

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2013 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillors Busby, Dransfield, Edwards, Lambert, Morris, Reed and Schofield

Officers: M Jones (Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), D Skinner (Director of Finance and Assets), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development), D O'Driscoll (Head of Service Development), M Osborne (Head of Service Delivery), M House (External HR Consultant – for Minutes EX24 and EX25), F Mansfield (Human Resources Operations Manager – for Minutes EX24 and EX25), D Elliott (Performance and Evaluation and Projects), F Pearson (Group Manager Communications) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Gomm

EX22 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 18 September 2013, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX23 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Committee considered the Members' Scheme of Allowances for 2014/15.

The Committee noted that the Authority had agreed, at its meeting on 14 December 2011, that the index linking for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 should be the pay award for the Authority's staff on National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book). The pay award for the Authority's staff on Grey Book conditions for 2013/14 was 1%.

RESOLVED –

That the Authority be recommended to adopt the scheme for Members' Allowances for 2014/15.

EX24 REVIEW OF SUPPORT STAFF (LOCAL 'GREEN BOOK') TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE AND PAY, GRADING AND REWARD STRUCTURE

The Committee considered the report which sets out the proposed timeline to determine and implement the terms and conditions of service review for support staff on Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Scheme of Conditions of Service, commonly referred to as the local 'Green Book'.

RESOLVED –

1. That the proposed support staff (local 'Green Book') terms and conditions of service and pay, grading and reward principles, be approved.
2. That the timetable for implementing the review of support staff (local 'Green Book') terms and conditions of service and pay and reward structure be noted.

Director of People and Organisational Development joined the meeting.

EX25 REVIEW OF THE PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE – THE POTENTIAL NEED FOR REDUNDANCIES

The Director of People and Organisational Development highlighted to the Committee the potential small number of redundancies that may need to be made in light of the review of the Directorate's staffing requirements.

In line with the requirements of the Redundancy and Managing Organisation Change Policies and Procedures reasonable steps will be taken to minimise the adverse effects of potential redundancies.

RESOLVED -

1. That the potential need for redundancies in the People and Organisational Development Directorate (POD) be noted.
2. That approval be given for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to initiate consultation with the affected staff.

EX26 BUDGET MONITORING PERFORMANCE AND DEBT MANAGEMENT APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2013 (Q2)

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring and Debt Management Performance for the three months to 30 September 2013.

The Director of Finance and Assets asked the Committee to note that there was a forecast managed under-spend of £1,326k, against a revenue budget of £29m.

A report on the cost of the recent industrial action would be taken to the next Fire Authority meeting.

RESOLVED -

1. That the revenue and capital budget virements as detailed at the end of section 9 of the report be authorised.
2. That the latest projected outturn forecast for the Fire Authority as at 30 September 2013 be noted.

EX27 TREASURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE 2013/14 – QUARTER 2

The Committee noted that since the 1 April 2013 the Authority has been investing in its own name. The report highlights the performance of the in-house treasury management function for the second quarter 2013/14.

The Committee noted that the accrued interest earned for the first six months of the year is £60k, which is £30k higher than the budget for the same period.

RESOLVED -

That the Treasury Management Performance 2013/14 – Quarter 2 report be noted.

EX28 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) 2014/15 – 2017/18

The Committee were advised by the Director of Finance and Assets that certain assumptions had been made with regard to funding reductions, natural growth in business rates and an increase in pay and national insurance for future years.

The Committee noted that since the report opportunities to reduce the employers contributions into the Local Government Pension Scheme had been highlighted and BMKFA could save around £200k. The committee also noted that in future the retirement profile would need to be more proactively managed.

The Committee were advised that all savings bids were agreed without much challenge. Further work is still to be done on the growth bids.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that the final CSR announcement would be made in early January although final dates are not yet know.

The Committee considered the draft revenue budget and three different council tax options for 2014/15 to 2017/18.:

RESOLVED –

1. That the savings and growth bids be noted.
2. That the draft capital budget for 2014/15 to 2017/18 be noted.
3. That the updated grey book retirement profile be noted.

It being proposed by Cllr Dransfield and seconded by Cllr Morris it was

RESOLVED -

4. That that three council tax options to be considered at the next Fire Authority meeting would be:

- (i) Council tax freeze;
- (ii) 2% Council tax increase;
- (iii) 1% Council tax decrease.

EX29

REVIEW OF CATERING PROVISIONS DURING EMERGENCY INCIDENTS

The Committee noted that the purpose of this report was to inform them of the proposed changes to arrangements for feeding at fires policy and to seek approval for the Chief Fire Officer to commence formal redundancy consultation with affected staff.

The Head of Service Development advised that the current expenditure was £29,864 per annum of which £26,454 (over a three year average) was staff costs. Some of the initial savings would be used to supplement appliances with the correct equipment and provisions for feeding at incidents.

All new appliances would be fitted with water heaters and refreshment packs. All appliances not fitted with water heaters would be stocked with self-heating food packs and dry provisions to provide light refreshments.

A high street supermarket chain would be used for the purchase of local refreshments and Flexi-Duty Officers would carry procurement cards to use when local suppliers are unavailable.

A Memorandum of Understanding would be drawn up between BFRS and other services with a large catering provision for feeding at protracted incidents of 8-10 pumps or more.

Adoption of the preferred recommendation would be at no additional cost and would be considered as an on-going saving of approximately £25k per annum in year 3.

RESOLVED –

1. That the progress taken to date be noted.
2. That approval be given for the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive to initiate consultation with the affected staff.

EX30

UPDATE ON THE PILOT SCHEME FOR STAFF BANK SYSTEM INVOLVING OPERATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS AND SUPERVISORY OFFICERS

The Head of Service Delivery updated the Committee on the successful pilot scheme to maintain appliance availability in the event of shortfalls in crewing that had been running since September 2012.

The availability of a 'bank' of staff that have the relevant skills and qualifications, whilst being remunerated at a 'flat rate' replaces the requirement on occasion to use 'pre-arranged overtime' as provided for in the national NJC terms and conditions of employment at a remuneration rate of 'time and a half'.

This had created a unique and flexible system with different crewing solutions being developed in line with the on-going IRMP process.

RESOLVED –

That the outcomes of the pilot scheme and that full implementation is underway be noted.

EX31

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the date of the next Executive Committee would be held on Wednesday 5 February 2014 at 10.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11.30 AM