

Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE 2013 at 11.00 am

Present Councillors Bendyshe-Brown, Busby, Chilver, Dransfield, Edwards, Exon, Glover, Huxley, Lambert, Morris, Reed, Schofield, Vigor-Hedderly, Watson and Webb

Officers: M Jones (Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director Law and Governance), D Skinner (Director of Finance & Assets), S Heap (Clerk), J May (Head of Finance [Deputy Director]), D O'Driscoll (Head of Service Delivery [Buckinghamshire]), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), F Pearson (Group Manager Communications), E Andrews (Executive Assistant), and Faye Mansfield (Human Resources Operations Manager).

Apologies: Councillors Gomm and Mallen.

FA01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

(Councillor Dransfield presiding)

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Busby be re-elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2013/14.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Busby be re-elected Chairman of the Authority for 2013/14.

(Councillor Busby in the Chair)

FA02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Dransfield be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2013/14

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Dransfield be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Authority for 2013/14

FA04 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 17 April 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

FA06 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed new Members to the Authority.

The Chairman announced that:

- (a) detailed Induction Packs would be sent to all new Members and an Induction day had been organised for Monday 15 July 2013 and he urged all Members to attend. New Members

had also been sent details of the Officer who would be acting as their mentor.

- (b) he had asked officers to prepare an update on the Fire Control project for the Executive Committee meeting in September;
- (c) the Service continued to play a leading role in promoting the use of sprinklers and a recent national seminar organised by the Service had been well attended. The service had also secured a number of condemned buildings in which fires would be set to demonstrate and test the effectiveness of sprinklers which it was hoped would be featured on national television;
- (d) Members had been supplied with a copy of a recently published report 'Facing the Future: Findings from the review of efficiencies and operations in fire and rescue authorities in England' by Sir Ken Knight, to which the Chief Fire Officer Mark Jones had contributed. A report would be presented to the Executive Committee meeting in September by which time the Government's response should be available.
- (e) that there would be a presentation to Simon Heap (Clerk) at the end of the meeting.

FA09

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority noted that the following Members had been appointed by the Constituent Authorities to serve on the Fire Authority for 2013/14:

Buckinghamshire County Council (12)

Councillors Bendyshe-Brown, Busby, Chilver, Glover, Gomm, Huxley, Lambert, Mallen, Reed, Schofield, Vigor-Hedderly and Watson

Milton Keynes Council (5)

Councillors Dransfield, Edwards, Exon, Morris and Webb

FA10

COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

The Authority noted that the allocation of seats on the Authority was:

- (i) Conservative Group: 11 seats (64.7059%)
- (ii) United Kingdom Independence Group 2 seats (11.7647%)
- (iii) Liberal Democrat Group: 2 seats (11.7647%)

- (iv) Labour Group: 2 seats (11.7647%)
- (b) Committee Matters – Committee Appointments
RESOLVED -
 - 1. That the following Committees be appointed and seats allocated, as follows:
 - (a) Executive Committee (8 members):
 - (i) Conservatives – 5 seats
 - (ii) Liberal Democrats – 1 seat
 - (iii) Labour – 1 seat
 - (iv) United Kingdom Independence – 1 seat
 - (b) Overview and Audit Committee (9 members):
 - (i) Conservatives – 6 seats
 - (ii) Liberal Democrats – 1 seat
 - (iii) Labour – 1 seat
 - (iii) United Kingdom Independence – 1 seat
 - 2. That the following Members be appointed to the Executive Committee:
Councillors Busby, Dransfield, Edwards, Gomm, Lambert, Morris, Reed, and Schofield
 - 3. That the following Members be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee:
Councillors Bendyshe-Brown, Chilver, Exon, Glover, Huxley, Mallen, Vigor-Hedderly, Watson and Webb

FA11 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Authority considered possible dates for its meetings and meetings of its committees during 2013/14.

