

**Non-Exempt Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
held on Wednesday, 7 October 2015, at 3.00 pm
at Service Headquarters, Shrewsbury**

Present

Members

Councillors Adams, Mrs Barrow, Carter (Vice-Chair), Fletcher, Hartin, Hurst-Knight, Dr Jones, Kiernan, Mason, Mellings, Minnery, Price, Reynolds, Turley, West (Chair) and Wynn

Officers

Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Business Change Manager, IRMP Project Manager, Clerk to the Fire Authority, Corporate Support Manager and Executive Support Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Roberts. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer and the Head of Finance had also given their apologies for absence.

2 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The Chair reminded Members that they must not participate in the discussion of, or voting on any matter, in which they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

Councillors Carter, Hartin, Kiernan and Mellings declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in items 15, 19a and 19b, in that they were directors on the board of Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd. They had been granted a dispensation by the Fire Authority, which allowed them to take part in the discussion of, and vote on, matters relating to Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services, providing that legal opinion considered the participation to be appropriate.

On this occasion, the items concerned required the Fire Authority to make decisions and it was, therefore, deemed appropriate for Councillors Carter, Hartin, Kiernan and Mellings to leave the meeting, before these items were debated and voted on.

Councillor Price declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 7, as he was in receipt of a pension from Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service. As the issue to be discussed did not impact directly on Councillor Price, he remained in the meeting room for the consideration of this item.

3 Public Questions

No questions, statements or petitions had been received from members of the public.

4 Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Fire Authority Annual Meeting, held on 17 June 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Mrs Barrow, and, with Councillors Fletcher, Turley and Wynn abstaining, as they had not been present at the meeting, it was

Resolved that the minutes of the Fire Authority meeting, held on 17 June 2015, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record

5 Strategy and Resources Committee Minutes

5a 16 July 2015

Members received the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 16 July 2015

It was proposed by Councillor Minnery, seconded by Councillor Mrs Barrow, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 16 July 2015.

5b 10 September 2015

Members received the non-exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015, and considered the recommendations at item 5.

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Wynn, and

Resolved that the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015, be noted

Item 5 - Financial Performance to July 2015

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Wynn, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget;
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested; and
- c) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2015/16.

6 Audit and Performance Management Committee Minutes

6i 9 July 2015

Members received the non-exempt minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 9 July 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Fletcher, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the non-exempt minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 9 July 2015.

6ii 17 September 2015

Members received the minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 17 September 2015 and considered the recommendations as set out below.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Fletcher, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 17 September 2015.

6a Code of Corporate Governance 2015/16

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Fletcher, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority agreed to formally adopt the Code of Corporate Governance 2015/16 without amendment.

6b Review of Whistleblowing Policy

It was proposed by Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Dr Jones, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the Whistleblowing Policy without amendment.

6c Annual Review 2014/15

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Kiernan, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the draft Annual Review 2014/15.

7 Fire Authority Pension Board

This report advised of the progress made in establishing the Fire Authority Pension Board for the Firefighter Pension Schemes, as required under the Public Services Pensions Act 2013. The report also asked the Fire Authority to decide upon the process for the appointment of the Pension Board Chair and to consider and agree the Board's terms of reference.

The Corporate Services Manager (CSM) presented the report and advised that the Monitoring Officer had recommended that the quorum for the meeting be set at 3, rather than 4. If the quorum was set at 4 and 1 Member of the Board was conflicted out of the meeting, then the Board would be prevented from meeting. The CSM also confirmed that the current membership of the Board was the Treasurer, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), a Fire Brigades Union employee representative and a Retained Firefighters Union employee representative.

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Barrow that the Board should appoint its own Chair and that the terms of reference for the Board should be amended so that the quorum was 3 instead of 4. This was seconded by Councillor Dr Jones, and it was

Resolved that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the progress made to date;
- b) Agree that the Chair of the Pension Board should be appointed by the Board itself; and
- c) Agree the terms of reference of the Board (attached as an appendix to the report), subject to the amendment that the quorum for a meeting be three, rather than four.

8 Review of Standing Orders

The purpose of this report was for Members to consider and agree the amendments to Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business and Standing Orders relating to Contracts, which stood adjourned from the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority.

It was proposed by Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Kiernan, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the amendments to the Standing Orders for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business and Standing Order relating to Contracts (set out at paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report), which stood adjourned from the Annual Meeting of the Fire Authority, held on 17 June 2015.

9 Review of Financial Regulations

This report asked Members to consider and agree the draft Financial Regulations, following the major review carried out by officers.

