



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

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of the meeting of the held on **4 AUGUST 2006** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge from 10.07am to 11.26 am.

Membership

- Councillor B Charlesworth
- Councillor J Cottee
- ^ Councillor S Fielding
- Councillor P Griggs
- Councillor D Pulk
- Councillor K Rigby

Members absent are marked ^

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Pulk be appointed Chair for the municipal year 2006/07.

2 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Fielding.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 May 2006, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

5 TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED that the following additional terms of reference for the Committee, agreed by the Fire and Rescue Authority at its meeting held on 9 June 2006, be noted:

- '22. To take the strategic lead in the development of equality across the Authority and to act upon outcomes referred to it from the Ad-Hoc Equalities Group.**
- 23. To take the strategic lead on ensuring delivery of a Value for Money Service.'**

6 INTERNAL CONTROL - REVIEW

Consideration was given to minute 13(2) of the Fire and Rescue dated 9 June 2006, copies of which had been circulated.

RESOLVED that the Fire and Rescue Authority be advised that the review and monitoring of the Statement of Internal Control should be undertaken by the Finance and Resources Committee, and the Chief Fire Officer submit a report to the September 2006 meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority recommending a variation of that Committee's terms of reference accordingly.

7 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – PROGRESS

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.

Progress reports by Lead Members and Project Managers considered by the Human Resources, Performance Monitoring and Community Safety Committees addressing raised by the Audit Commission during its inspection in February 2005, were appended.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that progress report content had been closely aligned to Direction of Travel documentation produced at the end of June and which was expected to be a major focus of the Service's internal audit inspection to be conducted during the Autumn as part of the formal Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) process. The content of the recently received CPA Key Lines of Enquiry was still being evaluated and Use of Resources documentation was expected on 14 August 2006.

RESOLVED

- (1) that progress on the people management, governance and management and partnership working elements of the Action plan, be noted;**
- (2) that to maintain and enhance their engagement in the process, the Chief Fire Officer be requested to arrange an informal briefing for elected members on the application of CPA to the Service, prior to the September meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority.**

8 SHIFT CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. The report included, for information, the minutes of the Shift Change Implementation Task and Finish Group meeting held on 4 July 2006. Issues of interest for this Committee included:-

- a revised implementation date of 3 January 2007;
- the use of further briefings to stations to recruit additional personnel to work in the Community Safety Team and which, if successful, would avoid the need for compulsory transfers;
- an early identification of transfer requirements to accommodate voluntary requests where possible, provide a longer migration period and assist leave plotting processes for 2007.

Councillor Cottee, Chair of the Task and Finish Group, and the Chief Fire Officer stressed that the revised implementation date would not result in any loss of impetus and would assist achievement of implementation whilst minimising the potential for conflict.

Financial implications of the changes and the revised implementation date were monitored by the Task and Finish Group at each meeting and were expected to result in slippage to some budgets, with other elements being achieved at a more measured pace.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;**
- (2) that the formation and work of the Task and Finish Group be welcomed as a means of addressing, at an earlier stage, those issues which might otherwise adversely affect implementation of the shift change proposals.**

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2007-10 - UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. The report outlined the content of the Community Safety Plan, now aligned to the National Framework and including the Medium Term Financial Plan for the concurrent period.

Following consideration at the Fire and Rescue Authority meeting in September, a twelve-week, limited consultation exercise would be undertaken with key stakeholders. The draft would also be publicised and made available for comment on the Service website, and the outcomes reported to the Authority in due course. More extensive consultation would be undertaken every third year as a result of the rolling nature of the Plan.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 AD-HOC MEMBERS GROUP ON EQUALITIES/CORE VALUES

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated. The report included, for information, the minutes of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Members Group on Equalities held on 22 June 2006, together with the notes of an informal planning meeting held on 5 June 2006, to identify further work required on service delivery improvements, the introduction of core values to the organisation and the cultural audit.

