

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY held at the
Borough Council Offices, Eastleigh on 5 December, 2012

PRESENT:

Councillors:

p	S. Barnes-Andrews	p	T. Knight
p	I. Beagley	p	C. McEwing
a	A.S. Carew	p	R. McIntosh
p	C. Carter	p	E. Neal
p	K. Chapman	p	F. Pearce
p	M. Cooper	a	R.H. Price
p	S. Darragh	p	D. Simpson
p	A. Evans	p	P. Smith
p	L. Fairhurst	p	R. Smith
p	J. Fazackarley	p	L. Stubbs
p	J. Frankum	p	J. West
p	D. Harrison	p	M. Tucker
p	R.J. Kimber		

274 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Carew and Price.

275 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

No interests were declared under this item.

276 MINUTES

Minutes of the Authority held on 19 September 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

277 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations to this meeting.

278 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

A report was read to Members on behalf of Councillor Price detailing a major exercise that he had recently attended in Portsmouth. It was noted that this had been very well organised, but that unfortunately he had been the only Member in

attendance. A point of concern was raised relating to rail electrics, which did not automatically switch off in the event of an incident, making rescue efforts more difficult.

Councillors Cater and Simpson reported their recent attendance at Exercise Tusker which had given them a good understanding of the level of co-operation with other services. Officers were thanked for providing the opportunity and for their assistance at the event.

279 **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman reported that Simon Hayes had been elected as the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and had been invited to attend a future HFRA meeting. It was noted that Mr Hayes' previous role as the Chief Executive of Crimestoppers UK gave him some familiarity with the work of the service in Hampshire, particularly preventative activity and as such the Chief Officer had invited him to visit headquarters to get a flavour of the wide range of community safety work undertaken.

It was announced that the Service Chaplain, Derek Overfield, was unwell and that Terry Lane was temporarily acting as Chaplain. Derek and his family were being supported by the Service and Derek had been awarded a letter of congratulation from the Chief Officer for his long and valiant service.

Those Members who attended a recent exercise at Fort Widley, testing the UK's international search and rescue capability and also the celebrating success evening at Winchester Guildhall, were thanked by the Chairman. At both events, Members were able to gain an insight into the wide variety of tasks undertaken by the Service, both home and abroad and the feedback that had been received was very positive.

New Members were reminded that a Fire Authority lapel badge was available to them and would be provided following the meeting.

Members' attention was drawn to the Awareness Session scheduled to follow the Authority meeting, which would include presentations on the Blue Lamp Trust and Understanding Finance, as well as a practical demonstration.

280 **ACTIVITY REPORT**

The Authority considered the report of Chief Officer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) highlighting prevention, protection and response activities in each of the group areas covering the period 12 August 2012 until 30 October 2012.

Over the course of discussion various questions were asked by Members and answered at the meeting. In particular concerns relating to call out charges and to the incidence of false alarms were addressed.

RESOLVED:

That the Activity Report be noted.

281 DRAFT BUDGET 2013/14

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer and the Treasurer (Item 8 in the Minute Book) regarding the draft budget for the Authority for 2013/14.

The broad financial position was outlined and the impact of a Council Tax freeze grant was explained, with reference to the hypothetical scenarios set out in the report. It was agreed that a fuller discussion would be possible when the actual grant figures and scenarios were available. Members' questions relating to the time-lag in the implementation of planned savings and to the capital reserves were addressed by the Treasurer.

RESOLVED:

The Authority will consider increasing the council tax in 2013/14 if the expected grant reduction over the period 2013/14 – 2015/16 is greater than 25 percent.

The Authority agreed that the draft budget (updated to take into account the actual grant notified) be presented at the formal budget consultation meeting in January 2013.

The Authority agreed that the final budget and council tax will be set at the Authority's meeting scheduled for 14 February 2013 following consultation.

282 DEVELOPING A COMMERCIAL APPROACH

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer, (Item 9 in the Minute Book) that sought support to explore the opportunity to establish a more commercially focussed organisation to exploit future opportunities in the fire sector market for income generation.

The Chief Officer introduced the report, explaining the importance of creating financial stability for the Authority in the context of reduced grant from central government. . Members expressed some concern about the level of the risk involved in the strategy, the principle of a public authority raising its own revenue and the cost of undertaking feasibility studies. However there was broad support for pursuing the options available and it was noted that more detail would be made available. It was noted that the decision to go ahead or not would be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and a recommendation made to the Authority.

RESOLVED:

The Authority agreed that officers should continue to progress the work to create a commercial organisation for HFRA and then to report back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee in January 2013 for consideration prior to a recommendation to the Authority in February 2013.

283 MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 SEPTEMBER, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee held on 18 September 2012, item 10 in the Minute Book. With reference to the discussion about fire alarms in the Activity Report (Minute 280 refers), it was confirmed that the Committee had undertaken considerable scrutiny of false alarms and of the work being done to tackle these.

284 MINUTES OF STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 21 SEPTEMBER, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 21 September 2012, item 11 in the Minute Book

285 MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 23 OCTOBER, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 23 October 2012, item 12 in the Minute Book.

Recommendations d-f to the Authority of Minute 110 (Budget Monitoring) were agreed.

286 MINUTES OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 14 November 2012, item 13 in the Minute Book.

287 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CONFERENCES

The Authority considered the appointment of Members to attend two LGA conferences in March and July 2013. It was agreed that attendance be arranged via the Chairman and reported to the next Authority meeting.

288 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That in relation to the following items the public be excluded from the meeting, as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the reports.

289 OPPORTUNITY TO TENDER FOR A MINISTRY OF DEFENCE CONTRACT

The Authority considered the exempt report of the Chief Officer, (Item 16 in the Minute Book) regarding a commercial opportunity.

(summary of an exempt Minute)

290 **MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 23 OCTOBER, 2012**

The Authority received the exempt Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 23 October 2012, item 17 in the Minute Book.

It was noted that the recommendation to the Authority under Minute 119 had been agreed under consideration of the previous item regarding a commercial opportunity to bid for a Ministry of Defence contract (Minute 289 refers).

291 **MINUTES OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 NOVEMBER 2012**

Prior to consideration of this item, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Officers withdrew from the meeting due to their pecuniary interest.

The Authority received the exempt Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 14 November 2012, item 18 in the Minute Book.