

## **SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD**

7 November 2008

### Present:-

Councillors B. Hughes (Chairman)(Devon & Somerset), Gordon and Healey (Devon & Somerset), Fox OBE DL (Dorset), Parsons (vice Windsor-Clive)(Gloucestershire), Roberts and Walker (Avon), Wilmott (Wiltshire & Swindon) and Yeo (Cornwall).

### Also in attendance in accordance with Standing Order 3:-

Councillor Wren (Wiltshire & Swindon).

### Apologies:-

Substitute Members Councillors Barrett and Curran (Avon), Fry, Mrs. Nicholson and Mrs. Parsons (Devon & Somerset) and Higman (Cornwall).

#### **RMB/23. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2008 be signed as a correct record.

#### **RMB/24. Declarations of Interest**

Board Members were invited to consider items to be discussed as part of this meeting and declare any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** they may have in any item(s) in accordance with their respective appointing Authority's approved Code of Conduct.

**NO** interests were declared.

#### **RMB/25. Highlight Report**

The Board considered a report of the Chair, South West Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFO Standing – Gloucestershire) (RMB/08/19) covering:-

- progress since the last meeting of the Board on those projects being supported by the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (SW RIEP);
- a summary of progress made since the last meeting of the Board by those workstreams addressing the following issues on a regional basis:-
  - Community Safety;
  - Equality and Diversity;
  - Finance and Procurement;
  - Human Resources Management and Development;
  - Regional Control Centre;
  - Strategic Planning and Performance Management; and
  - Service Operations and Resilience.

The report summarised milestones for each of the workstreams showing “red” status and indicated action initiated by the South West Chief Fire Officers’ Association (SW CFOA) Executive Management Group (EMG) to resolve those issues;

- updating of the Regional Communications Strategy – including production of the first edition of a quarterly regional newsletter (appended to the report) – to reflect changes to the regional business plan as agreed by the Board at its last meeting; and
- progress on the production of a regional climate change strategy (including the secondment of an Area Manager to work with the Carbon Trust in developing the strategy) aimed at assisting individual fire and rescue services in producing their own strategies.

All workstreams had been asked to submit budget bids for 2009/10 to inform a report to be submitted to the next meeting of the Board on its budget for the forthcoming financial year. At this stage it was felt that this should not result in any increase in contributions by individual fire and rescue services.

Members commented, however, that it may be necessary to review carefully the budget proposals – specifically, the contributions payable by individual fire and rescue services – in light of the grant settlement.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the progress of workstreams and the programme of work supported by the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership be noted;
- (b) that the commencement of work to determine, at the next meeting of the Board, a budget for 2009-10 be noted.

**RMB/26.**

#### **The New Incident Recording System (IRS) And The Financial Burden To Fire And Rescue Services In The South West**

The Board considered a report of the SW Firecontrol/Firelink Project Director (Clive Kemp) (RMB/08/20) on the financial implications for individual fire and rescue services (FRSs) within the South West of implementing a new Incident Reporting System (IRS) as required by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG).

At present, each FRS within region operated a different system for incident recording. Given the move to the Regional Control Centre (RCC), however, a consistent approach was required making the new system a pre-requisite to the transition to the RCC albeit that CLG did not deem this to be part of the RCC project.

The RCC Project Board had commissioned an evaluation of the costs to each FRS of implementing the new IRS. This indicated a total cumulative cost for the South West (including some voluntary enhancements to the basic CLG requirement considered necessary by some individual FRSs) of £260,964 gross (£133,963 net of development costs). In light of this – and given:-

- the government financial settlements for individual fire and rescue services; and

- that introduction of the IRS was in essence a pre-requisite to the FiReControl Project

it was proposed that representations should be made to CLG to seek financial support through CLG's New Budens programme for implementation of the IRS. A draft letter making such representations was appended to the report for consideration.

The report also noted that the information input requirements of the new system could result in significant increase in administration requirements. This could have a disproportionate impact on the retained service. The Board felt that this issue should also be addressed in the representations to be made to CLG.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that, subject to incorporation of those amendments as indicated at the meeting in relation to the potential impact on the retained service of the additional administrative burden associated with introduction of the new Incident Recording System (IRS), the draft letter to the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) as attached at Appendix A to report RMB/08/20 - highlighting the concerns at the financial implications for individual fire and rescue services in the region and seeking a solution from CLG to these – be approved and the Chairman authorised to submit it on behalf of the Board;
- (b) that, subject to (a) above, the report be noted.

#### **RMB/27. National Procurement Strategy For The Fire And Rescue Service 2008-11 - Consultation Response**

The Board considered a report of the Chairman, CFOA SW Procurement Committee (Mike Pearson – Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority) (RMB/08/21) on the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) consultation on the proposed National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service 2008 – 11. The report identified what were considered to be the key issues arising from the consultation and had appended to it a proposed regional response focussing on those issues. The closing date for responses to the consultation was 14 November 2008.

In debating the proposed response, the Board indicated that it would wish to emphasise, by emboldening, the first sentence of the third paragraph of section 3.1 (expressing the view that Firebuy should be wound up). The Board also felt that this sentence should be repeated as the conclusion to the response, which should be returned in the name of the Chairman on behalf of the Board.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that, subject to incorporation of those amendments agreed at the meeting and summarised above, the draft regional response (as attached at Appendix A to report RMB/08/21) to the consultation from Communities and Local Government (CLG) on the proposed National Procurement Strategy for the Fire and Rescue Service Consultation be approved and the Chairman authorised to submit it on behalf of the Board;

- (b) That each individual south west fire and rescue authority (SWFRA) be recommended to endorse the approved regional response as part of any individual response they may choose to make to the CLG consultation on the National Procurement Strategy

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 11.06hours.