

Minutes of the meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017 at 10.00 am.

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

Officers: 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), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) J Finden (Fleet Manager) M Crothers (Programme Manager), F Mansfield (HR Services and Development Manager) and F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager)

Apologies: Councillor Sullivan

EX17 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 20 September 2017, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX18 FLEET STRATEGY 2018/19 – 2021/22

The Lead Member for Property and Resource Management advised the Committee that in the Executive Summary it stated 'to provide a clear, corporate vision for the overall direction of the vehicle fleet across the Authority' and that was what this strategy was going to do. It was important that the Authority put some sort of emphasis on planning for the future. The financial planning for this project was very robust. This was a real positive for the Authority.

The Director of Finance and Assets put forward to Members a refreshed Fleet Strategy for the next three years. The current Fleet Strategy had been very well received both by the Authority and indeed a wider audience. This new Strategy focused on continuing with the improvements already made three years ago.

A Member asked why a move to hybrid/electric vehicles was not mentioned in the Strategy and was advised that although this was something that was regularly monitored, there was nothing that would meet Service requirements at this current time. With regard to new technology on vehicles, CCTV had already been installed on some appliances and other new technologies were looked at as and when they came along and whether they would benefit the Authority.

RESOLVED –

That the Fleet Strategy 2018-2021 as set out in Annex 1 be adopted for implementation.

EX19 BUDGET MONITORING PERFORMANCE AND DEBT MANAGEMENT APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2017

The Lead Member for Finance, IT and Procurement advised the Committee that the revenue and capital budgets continued to be well controlled. There was a current underspend of £663k which represented a 2.35% variance against the budget. The main reasons for the increase in underspend was it was anticipated that the majority of the joint funding for sprinklers would not be spent in the current year; lower numbers of operational apprentices were forecast and there was additional treasury management income.

RESOLVED –

1. That the latest projected outturn forecast for the Authority as at 30 September 2017 be noted.
2. That £240k of the underspend is transferred to the sprinkler reserve.
3. That the planned transfer of £150k from the sprinkler reserve is not made in 2017-18.

EX20 EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME (ESMCP)

The Lead Member for Finance, IT and Procurement advised the Committee that this report was another interim update.

The Head of Service Development advised the Committee that this was a centrally run project by the government that had been running for a few years now, originally it was expected to transition sometime next year.

(Councillor McCall joined the meeting).

The Programme Manager summarised the report for the Committee. The three main points were that the national infrastructure, which was the responsibility of EE to deliver to the programme, was on target and broadly meeting its milestones and early testing had been positive. The national transition plan was supposed to be published for fire services to scrutinise in July but that had not happened and it was now likely that this would not be ready until between the New Year 2018 and spring 2018. The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) had met on 13 November to scrutinise the progress of the project and they had focused mainly on the delay. It was unlikely that this Service would start transitioning now until 2020. The current risk nationally was amber/red. The PAC also focussed on Airwave and the extension to the current arrangements, but would not commit to any dates and would not commit to apportioning funding from

central government to services needing to take action to replace equipment.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

(M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery) and J Parsons (Head of Service Development) excused themselves from the Meeting.)

EX21

VOLUNTARY SCHEME PAYS IN THE FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES

The HR and Services Manager advised the Committee that this report was being presented as there was a requirement for a decision to be made on whether to allow Voluntary Scheme Pay arrangements to be made available to affected Pension Scheme Members. For 2016/17 the Authority had two scheme members affected by this and for the 2016/17 tax year any Voluntary Scheme Pays tax charge must be paid to HMRC by the end of January 2018, as after this date, interest would start to accrue. The Home Office had confirmed that it hoped to get out another set of amendment regulations by the end of spring 2018 and if it did this, it would include Scheme Pays. However, there was no guarantee, and if they do not manage this, it was likely to be a long time before it could then be done due to the demands of Brexit.

RESOLVED –

1. That the operation of Voluntary Scheme Pays for all eligible Scheme members when the tax charge in a particular year is in excess of £2,000 be approved.
2. That the Scheme members' benefits be adjusted to reflect the payment made by the Authority under Voluntary Scheme Pays be noted.

EX22

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED –

By virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the report contains information relating to an individual; and Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person; and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, so that the meeting could consider the following matter:

Application for flexible working – Director of Finance and Assets

(M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery) and J Parsons (Head of Service Development) re-joined the meeting.)

D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), M Hemming (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), J Finden (Fleet Manager), F Mansfield (HR and Service Manager), M Crothers (Programme Manager) and F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager) left the meeting.

EX23 APPLICATION FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING – DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ASSETS

The Committee considered the report and appendices, details of which were noted in the confidential/exempt minutes.

EX24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the date of the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 7 February 2018 at 10.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.35 AM.