

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

27 May 2011

Present:-

Councillors Healey (Chairman), Bakewell, Bown, Boyd, Cann, Drean, Dyke, Eastman, Foggin, Fry, Gordon, Gribble, Horsfall, Hughes OBE, Leaves, Mills, Radford, Randall Johnson, Smith, Way, Woodman, Wright and Yeomans

Apologies:-

Councillors Brooksbank and Burrige-Clayton

DSFRA/8. Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Woodman declared a **personal but non-prejudicial interest** in the item dealing with the South West Regional Management Board 2010/11 financial outturn by virtue of his being the Authority-appointed Director on South West Fire Control Ltd., the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) established to exercise overall governance responsibility for the former South West Regional Control Centre.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/16 BELOW)

DSFRA/9. Address by the Fire Brigades Union

In accordance with Standing Order 13, the Authority received an address from the Fire Brigades Union on the draft Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14, the consultation thereon the eight key proposals including changes to crewing arrangements on some stations, such as day crewed plus.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/11 BELOW)

DSFRA/10. Minutes of Committees, Working Parties Etc.

(a) Human Resources Management and Development Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Cann, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 April 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on absence management and sickness levels during 2010/11;
- a report on the streamlining of assessment and development centres (ADCs);
- a report on the outcome of the Part-time Workers Regulations Employment Tribunal and its implications for the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service; and
- an update report on the position of staff affected by the cancellation of the Regional Control Centre project.

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

(b) Audit and Performance Review Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Dyke, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 May 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- the proposed internal audit plan for 2011/12;
- reports from the Audit Commission on work currently in progress, the Opinion Audit Plan 2010/11 and the audit fee letter 2011/12;
- a report detailing the performance of the Service during 2010/11 against those goals, activities and targets as contained in the approved Corporate Plan for that year; and
- reports detailing work undertaken both by the Service Audit and Review Team and the Devon Audit Partnership during the 2010/11 financial year.

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

(c) Resources Committee

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Gordon, **MOVED** the Minutes of the Committee held on 18 May 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on the draft financial outturn position against the 2010/11 approved Revenue budget together with performance against the financial targets set for that year; and
- a report on a revised Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2013/14.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the recommendation at Minute RC/27(a) (Financial Performance Report 2010/11) be considered in conjunction with the item on the Financial Outturn 2010/11 elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting;
- (ii) that the recommendation at Minute RC/28 in relation to the revised Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2013/14 (as summarised in the table appended to these Minutes) be approved;
- (iii) that, subject to (i) and (ii) above and in accordance with Standing Orders, the Minutes be adopted.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/13 BELOW)

DSFRA/11.

Results and Recommendations arising from Consultation on the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14 and Eight Key Proposals

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/11/11) on the outcome of the 12 week consultation on the draft Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14 and eight key proposals. The report set out:

- the context for developing the draft and eight key proposals (including the 25% reduction in government grant to be secured over the next four years as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review [CSR] 2011 – 14);
- the Service strategy to secure the required budget savings (improving efficiency; reducing spending; and generating income); and
- the approach to consultation and summary of consultation methodology, which covered all key stakeholders including representative bodies.

The report identified that, in addition to efficiencies associated with the eight key proposals, the Service was also seeking to progress financial efficiencies in the excess of £4m by:

- robust budget management and control of non-essential spending on non-salary budgets (£1.5m);
- increased income generation (>£1m);
- procurement improvements and efficiencies (>£1m); and
- non-uniformed staff reductions (>£0.5m).

The report went on to summarise the consultation responses and recommendations, revised where appropriate to reflect the outcome of the consultations, in respect of the eight key proposals, namely:

- changing the Service approach to co-responder calls on behalf of the ambulance service;
- providing more targeted prevention services and advice;
- providing more targeted protection services and advice;
- providing smaller fire engines to meet local needs;
- pending anticipated legislative change, recovering costs for repeated defective automatic fire alarm system (AFA) call outs;
- managing with fewer operational staff by looking to make changes to crewing arrangements on some stations, such as day crewed plus;
- managing with fewer operational staff by standardising station staffing levels across Devon and Somerset; and
- selling training and other functions.