Councillor Hartin asked if there were any major changes to the contents of the Regulations. The Treasurer advised that there were not and the revised Regulations were mainly an amalgamation of existing documents and regulations.

It was proposed by Councillor Price, seconded by Councillor Fletcher, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority approve the adoption of the revised Financial Regulations.

10 Review of Scheme of Delegation to Officers

This report reviewed the Fire Authority's Scheme of Delegation to Officers and asked Members to consider and decide upon the amendments proposed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hurst-Knight, seconded by Councillor Mason, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the amendments proposed to the Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

11 Meeting Schedule 2015 and 2016

Members were asked to consider and agree the revised Meeting Schedule for October to December 2015 and the draft Meeting Schedule 2016. Once the dates were agreed, Members were asked to update their diaries accordingly.

The CSM requested that Members advise officers, as soon as possible, of any clashes. Councillor Mrs Barrow commented that the Standards and Human Resources Committee, scheduled for 22 March 2016, clashed with the North Planning Committee and requested that the Committee meeting be brought forward to 15 March 2016.

Councillor Adams referred to the start time for Fire Authority meetings, which was currently 3 pm to avoid clashes with Shropshire Council Cabinet meetings. As there appeared to be no such clashes on the proposed dates for 2016, Councillor Adams proposed that the meeting start times be moved back to 2 pm, with pre-meetings commencing at 1 pm. Councillor West agreed that this made sense. Councillor Hartin commented that this might cause him issues due to his work commitments. Councillor Mason asked and it was confirmed that this would apply to Fire Authority meetings in 2016 only.

It was proposed by Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Mrs Barrow, and, on a vote with 15 Members voting for and 1 Member voting against, it was

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the revised Meeting Schedule for October to December 2015 and the draft Meeting Schedule 2016, subject to the following amendments:

- The Standards and Human Resources Committee meeting, scheduled for 22 March 2016, be moved to 15 March 2016; and
- Start times for Fire Authority meetings be moved to 2 pm for 2016 meetings, with a 1 pm start for pre-meetings.
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12 Integrated Risk Management Planning Projects

Officers gave a presentation on the following Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP) projects:

IRMP 1 – Staffing Model Review;

IRMP 2 – Fire Control Review; and

IRMP 3 – Review of Telford Central site requirements.

Councillor Price referred to IRMP 1 and 2 and asked if these were ready to go to the wider Service and how any questions would be dealt with. The IRMP Project Manager (IPM) explained that there were IRMP champions on every station to ensure that the correct messages were passed on to staff. A staff analysis document for each shift pattern had also been established.

Councillor Dr Jones commented that she had concerns over the suitability of some of the shift patterns. The IPM advised that consultation would be carried out over a wide cross section of people. It was also recognised that any solution would not suit everybody but work would be undertaken with staff to address this.

Councillor Hartin suggested that other fire authorities might be interested in following a similar inclusive consultation process and that the Service should perhaps publicise the process widely. The IPM explained that an online staff forum had been established, on which staff could post comments and respond in a similar style to Facebook. The Business Change Manager (BCM) suggested that it might be more prudent to publicise the consultation process externally after negotiations with employees had been concluded.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) commented that there had been a change to the Service's financial situation, which had given a year to complete the necessary changes. The focus was no longer purely financial and there was now a strong element of improvement, with 'optimum crewing' being the desired outcome. The DCFO also commented that the process was looking at working patterns, rather than shifts.

With regard to IRMP 3, Councillor Hartin asked if West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) had shown any interest in the project. The DCFO replied that WMAS currently had a number of projects in progress and that it had confirmed that it was not interested in this project.

Councillor Wynn asked what the estimated cost of the IRMP 3 scheme was. The BCM responded that, dependent on variances, the estimated budget for the scheme was between £2.5 and £4 million.

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Carter, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the presentation.

13 Enabling Closer Working between the Emergency Services Consultation

This report provided information on the content of the consultation "Enabling closer working between the Emergency Services", published by HM Government.

A paper containing further detail of the consultation response was tabled, a copy of which is attached to the signed minute file.

The Chief Fire Officer (CFO) presented the report and explained that the Strategic Planning (StraP) Working Group had discussed the consultation at its meetings on 16 July and 23 September and that the responses in the report had been provided by the Group.

The CFO explained that with regard to collaboration, WMAS had a duty to collaborate with the Service, as set out in the Ellwood report of 2012 and Sir Ken Knight's review in 2013.

