

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY held at the
Borough Council Offices, Eastleigh on 19 September, 2012

PRESENT:

Councillors:

p	I. Beagley	p	T. Knight
p	S. Barnes-Andrews	p	C. McEwing
a	A.S. Carew	p	R. McIntosh
p	C. Carter	p	E. Neal
p	K. Chapman	p	F. Pearce
p	M. Cooper	p	R.H. Price
a	S. Darragh	p	D. Simpson
a	A. Evans	p	P. Smith
a	L. Fairhurst	p	R. Smith
p	J. Frankum	p	L. Stubbs
p	D. Harrison	p	J. West
a	J. Hancock	p	M. Tucker
p	R.J. Kimber		

258 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Carew, Darragh, Evans, Fairhurst and Hancock.

It was noted that Portsmouth City Council was likely to appoint another councillor to take the place of Councillor Hancock at its next Council meeting. It was proposed and agreed that in this case, the new councillor would take over the committee positions currently held by Councillor Hancock.

259 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

No interests were declared under this item.

260 MINUTES

Minutes of the Authority held on 6 June 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

261 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations to this meeting.

262 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

This item was added to the agenda at the meeting as it had not been included on the agenda circulated in advance.

Councillor Price reported on a development day he had attended regarding the role and influence of the European Union institutions and legislation on fire authorities. He highlighted some of the issues that had been raised, including fire risks associated with solar panels in Italy, the fire safety ratings of hotels and differences in the governance and control of fire authorities in different countries.

263 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman encouraged all Members to attend this year's Celebrating Success event which will be held at the Winchester Guildhall on Wednesday 14 November from 8 pm to 10 pm. This event gives a fantastic insight into the activities of the Service and the valiant work of so many staff.

It was announced that Hampshire was one of four Fire and Rescue Services nominated for Brigade of the Year by The Fire Fighters Charity. The results will be announced at an award ceremony in October, however, irrespective of whether or not the Service wins, a total of £310,000 was raised for the Charity during the past year; only one other Fire and Rescue Service had raised more than this.

It was confirmed that a letter of thanks from Dorset Fire and Rescue Service had been received following the assistance given to them during the Olympics and Paralympics. The Chairman felt this was testament to the way fire and rescue services, which are designed to protect their communities locally, can work together to meet unusual circumstances.

It was also announced that Brandon Lewis had become the new Fire Minister, replacing Bob Neill.

Members were reminded that a private briefing to update them on the Shirley Towers incident would follow the meeting.

264 ACTIVITY REPORT

The Authority considered the report of Chief Officer (Item 5 in the Minute Book) highlighting prevention, protection and response activities in each of the group areas covering the period 29 April 2012 until 11 August 2012.

Over the course of discussion various comments were raised by Members and answered at the meeting. As a result the Chief Officer agreed to give further consideration to ways in which disabilities such as deafness could be recognised during home visits. Members welcomed the report and particularly wished to extend their congratulations to all those involved in the Princes Trust and Road Safety events.

RESOLVED:

That the Activity Report be noted.

265 FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) on the Department for Communities and Local Government's publication, which outlined the Government's priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities, as well proposals for fire and rescue services for the coming years.

The Chief Officer introduced the report, explaining the emphasis on identifying risk, including national and cross border risk, with the intention that future service plans be clearer about risk. He confirmed that the Authority was responding to the new framework in its service planning including the preparation of a strategic assessment.

A Member asked whether Fire Authority control might change in the future in the way that control of the Police Authority had changed. It was confirmed that there were no known plans for this and it was felt to be unlikely, given the different set of powers held by each Service.

RESOLVED:

The Authority considered the contents of the 2012 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and noted the development of the HFRS Strategic Assessment.

**266 DRAFT 'HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PLAN 2013 - 2016':
DRAFT STRATEGIC PROPOSALS AND CONSULTATION STRATEGY**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer, (Item 7 in the Minute Book) outlining the six draft strategic proposals for the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2013 to 2016.

The dual approach of 'Making Hampshire safer' and 'Making the Service stronger' was outlined and it was explained that planned engagement with partners and staff about the external factors would help to shape the strategic proposals. Members welcomed the report and it was agreed that the matter be given further consideration when the consultation results were available.

