



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

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters,
Bestwood Lodge, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 8PD on 15 January 2016 from 10.02 -
11.10**

Membership

Present

Councillor Malcolm Wood (Chair)
Councillor John Allin
Councillor Chris Barnfather
Councillor Brian Grocock (substitute)
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor Gordon Wheeler

Absent

Councillor John Clarke (substituted
by Cllr Brian Grocock)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

John Buckley - Chief Fire Officer
Sue Maycock - Head of Finance
Neil Timms - Treasurer to the Authority
James Welbourn - Governance Officer

16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor John Clarke (sent substitute)

17 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

18 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2015 as a true record and they were signed by the Chair.

19 PRUDENTIAL CODE MONITORING REPORT TO 30 NOVEMBER 2015

Neil Timms, Treasurer to the Fire Authority introduced the Prudential Code Monitoring report to 30 November 2015, highlighting the following points:

- (a) there is likely to be a need to borrow this year; however if prudential targets need to be adjusted, then a report will come back to this Committee;
- (b) the decision on borrowing versus using cash reserves will take account of the current financial climate.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

20 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT TO NOVEMBER 2015

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance introduced the Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report to November 2015. Following discussion with Councillors, the following points were raised:

- (a) the £185,000 net budget deficit to the Prince's Trust is not sustainable in the long-term. An options report will be brought to the Policy and Strategy Committee;
- (b) Prince's Trust activities within other fire services in the East Midlands are being scaled back. Derbyshire don't currently run the service, Leicestershire have now finished running it, and Lincolnshire are facing similar financial issues.

Local businesses have been approached to see if they will sponsor teams from the fire service. The variable cost of running a team is approximately £7,000, with an overhead of 7 members of staff;

- (c) the control system is performing better than previously. The transfer of earmarked reserve funding is covered in the next meeting of Policy and Strategy Committee. Officers are working on the project longer than envisaged;
- (d) the Fire Authority has made a contribution of £130,000 towards the installation of sprinkler systems in social housing properties, in conjunction with Nottingham City Homes (NCH). This contribution has been drawn from the LPSA reward grant from several years ago.
- (e) the Incident Command Training project has been held up because of the delay with the tri-service control system.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report;**
- (2) approve the re-designation of the Fire Control Collaboration earmarked reserve of £220,000 to a Tri-Service Control Phase 2 earmarked reserve.**

21 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2016/2017 TO 2019/2020 AND OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL TAX 2016/2017

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance introduced the Revenue and Capital Monitoring Report to November 2015. Following discussion with Councillors, the following points were raised:

- (a) a property tour this year for interested members will be arranged, so that members can see the fire stations being considered for renewal or upgrading;
- (b) one detailed change to the base budget is £518,000 used on 'NI End of Contracting Out'. This refers to changes to the State pension.

The £350,000 contribution to earmarked reserve to fund the Specialist Rescue Team has been budgeted to support natural turnover. This is a one-off cost;

- (c) A discussion took place regarding Council Tax and the Committee unanimously agreed to the addition of the second recommendation below.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the report;**
- (2) recommend to the Fire Authority that there be a 1.95% Council Tax increase, with the residual balance met by funding from reserves in 2016/17.**

22 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

Sue Maycock, Head of Finance introduced the Appointment of External Auditors report.

Agreed to note the contents of the report.

23 CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT

John Buckley, Chief Fire Officer introduced the Corporate Risk management report, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the following items have the highest risk rating:
 - i) **mobilising** – risk has reduced because of the transition to the new system, but still remains the most significant issue on the risk register;
 - ii) **working at height** – this is higher up the risk register due to injuries to staff in other authorities;
 - iii) **use of vehicles** – this refers to how the vehicle fleet is used, as well as the risk involved in staff using their own cars for business use;
 - iv) **demand of projects** – competing projects within the Service are creating pressure on officers and this is being managed by a risk based approach to prioritisation.

Following questions from Councillors, further information was provided:

- (b) a budget is set for legal fees. In cases where there is litigation against the service, an amount is allowed for in the risk-based assessment of reserves – this amount is calculated using previous litigation as a guide;
- (c) the risk rating for mobilising has been reduced from 20 to 16. There has been more cooperation from the suppliers – however, because the service is so fundamental, the risk is still high;
- (d) there is currently a grant from Government to fund part of the costs of the Airwave communications system. The Fire Service only uses a small percentage of this service; there is potential to collaborate across blue-light services. At this stage, there is no indication of how much the replacement for Airwave will cost;
- (e) when working at height, there are two main criteria:
 - i) **restraint** – this applies to anyone that works above 2 metres. The restraint works by slowing the individual down should they fall from a cage or platform;
 - ii) **rescue** – where the Specialist Rescue Team would effect a rescue of a casualty using lines.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the content of the Corporate Risk Register and acknowledge the control measures in place;**
- (2) note the content of the Strategic Risk Register.**