

SOUTH WEST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

22 March 2010

Present:-

Councillors Hughes OBE (Chairman), Walker (Avon), Gordon and Healey (Devon & Somerset), Kennedy (Cornwall), Gregory (vice Bulteel) (Dorset), Parsons (vice Windsor-Clive)(Gloucestershire) and Brig. Hall (Wiltshire).

Apologies:-

Councillors Barrett, Curran and Roberts (Avon), Boyd (Devon & Somerset), Bulteel (Dorset).

Substitute Members: Councillors Fry and Gribble (Devon & Somerset),

Prior to the commencement of the formal business of the meeting, the Chairman, on behalf of the Board, made reference to the impending retirement following this meeting of CFO Standing (Gloucestershire). He expressed thanks for the excellent work that he had undertaken with the Regional Management Board and wished him well in his retirement.

RMB/32. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 28 January 2010 be signed as a correct record.

RMB/33. 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.

At this stage Councillors Healey, Brig. Hall, Gregory and Parsons each declared personal but non-prejudicial interests in the Workstreams Highlight and Revised Business Plan items (in so far as these related to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project) by virtue of their being an Authority-appointed Director or an alternate Director on the board of 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 RMB/34 AND RMB/35 BELOW)

RMB/34. Workstreams Highlight Report

(Councillors Healey, Brig. Hall, Gregory and Parsons each declared personal but non-prejudicial interests in this item, in so far as it referred to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project, by virtue of their being either an Authority-appointed Directors or an alternate Director on the board of South West Fire Control Ltd., the local authority controlled company (LACC) with overall governance responsibility for the South West Regional Control Centre).

The Board considered a report of the Regional Programme Manager (RMB/10/6) on progress since the last meeting of the Board on:

- the review of future governance arrangements;
- those projects being supported by the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (SW RIEP), specifically:
 - an extension of the regional benchmarking/equality and diversity project;
 - a survey to determine lessons learned from the 2008 Local Area Agreement round;
 - development of a regional website;
 - a regional fleet options review;
 - an e-recruitment project;
 - an Early Learning Fire Safety (ELFS) project; and
 - expressions of interest being sought by SW RIEP for the next round of its capital innovations fund; and
- 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 (Performance Management); and
 - Service Operations and Resilience.

Appended to the report was a summary of “red” milestones against the projects together with an indication of the action to be taken to resolve this.

Reference was made to the position in respect of the letter sent to Shahid Malik MP (Fire Minister), following the last meeting of the Board, seeking agreement to the proposal to disband the formal South West Regional Management Board in favour of the re-establishment of the South West Fire Forum. The Chairman advised that a response had not been received to date and that it was anticipated that this may be delayed until after the forthcoming General Election on 6 May 2010. The Board expressed dissatisfaction with this delay and urged that a further letter be sent to the Minister advising that the Board would be pursuing the dissolution of the RMB in favour of a South West Regional Forum (which would retain the processes established for programme management and cost saving associated with the proposal) and that no response to this second letter would be taken as CLG’s agreement to the proposal.

The Clerk to the Board advised that a paper could be prepared on this matter but this action would require ratification by all of the fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in the region. He suggested that, in order to meet the timescale indicated, this could be considered by the individual FRAs during May 2010 with a view to implementation of the new arrangements by the next scheduled meeting of the Board on 22 June 2010.

Councillor Healey **MOVED** (and was seconded by Councillor Kennedy) that:

“a further letter be sent to the CLG stating that the South West Regional Management Board would be pursuing the dissolution of the RMB in favour of a South West Forum, in the absence of a response to the Board’s initial letter sent seeking its views on this issue, with a response requested as a matter of urgency to enable implementation of the new arrangements by 22 June 2010 and that the Clerk to the Board prepare a model report on this matter for consideration with a view to ratification by each of the fire and rescue authorities in the region during May 2010”.

Upon a vote, the motion was **CARRIED** unanimously.

The Chairman referred to the position in relation to workstream Member champions. He commented that he did not feel that Members had been appointed to all of the workstreams and, additionally, that the remit for this needed to be clarified. CFO Standing (Gloucestershire) explained that the appointment of Member champions had been put on hold pending the outcome of the review of the future of the Board. He added that there had been a number of changes at lead officer level and suggested that appointments should be considered at the next meeting.

Councillor Gregory commented, in relation to the updating of the regional induction framework for fire and rescue authority Members, that it would be useful to have a role description available for use by Group Leaders in the selection of candidates to serve on fire and rescue authorities as this was different to the normal role of a local councillor. The Clerk replied that a similar exercise had been undertaken by Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority following the recent elections and a role outline had been produced and sent to political group leaders in constituent authorities for this purpose. He stated that he would be willing to share this document with all fire and rescue authorities in the region.

