLIDWORTH REFURBISHMENT PROJECT**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, seeking an increase to the Blidworth refurbishment project funding and providing a progress report on the project.

Ian Pritchard, Estates and Procurement Manager, explained to the Meeting that the cost of a temporary appliance bay, drainage works and a retaining wall meant that the project costs of the project had been revised upwards. As the variance was greater than the 5% permitted in Financial Regulations, authorisation to increase the Project budget was required.

**RESOLVED that the overall budget for the Blidworth refurbishment project be increased to £495,000 and a further £26,000 transferred from a separate budget for the Environmental Agency drainage works.**

#### **44 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Treasurer, copies of which had been circulated, presenting the reports which had been issued by Internal Audit during 2011/12 following audit work carried out.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

#### **45 PROJECT UPDATE REPORT ON INVESTMENT IN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, updating the Committee on the sustainable energy technology project for the installation of photovoltaic panels to Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service Sites.

Ian Pritchard, Estates and Procurement Manager, updated the meeting on the project progress at the various sites. There were two errors in the report: paragraph 2.8 the figure on the last line of the paragraph was 15.2p per kWp and in paragraph 2.14 the final figure was 20kW.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted and that future reports be received on this matter when further information became available;**
- (2) that the extension of the Project to include work at Tuxford up to a value of £85,000 be approved, to be financed in part by underspends elsewhere and in part by virement from the capital programme provision for Ashfield Fire Station of £50,000.**

## **46 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining item 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 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

## **47 CARDIFF CHECKS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Treasurer, copies of which had been circulated, informing the Committee of the findings on Internal Audit regarding three paid invoices selected by Members during 2011 and giving the response of management to the findings and recommendations.

**RESOLVED that the recommendations in the report be implemented without delay.**

## **48 CARLTON AND TUXFORD PROJECTS**

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated, giving the Committee information on the projects for the rebuilding of Carlton and Tuxford Fire Stations.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the conclusions made be noted.**