The Chief Fire Officer drew attention to:-

- the attendance of Councillor Lally and Sheldon, Julie Dennis and Patricia Griffith at the successful EuroPride Parade held in London on 1 July 2006 (minute 39);
- work by Opinion Research Services (ORS) on the cultural audit. In addition to questionnaires, focus group meetings, to be held towards the end of the current calendar year, would enable the organisation to build and reflect national core values and inform how the Service would continue to move forward. Once identified, ownership of the core values would be cascaded by representative individuals meeting with colleagues;
- the organisation would continue dialogue with Police force colleagues, where shared experiences were often of use.

Members expressed their support for the initiatives being undertaken and stressed the need for as many members of staff as possible to become involved in cultural visits as a means of building positive links with local communities.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;**
- (2) that, as with shift change implementation, the Chief Fire Officer identify in his reports items of likely interest or concern to the Committee.**

11 PROPOSAL TO ACQUIRE PROPERTY FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.

Subject to the Committee's approval of the acquisition and financing, the Chief Fire Officer was pleased to report acceptance of an offer to purchase the freehold of former Primary Care Trust premises at 571 Farnborough Road, Clifton, for use by the relocated Community Safety Division. Allowing for conversion and adaptation, the total cost of the facility was estimated at £650,000, excluding ongoing revenue budget provision for running costs. Staff accommodation and car parking arrangements were considered acceptable for the transient operational style of working.

Occupation of the site would provide a valuable presence for the Service in the local community, only a short distance from the recently opened Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) complex. Community use of the facility whilst possible was, for security considerations, likely to be restricted to the former patient waiting areas towards the front of the building where access could not be gained to offices. Holding larger meetings at the venue would be dependent on the availability of sufficient space and suitable furniture.

RESOLVED

(1) that the Chief Fire Officer be authorised:-

- (a) to complete negotiations for the purchase of 571 Farnborough Road, Clifton at an estimated cost of £538,000, to be financed by external loan and, in consultation with the Clerk to the Authority, to enter into any necessary agreement(s) to achieve this;**
 - (b) arrange conversion and adaptation works to the property at an estimated cost not exceeding £112,000;**
 - (c) make appropriate revenue budget provision for running costs of the premises in the current and future financial years;**
 - (d) arrange appropriate publicity for the initiative;**
- (2) that purchase and occupation of the facility be welcomed as a demonstration of the positive way in which the Service was seeking to introduce new methods of engaging and working with local communities;**
- (3) that the matter be referred to the City Council's Executive Board and appropriate Area Committee for information;**

12 REVIEW OF STORES AND PROCUREMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Fire Officer, copies of which had been circulated.

The Chair and Chief Fire Officer were pleased to report that the outcome of a review of stores and procurement undertaken by First Procurement Associates (FPA) on behalf of the Regional Management Board, had identified the Combined Fire Authority as a model of good practice in a number of areas at both regional and national levels.

Members noted that, whilst the FPA report recommended that Nottinghamshire apply for ISO 9002 accreditation, the costs and efforts to gain and maintain such accreditation could outweigh the potential benefits, and a full business case should be submitted before such registration was considered.

The Chief Fire Officer noted the merits of accreditation, but preferred to re-assess the case for external validation once existing service improvement goals had been attained and maintained.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be noted;**
- (2) that the Chief Fire Officer and his staff be congratulated on their achievement and he be requested to convey the thanks of the Committee to the Stores and Procurement staff concerned for their efforts.**

13 URGENT ITEM – DRAFT CORPORATE EQUALITIES PLAN

The Chair of the meeting was of the opinion that this item, although not included on the agenda, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the special circumstances that it was necessary to enable the Fire and Rescue Authority to consider the draft Plan in advance of its next ordinary meeting so as not to hinder the Service's progress towards achieving Level 2 of the Equality Standards

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that, as a previously arranged meeting to approve submission of the draft Corporate Equalities Plan for consideration to this meeting could not be held, the Committee's agreement was now being sought to submit the draft Plan directly to the Fire and Rescue Authority for consideration and adoption at its meeting on 13 September 2006.

RESOLVED that the draft Corporate Equalities Plan be submitted directly to the full Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 13 September 2006 for consideration and adoption.

14 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

- (1) that the Committee meet at 10.00 am on the following Fridays 30 March and 25 May 2007;**
- (2) that the meeting scheduled for Friday 17 November 2006 be re-arranged to take place at 10.00 am on Thursday 16 November.**