

**Minutes of the Meeting of
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority
Strategy and Resources Committee
held in the Oak Room at Headquarters, Shrewsbury
on Thursday, 12 November 2015 at 2.00 pm**

Present

Members

Councillors Mrs Barrow, Carter, Roberts (Chair), Turley, West and Wynn

Officers

Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Head of Finance and Executive Support Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence. Councillor Hartin did not attend the meeting.

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 that they should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate on that matter.

No Member declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

3 Non-Exempt Minutes

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

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

Resolved that the non-exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Public Questions

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

5 Financial Performance to September 2015, including Annual Treasury Review 2014/15 and Mid-Year Treasury Review 2015/16

This report provided information on the financial performance of the Service, and sought approval for action where necessary. The report also presented the annual treasury review 2014/15 and the mid-year treasury review 2015/16.

The Head of Finance (HoF) presented the report and drew Members' attention to the table on page 2, which detailed the variances within the revenue budgets for 2015/16.

Councillor Mrs Barrow referred to the suggested amendments to the capital programme, as set out on page 3 of the report, and requested further detail on the schemes concerned.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) explained that the command and control vehicle scheme was being amended because of changes to the specification of the vehicle and equipment needed for the command vehicles. The Major Incident Room was currently barely adequate and there had been a delay in progressing this scheme due to issues with the siting of CCTV equipment. This issue had now been resolved and the Major Incident Room scheme could be progressed, as originally planned.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) explained that the issue with the IT Infrastructure Scheme was related in part to the surveying of the ICT hardware sited in cabinets on station. Councillor Mrs Barrow asked if this work had been costed. The ACFO explained that it had not but the provision for the Scheme was thought to be adequate.

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

Resolved that the Committee recommend that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the position of the revenue budget;
- b) Approve virements to the revenue budget, where requested;
- c) Approve the rescheduling of capital schemes;
- d) Note the annual review of treasury activities for 2014/15;
- e) Note performance against prudential indicators to date in 2015/16; and
- f) Note the mid-year review of treasury activities for 2015/16.

6 Provisions, Reserves and Funds

This report set out the issues, which the Fire Authority needed to consider as part of its annual review of provisions, reserves and funds.

The HoF presented this report and highlighted the changes to the Equipment Replacement Provision, the Earmarked Capital reserve and the General Fund, as set out in the report.

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

Resolved that the Committee recommend to the Fire Authority that it:

- a) Confirm the current position of reserves and provisions; and
- b) Review the level of the General Reserve.

7 2016/17 and Later Years Revenue and Capital Budgets

This report brought together the elements of an initial revenue budget, based on the planning assumptions recommended by the Strategic Planning Working Group, and sought the Committee's approval for this outline to be recommended to the Fire Authority in December 2015.

The HoF talked through the planning assumptions, which were being used, and the various planning stages of the budget-setting process.

The HoF highlighted the Chancellor's announcement that by 2020 local authorities would retain 100% of business rates paid. As yet, there had been no real indication of how this would impact on fire authorities, aside from the phasing out of the Revenue Support Grant. Officers would ensure that information regarding this issue was passed to the Fire Authority as and when it was received. The joint Autumn Statement and Spending Review would be published on 25 November 2015 and the implications, for the Fire Authority, of this announcement would be brought to the Strategic Planning Working Group and Fire Authority in December 2015.

Councillor West commented that the forecast set out in the report was the best that could be hoped for at present and that the report gave a comprehensive overview of the budget setting process.

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

Resolved that the Committee recommend that the Fire Authority:

- a) Note the revisions and the committed changes to the base budget, as shown in section 4;
- b) Base its pay and price contingency in the revenue budget on the calculations, set out in section 5;
- c) Approve the use of revenue balances to fund the capital programme, which would be confirmed at the Committee's February 2016 meeting; and
- d) Approve the expenditure figures, associated with those approved assumptions, as a basis for developing the budget at the meeting of the Fire Authority on 16 December 2015.

8 Local Government Act 1972

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

Resolved that the public and press be excluded for the following agenda item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined by the provisions of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, by virtue of paragraph 3.

9 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 Mrs Barrow, seconded by Councillor Turley, and

Resolved that the exempt minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, held on 10 September 2015, be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

The meeting closed at 2.25 pm.

These minutes were agreed by the Strategy and Resources Committee and signed as a correct record by the:

Chair.....

on

Date.....