



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND CITY OF NOTTINGHAM FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Services HQ, Bestwood Lodge,
Arnold Nottingham NG5 8PD on 18 December 2015 from 10.34- 12.30**

Membership

Present

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)	
Councillor Brian Grocock (Vice Chair)	
Councillor Chris Barnfather	
Councillor Eunice Campbell	
Councillor Jon Collins	(minutes 39-49 inclusive)
Councillor Neghat Nawaz Khan	
Councillor Dave Liversidge	
Councillor Mike Pringle	
Councillor Michael Payne	(minutes 39-52 inclusive)
Councillor Gordon Wheeler	(minutes 39-52 inclusive)
Councillor Malcolm Wood	
Councillor Yvonne Woodhead	(minutes 39-54 inclusive)
Councillor Liz Yates	(minutes 39-54 inclusive)

Absent

Councillor John Allin
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Roger Jackson
Councillor Ken Rigby
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley	-	Chief Fire Officer
Wayne Bowcock	-	Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Craig Parkin	-	Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Malcolm Townroe	-	Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Authority
Neil Timms	-	Treasurer to the Authority
Sue Maycock	-	Head of Finance
Catherine Ziane-Pryor	-	Governance Officer

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor John Clarke (County Council business)
Councillor Roger Jackson (unwell)
Councillor Ken Rigby (County Council business)
Councillor Jason Zadrozny (County Council business)

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, declared interests in agenda item 12 (minute 50) 'Principal Officer Pay Review' insofar as the decision of the Authority would impact directly on their individual salary. Each officer withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Chris Barnfather, and Councillor Malcolm Wood, both declared an interest in agenda item 16 (minute 54) 'State Aid' in so far as they are both Directors of a company referred to within the report. This did not preclude them for remaining in attendance during consideration of the item, speaking or voting.

41 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2015 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

42 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the resignation from the Authority of Councillor Gail Turner, and the appointment to the Authority of Councillor Jason Zadrozny;**
- (2) to confirm the appointment of Councillor Jason Zadrozny to the following Committees and Board:**

**Human Resources Committee;
Personnel Committee;
Strategic Equalities Board.**

43 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Vice-Chair and Chief Fire Officer attended the Local Government Association (LGA) hosted Combined Fire Authorities (CFA) conference at Wyboston in October where the key topics included future finances, the Police Crime Commissioner Consultation and the work of the National Joint Council (NJC).

The Chair attended a City Forum Event regarding the Police Crime Commissioner Consultation, where it appeared to be accepted that the Fire Service will become the responsibility of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

An issue raised by the local LGA and Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) was the problem for Fire and Rescue Services of dealing with incidents at Mass Waste Management sites. It is surprising and disappointing that Local Authority Planning Services do not consider Fire and Rescue Services as Statutory Consultees when considering applications for such sites.

The Chair attended a National Fire Service Pension Board.

With regard to the Central Government grant settlement, the total grant figure has only just been announced and whilst it is not good, it is more than predicted. The implications of this will be presented to the next Finance and Resources Committee.

The Emergency Services Carol Concert was held earlier in the week with three representatives of this organisation giving readings.

The Chair and Chief Fire Officer have met with the FBU Brigade Committee to discuss future challenges. National, regional and local representatives were in attendance at this useful and interesting meeting.

Under the national arrangements, a Tactical Adviser and Enhanced Logistical Support Crew were deployed to Cumbria to assist during the recent flooding. The Boat Team was ready for deployment but fortunately was not required although other officers provided support in Control.

Pulp Friction is welcomed as the new tenant occupying the canteen at Fire Service Headquarters. It is a not-for-profit organisation providing employment and training for young people with disabilities whilst supplying food for purchase.

Resolved that, on behalf of the Chair, the Chief Fire Officer send a letter of thanks to Councillor Gail Turner for her time on the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Some members suggested that the AGM, scheduled for 3 June 2016, is rescheduled as the date falls within the half term holiday of some schools. The Chair responded that, at the request of some parties, the Authority had already changed the date of the AGM and it was not appropriate to change it again.

