



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

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on **1 NOVEMBER 2013** at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 8PD from 10.04 am to 12.20 pm.

Membership

Councillor Darrell Pulk (Chair)
Councillor Chris Barnfather
^ Councillor Jon Collins
^ Councillor Brian Grocock
Councillor Michael Payne
Councillor Gordon Wheeler
Councillor Malcolm Wood (as substitute for Councillor Brian Grocock)

Members absent are marked ^

11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jon Collins
Councillor Brian Grocock

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

13 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2013 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

With the exception of the Chief Fire Officer, the other uniformed officers present left the meeting during consideration of the next item.

14 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW AND TRANSITION PROPOSALS

Frank Swann, the Chief Fire Officer, presented his report, feeding back to the Committee on the outcome of the review into the size of the Strategic Management Team and proposing a process of transition for the Fire Authority, given his intention to retire from the Service on 31 March 2014 and David Horton, Assistant Chief Fire Officer's intention to retire from the service on 30 June 2014.

Following the retirement of the previous Deputy Chief Fire Officer in August 2012, a new structure was implemented in August 2012 comprising the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) (who fulfils the role of Chief Executive); Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO)(Head of Service Delivery); Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) (Head of Service Support) and Assistant Chief Officer (ACO)(Head of Finance and Resources).

In determining whether the management team could be reduced, a number of factors needed to be assessed; other fire and rescue service comparisons, capacity, expertise and skills requirements, finance in terms of costs and operational and organisational resilience.

The Chief Fire Officer expressed the view that, on balance, the current Strategic Management Team level of four seemed appropriate for an organisation of one thousand employees delivering the range of functions that it does. This should be reviewed again in 2016/17 as part of the budget planning cycle.

If members agreed, appropriate arrangements would have to be put in place to facilitate a smooth transition. This could be done by appointing an additional temporary ACFO with almost immediate effect. There are three eligible applicants at substantive Area Manager level. The cost of this for the current financial year could be met by not backfilling the Area Manager Post. The additional ACFO will bolster the Strategic Management Team whilst transition takes place, picking up work and projects which will transgress the next 6-9 months, thus ensuring no corporate memory loss.

At the same time, a decision would have to be made by members as to whether the CFO post remain a uniform operational post or whether it should become a non-uniformed Chief Executive post. Once this decision has been taken, the recruitment process will need to commence quickly. External support would be required for the appointment process and Human Resources will be able to facilitate and co-ordinate this in support of the Appointments Committee. A proposed timetable for this process is set out at paragraph 2.34 of the report.

RESOLVED

- (1) to retain a Strategic Management Team of four;**
- (2) to agree the process of recruitment of Principal Officers to replace those staff departing the Service;**
- (3) to agree to advertise the role of Chief Fire Officer as an operational uniform role and not one of a Chief Executive Officer non-uniformed role.**

Those uniformed officers who had left the meeting during consideration of the previous item, returned to the meeting.

15 ENHANCED CREWING

A representative of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) asked the following question of the Chair regarding this item;

‘Are the Committee aware that enhanced crewing proposals will have to be negotiated on with the FBU as they impact on the shift based collective agreement between management and the FBU. I am sure the Committee recognise the hard work that went into getting an agreement and the success of that agreement in providing a shift system that guarantees availability of fire cover and the reduction of sickness of operational staff. This was delivered without any recompense to operational staff even though the Authority had set aside over £1million to achieve a shift change. The FBU are very concerned that management are contemplating walking away from a very successful partnership that has served NFRS for the past five years. The FBU take this approach by management very seriously and will vehemently oppose any detrimental changes to the signed shift agreement.

The Chair replied as follows:

‘I am reliably informed by the Chief Fire Officer that for this to be implemented will require negotiation which is why he has specifically made that point in paragraph 2.30 of the report. We are well aware of the successful arrangements in place within Nottinghamshire and the benefits that these have brought, and I do not see why we would want to walk away from the partnership approach. The proposal is for the Policy and Strategy Committee to consider as a variation, a change from the Fire Authority decision which related to Worksop Retained and for that to be extended to address crewing pressures at Bingham. The process of delivery will then be a matter for the Chief Fire Officer and his team’

Frank Swann, the Chief Fire Officer, presented his report seeking to slightly vary the proposal for the second pump at Worksop by the introduction of an enhanced crewing model and to extend the model to Bingham fire station as part of the implementation.

RESOLVED to vary the proposal for the second pump at Worksop by the introduction of an enhanced crewing model and to extend the model to Bingham fire station as part of the implementation.

16 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2014-2019

Frank Swann, the Chief Fire Officer, presented his report seeking the approval of the Committee to consult on the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan, in line with the Authority’s agreed consultation strategy. The draft plan for the next period focuses over a period of five years and is written to encapsulate the aspirations of the Service but also to be suitably flexible so that if the Service needs to change its focus against a backdrop of further budget reductions, it can do so with targeted consultation, as has been previously undertaken when dealing with specific issues.

The Chair requested that the Chief Fire Officer pass on the congratulations of the Committee to those responsible for producing the draft.

RESOLVED to consult on the draft Integrated Risk Management Plan attached to the report and to report back to the Full Fire Authority with recommendations in time for formal adoption in April 2014.

17 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY

This item was withdrawn from the agenda by the Chair.

18 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 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

19 EXEMPT MINUTES

The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the current plans to address the potential fire fighters' industrial action that evening and on Monday morning.

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2013 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

20 PRINCIPAL OFFICER PAY

The Treasurer to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority presented the joint report of himself and the Clerk to the Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire and Rescue Authority, setting out the outcomes of the biennial principal officers pay review.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations in the report subject to the amendments agreed by the Committee, as recorded in a separate exempt minute.