

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 9 MAY 2018 at 10.00 am.

Present: Councillors Carroll, Lambert, Marland, McCall, McDonald, McLean, Reed (Chairman) and Roberts

Officers: J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development), D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), M Hemming (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), N Bousted (Head of Service Delivery), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), M Crothers (Programme Manager), A Stunell (Head of Human Resources), R Smith (Procurement Manager), F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager)

Apologies: None

EX42 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 14 March 2018, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX43 PROPERTY STRATEGY 2018-2023

The Lead Member for Property and Resource Management advised Members that the aim of this Property Strategy was to set a clear framework for the management of property assets within the Authority. The strategy supports the development of a longer term vision of how property can help to deliver the Authority's aims and outcomes while working within a value for money framework in order to achieve efficiency savings.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that it was a very comprehensive report, laid out in a very similar format to the existing strategy, which when published last time was very well received by Members and also a number of external bodies. The only action not completed in the last strategy was around Buckingham Fire Station and this was picked up again in this strategy.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that in the new strategy one of the main focuses would be in the south of the county and High Wycombe Fire Station. A recommended action over the next year was set out in the report.

The Lead Member for Property and Resource Management advised Members that the process of working with external stakeholders had already begun at Princes Risborough, with Thames Valley Police (TVP) and the Authority working together.

A Member asked if there was value in the air conditioning plant being replaced in Unit 7 and was advised that the investment in the air conditioning plant was only taking place in other HQ buildings, no investment was being made in Unit 7, but it would be used as temporary office space while work was underway.

A Member asked if there was any further information regarding Thames Valley Police sharing the fire station at Newport Pagnell and was advised that arrangements had been made for them to build an extension on the back of the station. It was a police project with police funding, the drawings had been agreed, but TVP had not yet applied for planning permission.

RESOLVED –

That the 2018-2023 Property Strategy as drafted be approved.

EX44

BUDGET MONITORING PERFORMANCE AND DEBT MANAGEMENT APRIL 2017 – FEBRUARY 2018

The Lead Member for Finance, IT and Procurement introduced the report and advised Members that it sets out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 28 February 2018, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the forecast was fairly stable, the underspend increased by only £42k and the underspend forecast was £304k, which was approximately 1% variance against the budget. The main reason for movement in the forecast variance was £138k backdated income for aerial site rentals and one off payments following the successful renegotiation of contracts, and additional IT and Communications expenditure of £83k.

A Member asked why there was an underspend of £167k in the People and Organisational Development (POD) budget and an overspend of £413k in the Statutory Accounting and Contingency budget regarding apprentices and was advised that in the POD budget there was a projected underspend on support apprentices in Prevention & Protection and Community Safety, as recruitment had been delayed due to changes in the apprenticeship frameworks. The forecast overspend in the Statutory Accounting and Contingency budget primarily relates to the planned recruitment of additional operational firefighter apprentices in order to ensure sufficient staff numbers were available to deliver the Authority's resourcing model.

A Member advised that he had been lobbying parliament for a response regarding emergency service buildings paying business rates. To date a response had not yet been received.

RESOLVED –

That the latest projected outturn forecast for the Authority as at 28 February 2018 be noted.

EX45

EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME (ESMCP)

The Head of Service Development advised that this report provided Members with a further update regarding the national status of the programme and the impact on the regional and local transition.

The Head of Service Development also asked Members if they would prefer to see the technical information being available in the Members' Library and not in the report, Members agreed and this would be trialled for the next report.

The Programme Manager advised Members that there was increased confidence that the proposed technical solution was viable, ESN testing was on schedule and had been successful thus far. Hand held devices were being procured from a major supplier in the market and this would be underpinned by the fact that South Korea would be implementing a similar project to ESN in the near future.

The Programme Manager advised Members that there had been a change in the National Programme Lead, who had made the decision to shelve the national transition plan. A number of alternative options were now being considered and these had been referenced within the paper. This process, whilst seen as a positive step forward, would impact user organisations in that it increased levels of uncertainty regarding the method of transition. There was still no indication regarding how the Authority would be charged during transition, it was suspected that there would be a need to have Airwave and ESN installed within the fleet at the same time. This may cause issues with wiring and the space available within vehicle cabs and will necessitate two lots of vehicle fits. There would remain a shortfall in the Airwave funding during this period, however, if the Authority was able to move to a data provision over the ESN this may reduce the Airwave costs. Although, the ESN data costs were still not known.

A Member asked if the Authority should look at ways to work with our near partners to put in an interim solution and was advised that unfortunately this would be too cost prohibitive.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.30 AM.