44 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2015-16

Neil Timms, Treasurer to the Fire Authority, and Sue Maycock, Head of Finance, presented the report which provided the Authority with an update on Treasury Management activity during the first half of the 2015/16 financial year.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) whilst the economy continues to grow, there has been a slight 'slow down' due to the strength of sterling. However, growth of 2.4-2.8% is expected going forwards;
- (b) the predicted interest rate rise has not happened yet and the Service's investment policy remained strict about which companies and organisations it lends to;

- (c) currently the Service has approximately £10 million invested, mostly in the UK, but has only earned £18,000 interest on this investment;
- (d) the Authority has not taken out any new borrowing for some time and therefore is not meeting the Prudential Code Target for loan maturity. This breach will be rectified when a new loan is taken;
- (e) new loans totalling approximately £13 million will be required for the medium term period and between £2 million to £4 million of this may be borrowed towards the end of the financial year.
- (f) apart from borrowing, the Treasury Management indicators are compliant with all Prudential Code targets.

RESOLVED to note the report.

45 BUDGET GUIDELINES 2016/17

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance, presented the report which informs members of the predicted budget position for 2016/17 and asks that the Authority set general guidelines within which the Finances and Resources Committee can develop a detailed budget proposal for 2016/17 to 2018/19. Final budget proposals will be submitted to the Authority for consideration at the February 2016 meeting when the council tax precept options will be set.

The following points were highlighted:

- (a) the Authority is in a stable financial position and has identified spend for the next four years. However, there is still uncertainty with regard to long term Central Government grant funding;
- (b) the Minister for Communities and Local Government has just announced a 21% funding reduction over the next four year period. The implications of this will be presented to the next Finance and Resources Committee;
- (c) four options for Council tax are presented to the authority with the advice that the following two options are considered by the Finance and Resources Committee:
 - (i) leave the council tax level as it is;
 - (ii) increase council tax by an amount lower than the referendum limit.

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

- (i) the options for Council Tax to be recommended to the Fire Authority in February, limited to either a council tax freeze or an increase in council tax within the referendum limit;**
- (ii) if required, the options for eliminating any budget deficit to enable the Fire Authority to approve a balanced budget, as required by law.**

46 ADJUSTMENTS TO SERVICE DELIVERY PROVISIONS

Prior to consideration of the item, questions from representatives of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) were posed as follows:

Question 1 Nottinghamshire FBU would like to raise their concerns at the reduction in operational establishment levels from the flexi duty officers system. With ever increasing demands placed upon the service to participate in a multiagency and partnership arena, the management of the Service and impact upon all strands of the delivery, prevention and protection are being stretched beyond capacity. Additional expectations of supervision born from previous incidents across the country should not be overlooked by the Service. Whilst we are all aware of the financial squeeze from Central Government the safety of employees and the public is our first and only priority. Bearing this in mind can you confirm that there will be no further reductions in the number of officers in Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service?

The Chair responded:

In making his recommendations the Chief Fire Officer has considered both the managerial and operational impact which these proposals may have on the ability to deliver robust and safe services. Furthermore he believes that any impact is manageable, not only through internal processes but also due to local and national agreements regarding mutual aid.

However, within the report the Chief Fire Officer also recognises that there will be very little scope for any further reductions. This does not enable the Authority to confirm that there will be no further reductions, as it is impossible to project all future scenarios, but it does demonstrate that the points raised by the FBU are very much in the forefront of the Chief Fire Officer's and Authority's thinking.

Question 2 Is the CFA confident that the same high level of service to the public of Nottinghamshire will remain if the Specialist Rescue Team is converted into two Technical Rescue Stations?

The Chair responded: The proposals within the report recognise that the broader rescue competence within the Service has increased since the procurement of rescue equipment on all frontline appliances. This, together with the commitment that all current capabilities will be maintained under the new arrangements gives confidence that the high level of service delivered to the community will continue.

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which seeks approval to adjust operational provisions and delete 34 posts from the whole time uniformed establishment.

