

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

29 September 2011

Present:-

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

Apologies:-

Councillors Burridge-Clayton, Randall Johnson and Way

DSFRA/29. Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 29 July 2011 be signed as a correct record.

DSFRA/30. 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.

No interests were declared.

DSFRA/31. Address by the Fire Brigades Union

In accordance with Standing Order 13, the Authority received for information an address from the Fire Brigades Union on the following issues:

- the draft Corporate Plan 2012/13 to 2014/15;
- Service Improvement Plans; and
- the potential for forthcoming industrial action.

DSFRA/32. Minutes of Committees, Working Parties Etc.

(a) Audit and Performance Review Committee

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Dyke, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 July 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a report on Service performance during April to May 2011 as against the Corporate Measures and Strategic Principles contained in the 2011/12 to 2013/14 approved Corporate Plan;
- an Audit Commission progress report; and
- a draft Statement of Accounts 2010/11.

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

(b) **Community Safety and Corporate Planning Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Leaves, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 August 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- an update report from the Director of Service Support on fire control issues, including proposals for the consolidation of the Devon & Somerset controls (linked to the requirement to vacate Hestercombe House, Somerset) and for a more long-term solution following cessation of the regional FiReControl project;
- a presentation on performance against community safety targets;
- a report on methodologies being used to target community safety activities; and
- a report on the use of Local Community Plans to identify and deliver activities to reduce risk and improve safety bespoke to the communities served.

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

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/33 BELOW)

(c) **Commercial Services Committee**

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Healey, **MOVED** the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 September 2011 which had considered, amongst other things:

- a future workplan for the Committee; and
- a report on progress with current workstreams.

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

DSFRA/33. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2012/13 to 2014/15

The Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer (DSFRA/11/23) on the draft Corporate Plan 2012/13 to 2014/15. The document, which incorporated the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan, detailed a number of proposals including:

- a revision to the current Service policy for responding to false alarms generated by automatic fire alarm systems (NOTE: this was subject to a separate, key proposal, consultation document that accompanied the papers for this meeting);
- a proposed pilot scheme in the Plymouth area of an initiative aimed at promoting greater community involvement in the identification and planning of bespoke community safety initiatives, matching resources to risk;
- a multi-agency approach to data sharing to assist, for example, in the more accurate targeting of appropriate initiatives;
- continuation of the review of resource distribution;
- determination on the proposals initially raised in the prior iteration of the Plan on matching operational staff resources to community risk;
- continuation of work on the introduction of smaller fire appliances to meet local need;

- fire control consolidation, including options for a long-term solution following cessation of the regional FiReControl Project;
- ongoing implementation of a modification in responding to co-responder calls;
- development of an Operational Assurance Framework for firefighter safety;
- harmonisation of retained duty system contracts; and
- the development of Standard Operating Procedures, in partnership with other fire and rescue services, to establish standard ways of operating at emergency incidents thereby enhancing resilience and cross-boundary co-operation.

The draft Plan also set out progress made to date in those areas agreed by the Authority for inclusion in the prior iteration of the Plan.

The report detailed the proposed consultation process for the draft Plan, which would run from Monday 3 October 2011 for thirteen weeks until Tuesday 3 January 2012. The reports of the consultation exercise would be reported to the Authority meeting on 17 February 2012.

In debating the matter, Members made the following points in particular:

- that consideration might be given to including in the Plan details of the emergency response standards currently operated by the Service; and
- that the separate consultation document on the proposal to modify the policy in relation to responding to false alarms from automatic fire alarm systems be condensed if possible.

RESOLVED

- (a) That, subject to incorporation as appropriate of those issues raised at the meeting and indicated above, the Draft Corporate Plan 2012/13 to 2014/15 and associated Consultation Document, as set out at Appendices A and B respectively to report DSFRA/11/23, be approved for consultation purposes;
- (b) that the associated engagement plan for consultation as set out in Section 3 of the report and to include a 13 week consultation period (to run from Monday, 3 October 2011 to Tuesday 3 January 2012) be approved;
- (c) that the outcome of the consultation, together with appropriate recommendations, be submitted to the full Authority meeting scheduled for 17 February 2012;
- (d) that the progress made in relation to those issues as contained in last year's plan be noted.

(SEE ALSO MINUTE DSFRA/32[b] ABOVE)

DSFRA/34. Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) Funding Consultation Papers on the Local Government Resource Review and Distribution of Fire Capital Grant

The Authority considered a report of the Treasurer to the Authority (DSFRA/11/24) on the publication by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) of two consultation documents, namely:

- the Local Government Resource Review which proposed, from 2013/14, to radically change funding for local authorities by allowing them to retain local business rates collected rather than initially paying these to central government for subsequent redistribution by way of formula grant. Consultation responses were required by 24 October 2011; and
- the Distribution of Fire Capital Grant which set out proposals for the distribution of £210m (£70m per annum during the next three years from 2012/13). Responses to this consultation were required by 21 October 2011.

RESOLVED that publication by the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) of the two documents relating to funding issues be noted and the Resources Committee delegated authority to approve, at its meeting on 19 October 2011, a response on behalf of the Authority to the documents.

DSFRA/35. Appointment of Chairman to the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Services Management Committee

The Authority considered a report of the Clerk to the Authority (DSFRA/11/25) on the appointment of the Chairman by the Local Government Association (LGA) to its Fire Services Management Committee which provided a national voice for the fire community on issues such as the fire services modernisation agenda.

Although an LGA appointment, constituent authorities were nonetheless expected to meet the costs associated with attendance at meetings of the Committee. This would require a minor modification to the Authority's approved Scheme of Members Allowances.

RESOLVED that the Chairman be congratulated on his appointment to the Local Government Association Fire Services Management Committee and the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority approved Scheme of Members Allowances revised to facilitate the payment of travel and subsistence expenses associated with attendance at Committee meetings.

DSFRA/36. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman circulated a list of events attended on behalf of the Authority since its last meeting and drew attention in particular to attendance at the Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) Annual General Meeting at which Chief Fire Officer Lee Howell had been inaugurated as CFOA President for 2011/12 and Deputy Chief Fire Officer Neil Gibbins had received an award in recognition of his contribution in the field of fire safety.

DSFRA/37. Chief Fire Officer's Announcements

The Chief Fire Officer reported on:

- a fatal incident in Combe Martin involving a 67 year old male. Smoking and other ill-health characteristics had contributed to the fatality. Such incidents reinforced the requirement for data sharing with other agencies to more accurately target Service prevention and community safety initiatives;
- attendance by Members and Senior Officers of the Authority at a joint seminar with Members of the Dorset Fire & Rescue Authority held on 28 September 2011 at the Weymouth Community Fire Station; and

- receipt from UNISON of official notification of its intention to ballot in relation to pensions proposals. It was anticipated ballot papers would be despatched on 11 October, with the earliest date for industrial action being in mid-November. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service had plans in place to facilitate business continuity and minimise disruption in the event of any such action.

The meeting started at 10.00hours and closed at 11.30hours