Members debated the responses and recommendations in relation to the eight key proposals, and particularly the proposal relating to possible changes to crewing arrangements (such as day crewed plus) on some stations. In respect of this proposal, Councillor Boyd **MOVED**, with Councillor Yeomans seconding the motion, that recommendation 6 as printed in report DSFRA/11/11 be approved.

Councillor Hughes OBE proposed, with Councillor Fry seconding (subject to the inclusion of additional words – shown in ***bold italics*** – as accepted by Councillor Hughes OBE) the proposal, that the motion be **AMENDED** by deletion of the first bullet point of the printed recommendation and the initial word “alternatively” in the second bullet point, the full **AMENDMENT** reading as follows:

“that, as part of the Service budget strategy, discussions commence with Trade Unions in an attempt to agree a different staffing model for DSFRS which presents significant savings ***and would work better for staff***”.

The amendment was put to the vote and declared **LOST** by 17 votes to 5.

There being no further motions or amendments, the recommendations as printed in report DSFRA/11/11 were put before the Authority upon which it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the outcome of the consultation on the Draft Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14, as summarised in report DSFRA/11/11 and detailed in the separate consultation report appended to the agenda for the meeting, be noted;
- (b) that the recommendations associated with the eight key proposals and on the draft Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14, as amended where appropriate to reflect the outcomes of the consultation, be approved;
- (c) that, subject to incorporation of the amendments as indicated, the Corporate Plan 2011/12 to 2013/14 be approved.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/9 ABOVE AND DSFRA/12 BELOW).

DSFRA/12. Corporate Measures and Targets

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/11/12) on the outcome of the 12 week consultation on the draft Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Strategy "Towards 2014".

Following the consultation, three strategic principles (with partnership working embedded within the first one) were proposed for adoption, each supported by proposed commitments, corporate measures and targets as set out in the report.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the outcome of the consultation on the draft Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Strategy "Towards 2014, as summarised in report DSFRA/11/12 and detailed in the separate consultation report appended to the agenda for the meeting, be noted;
- (b) that, in light of the consultation results, the proposed Strategy, featuring the three Strategic Principles as supported by proposed commitments, corporate measures and targets, be approved.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/11 ABOVE).

DSFRA/13. Financial Outturn 2010/11

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer (DSFRA/11/13) on the provisional revenue and capital financial outturn position for 2010/11.

In relation to revenue, the indicative outturn position was for a total spend of £73.774m against an approved budget of £75.135m, giving an underspend of £1.361m (equivalent to 1.81% of the total budget). The total spend of £73.774 also included £2.757m already transferred to earmarked reserves as follows:

- £0.726m identified in-year savings to help address the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) issues;
- £0.657m expenditure carried forward from the current financial year to 2011/12; and
- £1.374m grants unapplied.

The report identified areas of overspend against the approved budget (e.g. retained pay costs; fire service pensions costs; communications costs; increase in Occupational Health provision contract) as offset by areas of underspend (e.g. wholetime pay costs; control room staff costs; non-uniformed staff costs; training expenses; premises related costs; transport related costs) and greater than anticipated income in relation to treasury management investment.

The report outlined proposals for utilisation of the £1.361m underspend, as recommended by the Resources Committee at its meeting on 18 May 2011 (Minute RC/27(a) refers):

- £0.896m to be transferred to the Change and Improvement Reserve to be used to fund invest-to-save projects to be identified through the Change and Improvement Programmes; and
- £0.465m to be transferred to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) Budget Strategy Reserve to provide further financial contingency towards budget setting in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

In relation to the 2010/11 Capital Outturn, total spending amounted to £3.466m against a finally-approved programme figure of £7.539m. The report identified the mechanism for financing the £3.466m expenditure and indicated that, of the ££4.073m indicative underspend:

- £3.292m was as a result of slippage against individual projects and had been included in the revised capital programme for 2011/12; and
- the remaining £0.781m had been identified as savings against individual projects resulting in a reduction of the same amount in the borrowing requirement.