The Chief Fire Officer highlighted the following points in the report:

- (a) whilst the Service has implemented savings of £1.3 million there is still a shortfall against the £2.4 million savings required, but the proposed measures will address that shortfall;

- (b) enhanced crewing has been considered for whole time and retained officers, but it was not possible to reach agreements with representative bodies regarding such arrangements. Enhanced crewing is no longer considered an option;
- (c) following discussions with representative bodies is proposed to:
 - (i) delete three station manager posts and convert one to a non-uniformed manager, reduce the Station Manager operational rota from a seven week cycle to a six-week cycle;
 - (ii) delete the 10 firefighter posts allocated to Worksop to enable enhanced crewing;
 - (iii) reintegrate the Specialist Rescue Team onto firefighting watches and create two Technical Rescue Stations at Highfields and Newark Fire Stations;
- (d) due to the predicted turnover of staff, the proposed changes can be implemented without the need for compulsory redundancies.

RESOLVED

- (1) to approve the deletion of 34 whole time uniformed posts;**
- (2) to approve the creation of a non-uniformed manager post within the Equipment Section;**
- (3) to support the adjustments to the service delivery provisions as outlined within the main body of the report.**

47 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2014/15

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, introduced the report which presents the Annual Statement of Assurance for 2014-15 for the Authority's approval.

The Statement of Assurance replaces the Annual Report and is a mandatory requirement, providing assurance of financial, governance and operational matters, with due regard to the expectations presented within the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

The Statement provides an organisational performance report which should instil community and Central Government confidence in the Authority.

RESOLVED to approve the Annual Statement of Assurance 2014-15.

48 FEES AND CHARGES

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which asks members to consider and approve the non-profit making fees and charges of the Service for room hire, use of service facilities, and application of special services. It is noted that the Policy and Strategy Committee had considered the proposals in detail prior to any final report being submitted to the Full Fire Authority.

RESOLVED

- (1) to implement the proposed new charges for special services are set out in appendix B to the report;**
- (2) to implement the recovery of costs for attending special service incidents within the framework set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report;**
- (3) to implement the proposed new charges for the hire of rooms as set out in appendix C to the report;**
- (4) to implement charging for the use of facilities for all service premises;**
- (5) to approve the proposal to fully review fees and charges every three years and to amend fees and charges to reflect inflationary charges in the interim years.**

49 ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR POST

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which seeks approval for the creation of a part-time System Administrator Post within the Human Resources Department. It is noted that the proposal is recommended for approval by the Human Resources Committee following consideration at its meeting on 16 October 2015.

RESOLVED to approve the creation of the post of Systems Administrator (18.5 hours per week) in line with the provisions set out within the report.

50 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY REVIEW

Prior to the Authority's consideration of the item and having declared interests, John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, and Craig Parkin, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, withdrew from the meeting and did not return until consideration of the item had concluded.

Malcolm Townroe, Monitoring Officer and Clerk to the Fire Authority, presented the report which asked members to approve the recommendation of the Policy and Strategy Committee regarding the outcomes of the Principal Officer Pay Review.

RESOLVED

- (1) to approve the recommendation of the Policy and Strategy Committee to maintain the existing pay arrangements for the Chief Fire Officer, including the previously agreed phasing of incremental progression;**
- (2) for the next Principal Pay Officer Review to take place in 2017 for application from 1 January 2018.**

51 COMMITTEE OUTCOMES FOR NOTING

The report of the Chief Fire Officer provided for information the minutes of:

Community Safety Committee 2 October 2015;
Finance and Resources Committee 9 October 2015;
Human Resources Committee 16 October 2015;
Policy and Strategy Committee 13 November 2015.

RESOLVED to note the report.

52 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining 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 outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12 A to the Act.

53 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS RESTRUCTURE

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report which seeks approval for proposed changes within the Corporate Communications Team.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations within the report.

54 STATE AID

Wayne Bowcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, presented the report.

Resolved to note the first recommendations and determine the second, as stated within the exempt minutes.

55 RESILIENCE PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer, presented the report.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations within the report.