RESOLVED:

The Authority considered and endorsed the strategic proposals (set out in Appendix A) as a basis for consultation with stakeholders; and

The Authority approved the proposed consultation strategy and programme (set out in Appendices B and C).

267 SPRINKLER STRATEGY

The Authority received the report of the Chief Officer, (Item 8 in the Minute Book), providing an update on progress to date with the strategy.

An amended appendix A to the report was tabled and distributed to Members.

The Authority discussed issues raised in the proposed strategy. It was noted that it was written to be inclusive of the views of the Members, however it could be reviewed and amended in the future if required.

It was proposed that the strategy as set out in the amended appendix A be adopted. A vote was held and the proposal was carried.

It was agreed that an electronic copy of the strategy be supplied to Members after the meeting along with material to assist each Member to promote the strategy.

RESOLVED:

That the position statement detailed in amended Appendix A be accepted as the sprinkler strategy for HFRA.

That Fire Authority Members promote the new position statement and act as HFRA advocates, both as HFRA Members and Councillors, and actively contribute to achieving risk reduction via the promotion of sprinkler installations within the identified risk premises.

268 AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

The Authority considered the report of the Clerk (Item 9 in the Minute Book) setting out the proposed amendments to the Authority's standing orders.

The Clerk confirmed that the amendments referred to the Vice-Chairmanship of the Authority and to the changes to the Standards procedures resulting from the Localism Act.

RESOLVED:

That, following the in principle decisions taken at its meeting on 6 June 2012, the Authority agreed to vary Standing Orders as set out in the Schedule.

269 LOCALISM ACT 2011 – AN UPDATE ON THE CHANGES TO THE STANDARDS REGIME

The Authority considered the report of the Clerk (Item 10 in the Minute Book) providing an update on progress with the introduction of new arrangements for promoting and maintaining high standards of Member conduct under the Localism Act 2011.

The Clerk confirmed that this matter had received debate in the Standards and Governance Committee and summarised the proposed changes, highlighting the differences with the previous system.

Members questioned wording relating to the equalities monitoring section of the draft complaint form and it was agreed that the Standards and Governance Committee should review this.

It was confirmed that the proposed Independent Person appointment was only until July 2013, due to a clause in the regulations, however it was hoped that by then discussions on shared arrangements with other authorities in the area would have reached a conclusion.

RESOLVED:

The arrangements for handling allegations of failure to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct, set out in Schedule 1 to the report, were approved subject to any revisions to the complaint letter from the Standards and Governance Committee.

The recommendations of the Selection Panel meeting on 6 September regarding the appointment of the Independent Person (as reported to the meeting and included in the exempt appendix) were agreed and the payment of a sum of £500 per annum to the Independent Person in respect of their time and expenses incurred in carrying out the role was approved.

The Code of Conduct in Schedule 2 to the report was approved.

Work to explore the possibility of a common code of conduct continue over the coming months, with a view to presenting a report back to HLOWLA on a future occasion was supported with progress in this respect to be reported to Standards and Governance Committee.

270 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEMES – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer and the Treasurer, (Item 11 in the Minute Book) setting out the Authority's initial response to consultation on the development of local Council Tax Support Schemes by Billing Authorities in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The generic response from the Authority to the billing authorities was highlighted and supported by Members.

RESOLVED:

The Authority approved the response to Billing Authorities attached at Appendix 2.

The Authority noted the potential financial impact on the Authority as outlined in section 5.

271 MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 JUNE, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Performance Review and Scrutiny

Committee held on 27 June 2012, item 12 in the Minute Book.

272 MINUTES OF STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 28 JUNE, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 28 June 2012, item 13 in the Minute Book

273 MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 31 JULY, 2012

The Authority received the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 31 July 2012, item 14 in the Minute Book.

The recommendation to the Authority at Minute 100 was agreed.

With regards to the confidential Minute (105) relating to Carpenters Down, the Committee Chairman confirmed that the Committee had decided not to sell this site.

With regards to advanced driver training (Minute 102), the Chief Officer offered to extend this to Authority Members who wished to take part.