The report also detailed draft prudential indicators in relation to the 2010/11 capital programme which were subject to completion of the Statement of Accounts. Finally, the report proposed the use of finance for the 2010/11 capital programme which the Authority was required to determine in accordance with the requirements of the capital control legislation.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the following two proposed transfers to Earmarked Reserves, as outlined in paragraph 11.1 of report DSFRA/11/13 and as recommended by the Resources Committee, be approved:
 - (i) an amount of £0.896m be transferred to the Change and Improvement Reserve, and;
 - (ii) an amount of £0.465m be transferred to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2010 Budget Strategy Reserve
- (b) That the following capital determinations in relation to funding of the 2010/11 capital programme be approved:
 - (i) that central government support to borrowing totalling £1.808m be used as authorisation to capital expenditure;
 - (ii) that unsupported borrowing of £0.242m be used as authorisation to capitalise expenditure;
 - (iii) that £1.258m be capitalised and funded from government grant; and

- (iv) that £0.158m be capitalised and funded from a revenue contribution to capital spending.
- (c) That, subject to (a) and (b) above, the position in relation to the Revenue and Capital Outturn as indicated in report DSFRA/11/13 be noted.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/10(c)(i) ABOVE).

DSFRA/14. Annual Treasury Management Report 2010/11

The Authority received for information – and as required by the Chartered Institute for Public Management Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management - a report of the Treasurer (DSFRA/11/14) on the performance of its borrowing and investment activities during 2010/11 as compared against its approved Treasury Management Strategy.

The report identified that no Prudential Indicators had been breached and that a prudent approach over investment decisions had been exercised, with priority being given to liquidity and security over yield.

DSFRA/15. Authority Approved Scheme of Members Allowances - Mileage Allowances

The Authority considered a report of the Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/11/15) on the HM Customs and Excise announced increase to the tax exempt rate for mileage expenses from 40pence to 45pence per mile, for the first 10,000 miles claimed, with effect from 1 April 2011.

In line with the relevant regulations, the Authority had approved its Scheme of Allowances to operate for the forthcoming financial year at its budget meeting on 14 February 2011 (Minute DSFRA/55 refers). The Scheme provided, however, for the mileage rate refundable to be adjusted as and when required in line with guidance from HM Revenue and Customs.

RESOLVED that the Authority-approved Scheme of Allowances be amended to reflect that the rate per mile refundable in any given year will be set at the tax-exempt limit as advised by HM Revenue and Customs up to the maximum number of miles permitted at that rate by HM Revenue and Customs in any given financial year (currently 45pence per mile for the first 10,000 miles in any one financial year).

DSFRA/16. South West Regional Management Board Accounts 2010/11

(Councillor Woodman declared a **personal but non-prejudicial interest** in this item – in so far as it related to the South West FiReControl Project - by virtue of his being the Authority-appointed Director on South West Fire Control Ltd., the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) established to exercise overall governance responsibility for the former South West Regional Control Centre).

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer (DSFRA/11/17) on the 2010/11 financial outturn for the South West Regional Management Board. The report outlined the composition of the Board (as a joint committee) and indicated that the Board had been formally dissolved with effect from 31 March 2011.

At its ultimate meeting, however, in September 2010 the Board had resolved to delegate - in accordance with its constituting Agreement - authority for approval of its accounts in the last financial year of its operation (2010/11) to the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority, the Treasurer for which had formerly provided financial services for the Board.

The original 2010/11 net budget for the Board had been set at £171,200, allowing the financial contributions from each constituent authority to be remain frozen at 2007/08 levels for the fourth consecutive year. Actual net spending against the approved net budget totalled £165,713. The underspend of £5,487 had been transferred to the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority, in accordance with the decision reached by the Executive Management Group (EMG)(comprising the Chief Fire Officers of the six south west regional fire and rescue services) and to reflect the fact that two former regionally-funded employees had been redeployed to this Authority thereby significantly reducing the redundancy liabilities that would otherwise have fallen on the Board's budget.