RESOLVED -

- 1. That meetings of the Authority be held on Wednesday 18 December 2013, Wednesday 19 February 2014, Wednesday 9 April 2014 and Wednesday 11 June 2014, all at 11 a.m.
- 2. That meetings of the Executive Committee be held on Wednesday 17 July 2013, Wednesday 18 September 2013, Wednesday 20 November 2013, Wednesday 5 February 2014, Wednesday 19 March 2014 and Wednesday 14 May 2014, all at 10 a.m.
- 3. That meetings of the Overview and Audit Committee be held on Wednesday 26 June 2013, Wednesday 25 September

FA12

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Authority considered the appointment of representatives to outside bodies:

RESOLVED –

1. That Councillors Busby and Dransfield be appointed as the Authority's representatives to the Local Government Association Annual Conference.
2. That Councillors Busby and Dransfield be appointed as the Authority's representatives to the Local Government Association Fire Commission.
3. That Councillor Busby be appointed as the Authority's representative to the Regional Management Board (South East Fire Improvement Partnership), with Councillor Dransfield as deputy.
4. That Councillors Dransfield and Reed be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Programme Sponsoring Group.

FA13

LEAD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority considered the allocation of Lead Member responsibilities.

RESOLVED –

That Members be appointed as Lead Members for 2013/14 as follows:

Responsibility	Lead Member
Community Protection	Councillor Morris
Equality and Diversity and Human Resources	Councillor Reed
Finance, IT, Property and Procurement	Councillor Dransfield
Health and Safety and Corporate Risk	Councillor Schofield
Resource Management	Councillor Busby

FA14

PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2012/13

Councillor Dransfield as Lead Member for Finance, IT, Property and Procurement introduced the report and gave a brief update on the Authority's recent history of cost reduction.

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that prudent management and strict spending controls had allowed the service to reduce cost with no loss of front line service.

The Authority considered an update of the provisional Revenue and Capital outturn position as at 31 March 2013.

The Authority noted the managed underspend for the year of £873k, which when taking reserves into account was likely to provide a residual balance of an underspend of £429k. If statutory accounting and contingency items totalling £307k were to be removed there was a forecast overall under-spend of £122k.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the Authority's Accounts had still to be audited and the Final Accounts would be presented to the Overview & Audit Committee in September.

A discussion was had on the RAG (Red, Amber and Green) variance reporting and it was felt that savings and items under budget should not be shown as 'Red' as they portrayed a positive rather than a negative position.

RESOLVED:

1. That the provisional outturn revenue and capital position 2012/13 be noted.
2. That the proposed movements in reserves as outlined in the report be approved.
3. That the £285k financing of carried forward capital commitments for slipped capital schemes be approved.
4. That delegated authority be given to the Treasurer to authorise any late changes to the movements in reserves and capital slippage amounts resulting from accounting adjustments needing to be made during the year-end closedown process.
5. That should any changes to the amounts referred to above be required, then the Treasurer will report these to Members at the next available meeting of the Executive Committee.

FA15

URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE CREWING AND PROVISION

The Head of Service Delivery – Buckinghamshire explained to Members the background behind the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) function, which had arisen from the 'New Dimensions' programme introduced by the Government following the 2001 terror attacks in New York.

The Authority considered an update on the review of USAR crewing and provision. It was noted that the USAR staff had transferred to Aylesbury Fire Station on 1 May 2013. It was also noted that this review would support savings of at least £462k per annum, together with an improvement to service.

Members commended the fact that there had been no compulsory redundancies involved in the implementation.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(Councillor Edwards declared an interest in this item and did not participate in the debate.)

FA16

APPROVAL OF REVISIONS TO THE AUTHORITY'S CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS

The Director of Legal and Governance explained the reasoning behind the amendments to the constitutional documents which were in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan agreed by the Authority at the last meeting, including the internalisation of the Clerking Service.

RESOLVED:

1. the revised "Scheme of Delegation to Officers" be approved.
2. the Director of Legal & Governance be delegated authority:
 - (a) to amend "Standing Orders for the Authority and its Committees"; "Standing Orders relating to Contracts"; and "Financial Regulations" so that references to "Clerk" are replaced with "Monitoring Officer"
 - (b) to amend "Financial Regulations" so that:
 - (a) references to the "Deputy Chief Fire Officer" are replaced with "Chief Operating Officer"
 - (b) references throughout to responsible officers are amended to reflect prevailing post holder designations.
3. That the revised Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee and the Authority be approved.

A presentation was made by the Chairman to Simon Heap to recognise his commitment to the administration of Authority business and his time as Clerk to the Authority. Simon Heap responded.

FA17

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Authority noted that the next meeting of the Authority is to be held on Wednesday 18 December 2013 at 11.00 am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.22 PM