RESOLVED

- (a) That a further letter be sent to the CLG stating that the South West Regional Management Board would be pursuing the dissolution of the RMB in favour of a South West Forum, in the absence of a response to the Board’s initial letter sent seeking its views on this issue, with a response requested as a matter of urgency to enable implementation of the new arrangements by 22 June 2010;
- (b) that the Clerk to the Board prepare a model report on this matter for consideration with a view to ratification by each of the fire and rescue authorities in the region during May 2010;
- (b) That, subject to (a) and (b) above, the progress of workstreams and the programme of work supported by the South West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (SW RIEP), as indicated in report RMB/10/6, be noted.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE RMB/33 ABOVE)

RMB/35. South West Fire & Rescue Services Programme of Collaboration - Revised Business Plan 2010/11

(Councillors Healey, Brig. Hall, Gregory and Parsons each declared personal but non-prejudicial interests in this item, in so far as it referred to the FiReControl/Regional Control Centre project, by virtue of their being either an Authority-appointed Directors or an alternate Director on the board of South West Fire Control Ltd., the local authority controlled company (LACC) with overall governance responsibility for the South West Regional Control Centre).

The Board considered a report of the Chair, Chief Fire Officers' Association South West (CFOA SW) (RMB/10/7) on proposed changes, endorsed by the CFOA SW Executive Management Group (EMG), to the Regional Business Plan 2010/11 and including, amongst other things:

- proposed changes to the Strategic Objectives; and
- proposed changes to workstreams following a review of their programmes against the National Framework and drivers, aims and objectives set out in the Business Plan.

CFO Standing (Gloucestershire) advised that the report contained four recommendations but that recommendation (b) needed to be deleted as this had been included in error.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the updated Business Plan 2010/11 as enclosed separately with the agenda for this meeting be approved and circulated to workstreams as a working document;
- (b) that the updated Business Plan be published on the regional website with each workstream's webpage updated accordingly.
- (c) that the Business Plan be reviewed annually in March of each year after the Board sets its budget for the following financial year.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE RMB/33 ABOVE).

RMB/36. Mid-Year Benchmarking Report 2009/10

The Board received for information a report of the South West Regional Benchmarking Officer (RMB/10/8) on the 2009/10 mid-year results for south west fire and rescue services (SW FRSs) performance against key indicators as identified by the Chief Fire Officers' Association South West (CFOA SW) Benchmarking Practitioners Group. The results were intended to inform regional initiatives and to identify and share best practice between SW FRSs so as to improve efficiency and provide value for money.

The report was divided into four sections:

- Operational measures performance summary (including incidence of primary fires; incidence of accidental dwelling fires; and false alarms);
- Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) highlight results;
- CFOA SW Executive Management Group benchmarking work request status; and

- future benchmarking projects (including contextualisation of energy usage in FRS building stock; water consumption and vehicle CO₂ emissions; CO₂ emissions from fires; equality and diversity recruitment and progression measures; and efficiency savings).

In addition, a presentation was given at the meeting and a copy of the slides utilised were circulated to Board Members for information.

RMB/37. Carbon Management Plans Collaborative Programme

The Board considered a report of the Regional Programme Manager (RMB/10/9) on progress with the programme of collaboration between south west fire and rescue services (SW FRSs) in formulating their Carbon Management Plans (CMPs). All SW FRSs had taken part in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management (LACM) Programme Round 7. Regionally, the programme had been overseen by a Regional Climate Change Programme Board which included representatives from each FRS and the Carbon Trust.

The CMP process was intensive and, in reviewing lessons learnt at its meeting on 16 February 2010, the programme board concluded that the collaborative arrangements had worked well. All South West Fire and Rescue Authorities were anticipated to have approved their CMPs by the end of May 2010.

Additionally, the Programme Board had agreed to continue the collaborative approach to assist FRSs implement their CMPs and to embed the wider principles of sustainability.

RESOLVED

- (a) that, upon approval of all South West Fire and Rescue Authorities Carbon Management Plans, a press release be issued highlighting the success of the collaborative approach to Carbon Management;
- (b) that the inclusion of a high-level sustainability impact assessment in all future reports to the Board be approved;
- (c) that, subject to (a) and (b) above, progress on collaboration between south west fire & rescue Services in formulating and implementing their Carbon Management Plans, as indicated in report RMB/10/9, be noted.

The meeting started at 11.00hours and finished at 12.40hours.