The report also detailed funding and costs associated with both the Regional Control Centre, for which New Burdens grant funding had been made available by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Treasurer reported that a change to the relevant regulations in relation to Annual Accounts now classified the Board as a "smaller relevant body" requiring the production only of an Annual Return which would be subject to limited scrutiny. A copy of the relevant return for the Board for the 2010/11 financial year was appended to the report.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the South West Regional Management Board (SWRMB) Annual Return for 2010/11, as appended to report DSFRA/11/17, be approved and the Chairman of the Authority authorised to sign it on behalf of the Board;
- (b) that, in approving the Annual Return, the transfer to the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority of the surplus of £5,487 against the approved net 2010/11 budget for the Board be noted;
- (c) that the Treasurer be asked to circulate a copy of report DSFRA/11/17, for information, to each of the south west fire and rescue constituent authorities to the Board.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/8 ABOVE)

DSFRA/17. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service Year-End Performance Report April 2010 - March 2011

The Authority received a report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/11/) on the performance and progress of the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 against those goals, activities and targets as contained in the Authority's approved Corporate Plan for that period. The report had initially been considered by the Audit and Performance Review Committee at its meeting on 12 May 2011 when a number of notable achievements had been acknowledged, including:

- that, in relation to accidental dwelling fire casualties, the Service had moved from the third quartile of performers nationally to the first quartile (top 25%) of performers;
- a decrease in the number of deliberate primary fires meant that the Service was now in line with the “excellent” fire and rescue service national average and had secured better performance than the regional average; and
- the Service was now within the top quartile of performers nationally in terms of initiatives to drive down malicious false alarms.

DSFRA/18.

Chairman's Announcements

The Authority received for information details of events attended by the Chairman on its behalf since the last formal meeting and including:

- meetings in relation to closer collaborative working between the Devon & Somerset and Dorset Fire & Rescue Services; and
- meetings with Falck Teknik Distribution in relation to potential partnership activities with the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service.

The meeting started at 10.45hours and finished at 14:00hours

**APPENDIX TO THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE DEVON & SOMERSET
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY HELD ON 27 MAY 2011**

Revised Capital Programme (2011/12 to 2013/14)

2010/2011 DRAFT outturn (£000)	Item PROJECT	2011/12 (£000)	2012/13 (£000)	2013/14 (£000)
	Estate Development			
(7)	1 Exeter Middlemoor	30		
52	2 Exeter Danes Castle	10		
39	3 SHQ major building works	96		
	4 Major Projects - Training Facility at Exeter Airport	1,000	1,900	
1,091	5 Minor improvements & structural maintenance	1,650	1,750	1,750
90	6 Welfare Facilities	37		
34	7 Diversity & equality			
10	8 USAR works	560		
	9 Minor Works slippage from 2010-11	1,689		
<hr/> 1,309	Estates Sub Total	<hr/> 5,072	<hr/> 3,650	<hr/> 1,750
	Fleet & Equipment			
1,642	10 Appliance replacement	397	1,400	1,700
328	11 Specialist Operational Vehicles	1,315		
68	12 Vehicles funded from revenue			
96	13 Equipment	127	200	200
23	14 Asset Management Plan (Miquest) software	129		
<hr/> 2,157	Fleet & Equipment Sub Total	<hr/> 1,968	<hr/> 1,600	<hr/> 1,900
<hr/> 3,466	SPENDING TOTALS	<hr/> 7,040	<hr/> 5,250	<hr/> 3,650
	Programme funding			
2,050	Main programme	3,757	4,500	3,650
179	Revenue funds	802	750	
1,237	Grants	2,481		
<hr/> 3,466	FUNDING TOTALS	<hr/> 7,040	<hr/> 5,250	<hr/> 3,650