

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

14 December 2009

Present:-

Councillors Hughes OBE (Chairman), Boyd, Burridge-Clayton, Cann, Dyke, Eastman, Foggin, Gordon, Gribble, Healey, Horsfall, Leaves, Manning, Mills, Mrs. Nicholson, Randall Johnson, Turner, Viney, Wallace, Way, Woodman and Yeomans

Apologies:-

Councillors Fry, Radford and Smith

DSFRA/30. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2009 be signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/31. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to consider whether they had any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

At this stage Councillors Healey and Woodman each declared a **personal but non-prejudicial** interest in Minutes DSFRA/32 and DSFRA/35, in so far as these related to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project, by virtue of their being an Authority-appointed Director and an Alternate Director, respectively, with South West Fire Control Ltd., the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) with overall governance responsibility for the South West Regional Control Centre.

(SEE ALSO MINUTES DSFRA/32 AND DSFRA/35 BELOW)

DSFRA/32. Address by the Fire Brigades Union

(NOTE Councillors Healey and Woodman each declared a **personal but non-prejudicial interest** in this item by virtue of their being an Authority-appointed Director and an Alternate Director, respectively, with South West Fire Control Ltd., the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) with overall governance responsibility for the South West Regional Control Centre.

In accordance with Standing Orders, the Authority received a presentation from Messrs. French (Secretary) and Walker (Chair) of the local branch of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and viewed the video clip "Part of the Team", produced by the FBU and setting out its stance in relation to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project.

The FBU representatives also circulated to those Members present at the meeting a copy of an Local Government Press release dated 18 September 2009 relating to the project together with the wording of an Early Day Motion which Members were encouraged to discuss at their political group meetings.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/31 ABOVE AND MINUTE DSFRA/35 BELOW)

DSFRA/33. Minutes of Committees

(a) Community Safety and Corporate Planning Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Leaves, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Community Safety and Corporate Planning Committee held on 19 October 2009 which had considered, amongst other things:

- Election of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Minutes be adopted.

(b) Human Resources Management and Development Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Wallace, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Management and Development Committee held on 27 October 2009 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on the High Potential Leadership Programme;
- a report on the establishment of a process to facilitate retained duty system (RDS) staff joining the wholetime service;
- a report on an initiative to identify and record additional skills possessed by staff that might be utilised to enhance Service performance;
- a report on Service performance against targets intended to secure reductions in both short- and long-term absence

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Minutes be adopted.

(c) Resources Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Gordon, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 16 November 2009, which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report monitoring expenditure and income against the approved 2009/10 Revenue Budget;
- a report on the Integrated Clothing Project (ICP) for the replacement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- the Minutes of the meeting of the Capital Programme Working Party held on 5 November 2009;
- a report monitoring progress against the approved Capital Programme 2009/10 to 2011/12; and
- a report on Treasury Management Performance during 2009/10.

RESOLVED

- (i) that, from the total projected underspend of £0.875m against the approved revenue budget 2009/10, an earmarked reserve of £0.357m be established to part-fund the costs associated with the replacement Personal Projective Equipment (PPE) programme under the Integrated Clothing Project (ICP);

- (ii) that a programme for the replacement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on a Purchase Managed Service (PMS) "as needed" basis under the Integrated Clothing Project (ICP) be approved, as set out as Option 2 in Appendix A to report RC/09/9 as considered by the Resources Committee (and included for information with the agenda for this meeting) and to be funded in accordance with the model as set out in Section 4 of that report;
- (iii) that, subject to (i) and (ii) above and in accordance with Standing Orders, the Minutes be adopted.

(d) Audit and Performance Review Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Dyke, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Performance Review Committee held on 26 November 2009 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on Service performance during the period April to September 2009 as against the goals, activities and targets as contained in the approved Authority Corporate Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12;
- a report on progress made to ensure compliance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS);
- a summary report from the Audit Commission on areas recently examined including managing the transition to IFRS and use of resources; and
- a summary report of work undertaken against the agreed Internal Audit plan for 2009/10.

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Standing Orders, the Minutes be adopted.

DSFRA/34. Smoke Detection in Rented Accommodation

The Authority considered a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/09/28) on a proposed campaign for the introduction of a statutory requirement for the fitting of smoke detection systems in those premises currently not covered by legislation.

