

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 30 JULY 2014 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillors Busby, Dransfield, Gomm, Lambert, Reed, Schofield and Webb

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), J Parsons (Head of Service Delivery), M Osborne (Head of Service Transformation), D O'Driscoll (Head of Service Development) G Smith (Group Manager) K McCafferty (Head of Human Resources), Fraser Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

2 Members of the Public

Apologies: Councillor Morris
(Councillor Dransfield in the Chair)

EX01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Busby be re-elected Chairman of the Committee for 2014/15

(Councillor Busby in the Chair)

EX02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Dransfield be re-appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for 2014/15

EX03 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 14 May 2014, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX04 FOURTH QUARTER PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN & CORPORATE PLAN 2012-15 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Service Transformation introduced the report and advised Members that the report sets out performance against the Authority's key strategic aims, Prevention, Protection and Response. Overall performance was very good and continued to improve in most areas and early indications since these figures were produced supported this improving trend across areas in exception such as call handling and 1st Attendance.

Members noted that with regard to the reduction in the number of casualties killed and seriously injured in road traffic collisions, in Buckinghamshire this was steadily decreasing in line with national trends. However, in Milton Keynes increases in this area were of some concern. Milton Keynes Council was undertaking a comprehensive review of road accident trends in Milton Keynes and the Authority was contributing to this review with its work with 'Safer Milton Keynes'. The Authority provided various road safety education initiatives aimed at those most vulnerable on our roads and would continue to invest in this area.

Members noted that with regard to call handling the Authority's annual outturn was slightly off target, but there had been consistent improvement and the end of month figures since February this year have exceeded target.

Members noted that the Authority's work in reducing false alarms in non-domestic premises was recognised by the Fire Protection Association as the most reliable and consistent approach to automatic fire alarms in the UK. We were the only service that still responds to all calls generated by automatic fire alarms. By engaging with and educating those businesses and other building management teams, the Service had managed to reduce the amount of automatic fire alarm calls.

RESOLVED -

That the outturn performance against the objectives and targets set in the Public Safety Plan 2013-14 be acknowledged.

EX05

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 TO 2018/19

Members noted the update on the Medium Term Financial Plan process for 2015/16 to 2018/19. The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that some of the dates had been moved forward to allow for a more robust process. The process would be similar to previous years' with Officer challenge and scrutiny and Member challenge and scrutiny in a similar way.

A discussion was held on the date of the Fire Authority meeting on 25 February 2014 when the budget would be set. This date was later than in previous years to allow for the lateness of information from other billing Authorities.

Members noted that the proposed earlier date of 18 February 2015 for the budget setting Fire Authority meeting would stay in the diary and either the 18 or 25 February would be confirmed at the Fire Authority meeting in December 2014.

RESOLVED -

1. That the key dates at Appendix A which have been set to enable challenge and scrutiny of revenue and capital bids during the budget build and MTFP process be noted.
2. That the guidance document at Appendix B sent out to cost centre managers in June 2014 be noted.

EX06

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS AND TRENDS

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity asked Members to note the significant improvement in attendance management and the favourable absence levels compared with other Public Sector and Fire Authorities.

Members noted the report set out the current position of the Authority in respect of Attendance Management and the significant improvements that had been made to date to reduce non-attendance caused by sickness absence.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that this was the first full year report. It had been a corporate priority for a while to focus on attendance management with a view to reducing it. Also to look at what the Authority could do in terms of reasonable levels of prevention and looking at the wider picture of employee well-being.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised that for the first time the Authority had really good data to compare with 29 other fire and rescue services who were now measuring things in the same way. It showed what's possible when the Authority had a combination of robust management controls, the right fit for purpose policy and cross functional team work. The Authority had seen a very significant reduction year on year of working days lost. It was not complacent and by continually focusing on early intervention it would look to improve even further.

When looking at the fire and rescue performance comparison report the Authority is seeing the highest improvement rate of all the other fire and rescue services in terms of control staff and support staff. Considering what the Control staff were going through in terms of the Thames Valley Fire Control project and the reduction in numbers. This was a really good achievement and should be acknowledged.

RESOLVED –

That the Authority's recorded attendance management performance trends, absence reductions to date, and plans for further improvements as detailed in Annex A be noted.

EX07

REVIEW OF PAY, GRADING AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR STAFF COVERED BY THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY, SUPPORT SERVICES STAFF, SCHEME OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity formally thanked the Members of the working group for achieving such good results and advised Members that it was important to move from long service and good conduct and to reward those who performed well for the Authority.

The Lead Member for Human Resources and Equality and Diversity asked Members to note the primary objectives for amending the current pay scales set out in Annex A, paragraph 19.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that an equal pay audit had been combined with a review of support services staff terms and conditions which gave assurance that all support service jobs were ranked in a particular order which gave a proper pay spine and transparency around equal pay, and would give flexibility in the future.

The Director of People and Organisational Development asked Members to note that one of the equal pay recommendations was to review the pay and grading structure as there was gaps in it. It was also reviewed to ensure in future the Authority attracted and retained the right calibre of skills and staff needed to drive through changes in the service.

The Authority now had a very robust salary pay and grading scale, which had been achieved under the principles of self-funding.

RESOLVED –

1. That the outcome of the review be noted.
2. That the Member led Working Group be thanked for its work and to note that its task has been concluded.

EX09

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the date of the next Executive Committee would be held on Wednesday 17 September 2014 at 10.00am.

Before closing the meeting the Chairman welcomed back Councillor Schofield who had been ill and introduced Kerry McCafferty the new Head of Human Resources. The Chairman also thanked the Head of Service Development for all his hard work with the Control project as this was his last meeting before retiring.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.55 AM.