The CFO highlighted page 4 of his report, which stated that, if a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) did not take responsibility for a fire service, then they should have the opportunity to be represented on the fire and rescue authority. The CFO also explained that Appendices A and B to report set out the proposed organisational structures, with the Chief Officer referred to in Appendix B being either a Chief Fire Officer or a Chief Constable. The consultation also suggested that in those areas with one police force footprint and two fire and rescue services a merger might be initiated between the fire and rescue services, if necessary.

Councillor Carter left the meeting at this point (4 pm), as he had another meeting to attend.

Councillor Hartin commented that it was a very measured response. The CFO explained that the discussions at the StraP Working Group had been more strident but that these had had to be tempered for the actual consultation response. Councillor Price commented that it was important to include a balanced view. He suggested that there was a need to talk to the PCC and West Mercia Police to establish their position with regard to the consultation. The CFO confirmed that he had spoken to the PCC, who had stated that he was not interested in taking responsibility for fire. The CFO was still to meet with the Chief Constable to discuss his views.

The Monitoring Officer advised that recommendation b) be amended to read 'agree that the draft consultation response be amended and agreed by the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with Chair of Fire Authority and StraP Working Group.'

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Price, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the contents of the report and the consultation document that had been circulated earlier; and
- b) Agree that the draft consultation response be amended and agreed by the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Fire Authority and the StraP Working Group.

14 Details of Lives Saved and those Protected from Harm

This paper highlighted the number of people, who had been protected from harm, or rescued by operational crews during the year 2014/15 and from April to September 2015. It also attempted to provide an economic value for the rescue work carried out by the Fire Service.

Councillor Adams commented that this report was a clear and quick way to see the benefits provided by the Service and asked how far it had been promulgated. He suggested that Shrewsbury Town Council noticeboards could be used for publicity, if the Service produced a single-page document, containing the pertinent information.

The DCFO confirmed that this would be done through the Corporate Communications Officer. The document could also be displayed on Parish Councils noticeboards. The Executive Support Officer undertook to contact Members to establish the number of noticeboards within their wards. An electronic copy of the document would also be provided to Members.

It was proposed by Councillor Adams, seconded by Councillor Hurst-Knight, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the paper.

Councillors Hartin, Kiernan and Mellings and DCFO and BCM left the meeting at this point (4.15 pm).

15 Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd Board of Directors

This report provided an update on membership of the Board of Directors of Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd. (SFRMS) and asked the Fire Authority to decide whom it wished to appoint to fill the current vacancy on the SFRMS Board.

It was proposed by Councillor West, seconded by Councillor Mason, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the constitution of SFRMS, including current membership of the Board, attached as an appendix to the report;
- b) Agree to maintain the current membership; and
- c) Agree to appoint the Deputy Chief Fire Officer to fill the vacancy on the Board.

At this point (4.18 pm) Councillors Hartin and Kiernan and the DCFO and BCM returned to the meeting and Councillor Mellings and Turley left, as they had other meetings to attend.

16 Local Government Act 1972

It was proposed by Councillor Reynolds, seconded by Councillor Hartin, and

Resolved that, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting room for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined by the provisions of Part I of Schedule 12(A) to the Act, by virtue of Paragraph 3.

17 Audit and Performance Management Committee Exempt Minutes (Paragraph 3)

Members received the exempt minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 9 July 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Jones, seconded by Councillor Fletcher, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the exempt minutes of the Audit and Performance Management Committee meeting, held on 9 July 2015.

18 Strategy and Resources Committee Exempt Minutes (Paragraph 3)

Members received the exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor Hartin, seconded by Councillor Wynn, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority note the exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015

19 Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd (Paragraph 3)

19a Going Concern

This report sought approval from the Fire Authority to support Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd (SFRMS) as a going concern, for a period of at least twelve months. It also presented the results from a recent review of the company's current Business Plan, to assist Members in deciding on the above matter.

Councillors Hartin and Kiernan left the meeting at this point (4.26 pm), having previously declared a Disposable Pecuniary Interest in the following items. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Business Change Manager also left the meeting, because of the conflict of interests, which would have arisen, were they to have remained in the meeting for the discussion of the following items.

It was proposed by Councillor Minnery, seconded by Councillor Mrs Barrow, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the recommendations within the report.

19b Use of the 'Service Brand'

This report sought approval from the Fire Authority for its trading company, Shropshire Fire Risk Management Services Ltd. to use the Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service brand and to determine an appropriate charge for such use.

It was proposed by Councillor Minnery, seconded by Councillor Dr Jones, and

Resolved that the Fire Authority agree the recommendations within the report.

Councillors Hartin and Kiernan and the DCFO and BCM returned to the meeting at this point (4.32 pm).

The meeting closed at 4.33 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....