RESOLVED that the Authority support the undertaking of a campaign, as envisaged in Section 3.1 of this report, with the intention of securing legislative change to introduce a statutory requirement for smoke detection systems to be fitted in the premises currently not covered by legislation.

DSFRA/35. South West Fire Control Limited - Authority-Appointed Director Feedback

(**NOTE** Councillors Healey and Woodman each declared a **personal but non-prejudicial interest** in this item by virtue of their being an Authority-appointed Director and an Alternate Director, respectively, with South West Fire Control Ltd., the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) with overall governance responsibility for the South West Regional Control Centre.

Councillor Healey briefed the Authority on the latest position in relation to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project and specifically on:

- recently-held consultation forums with Control Room staff;
- concerns over the software requirements for the mobilising system which had necessitated exploration of an alternative supplier.

Councillor Healey undertook to provide written responses in relation to:

- a question from Councillor Yeomans on the existence of penalty clauses in relation to the mobilising system software requirements; and
- a question from Councillor Viney on the current position of the project as compared to that outlined by the Local Government Association in its press release of 18 September 2009.

(SEE ALSO MINUTES DSFRA/31 AND DSFRA/32 ABOVE)

DSFRA/36. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reported on attendance on behalf of the Authority at the following events since the last meeting:

- accompanied by the Councillor Healey (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Wallace and the Chief Fire Officer, a meeting with the Leader of Somerset County Council on 28 September;
- Regional Management Board meetings on 30 September and 9 November;
- a visit to Taunton Fire Station on 6 October to coincide with a visit by Jeremy Browne MP;
- the West Devon District Council Civic Service on 11 October;
- the Local Government Association Fire Forum on 16 October;
- the West Somerset District Council Civic Service on 25 October;
- the Remembrance Day events at Ypres, Belgium, on 10 to 13 November;
- a Passing Out Parade at the Service Training Centre, Plympton, on 10 December.

DSFRA/37. Chief Fire Officer's Announcements

The Chief Fire Officer reported on:

- two fatal fires – one at Ellacombe, Torquay. This was still subject to investigation although the premises was not fitted with a smoke detector. The second fire occurred in Compton, Plymouth, on 14 October and – while tragic – was not considered to be a preventable incident;
- preliminary feedback from the Audit Commission on the outcome of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process. The Audit Commission had recognised that the Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority was making communities safer; responded quickly and effectively to emergencies; showed great commitment to delivering community safety campaigns to help vulnerable people; and worked well with partners to improve the quality of life in the area. The Commission also recognised the high public satisfaction rates and considered that the Authority's arrangements for securing Value for Money and savings were especially good. Areas identified for improvement, however, included making the Integrated Risk Management Plan more strategic; increasing the awareness of the contribution that can be made by the Fire & Rescue Service to partnerships; recruiting more women and people from minority backgrounds and demonstrating more fully the impact of community safety work.
- the forthcoming Carol Concert and Blessing of the new Colours for the Ceremonial Unit to be held at Exeter Cathedral on Saturday 19 December; and

- a forthcoming Passing Out Parade to be held at Severn Park on 23 December 2009.

DSFRA/38. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined:

- for Minute DSFRA/39, in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating individuals, which is likely to reveal the identity of individuals and which relates to consultations in connection with a labour relations matter between the Authority and its employees; and
- for Minute DSFRA/40, in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely information relating individuals and which is likely to reveal the identity of individuals.

DSFRA/39. Senior Management Board Restructure

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded).

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/09/29) on a proposed restructure of the Senior Management Board in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness.

RESOLVED

- that the proposed new Senior Management Board structure as set out in Appendix B to report DSFRA/09/29 be endorsed;
- that the proposed arrangements to determine the redundancy payments (should these prove necessary) for the two members of staff "at risk", as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report and including a maximum multiplier to be used, be approved.

DSFRA/40. Applications for Retirement and Re-employment - Officers X & Y

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during which the press and public were excluded).

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/09/30) on requests by two officers for retirement and re-employment. The report set out the business case for each request which, if granted, would not result in any additional financial implications for the Authority.

RESOLVED

- that the retirement of Officer X, as identified in report DSFRA/09/30, with effect from 25 February 2010 be approved;
- that the retirement of Officer Y, as identified in report DSFRA/09/30, with effect from 17 May 2010 be approved.

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 11.58hours.