

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 23 October 2012.

**PRESENT:**

Councillors : I. F. E Beagley (Chairman); S. Barnes-Andrews; A. Carew; C. Carter; M. Cooper; L. Fairhurst; R. Price; D. Simpson and R. Smith.

**105 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Stubbs.

**106 DISCLOSURE 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.

**107 MINUTES**

It was noted that Cllr Cooper was not present for the previous meeting, despite being listed as an attendee. The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2012 were then confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**108 DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations at the meeting.

**109 PROVISION OF MARINE FIRE FIGHTING**

The Committee considered a report of the Treasurer and the Chief Officer (Item 5 in the Minute Book) regarding the marine fire fighting.

The officer confirmed that national funding was now no longer available for this provision as it was no longer considered a national resource, however HFRA felt that it was important to maintain marine fire fighting capability for a defined area of coastline. The Chief Officer explained the map in Appendix B and the responsibilities of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) compared to that of HFRA.

It was confirmed that joint work was currently underway with West Sussex and Kent as to the best joint approach.

**RESOLVED:**

The Committee noted the requirement to adapt previous maritime response with the cessation of the national maritime response arrangements

## **110. BUDGET MONITORING: 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER 2012/13**

The Committee considered a report of the Treasurer and Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) regarding budget monitoring for quarter 2 of 2012/13.

Members were taken through the report. Section 3 was highlighted as containing the main variations to the budget, including pay, and it was confirmed that efficiency savings planned were on target. It was also confirmed that the £50,000 additional cost relating to vehicles was a result of raw material prices increasing. Interest rates on longer term borrowing were currently high relative to shorter term lending rates. New national arrangements were expected to be introduced in early 2013 might enable the HFRA to repay more expensive loans cost effectively.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

- a) Noted the latest financial position for 2013/14;
- b) Approved the virements in section 5;
- c) Supported the principle of the transfers to the Improvement and Sustainability Reserve and an Operational Pressures Reserve as set out in section 6 subject to the final outturn position being able to sustain the transfers.

The Committee agreed the following RECOMMENDATIONS to the Authority:

- d) That the Authority approve the changes to the capital programme as set out in the report
- e) That the Authority delegate to the Chief Officer, in consultation with the Treasurer, Chairman of the Authority and the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the power to make changes within the approved capital programme limits where it is in the Authority's interests, with the changes being reported back to the full Authority; and
- f) That the mid-year review of treasury management activities be noted.

## **111. BUDGET DEVELOPMENT 2013/14 – 2015/16**

The Committee considered a report of the Treasurer and the Chief Officer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) regarding budget development for 2013 through to 2016.

Changes and updates since the last report were detailed in section 4 of the report, with proposed options regarding Council Tax being summarised in section 5.5. The new figures for grant reduction would not be known until December 2012, and so it was agreed that consultation on these would take place in January 2013. However, it was agreed that if the grant figures released in December are appreciably different from the current assumptions then a revised set of options will be compiled and used for public consultation.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

- a) Endorsed the planning assumptions set out in the report as a basis for preparing the Authority's budget for 2013/14; and

- b) Agreed the approach to be adopted in respect of the draft budget to be presented to HFRA in December 2012 as outlined in section 5.

**112. JOINT WORKING WITH ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (RBFRS) FOR THE PROVISION OF FLEET MAINTENANCE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Officer (Item 8 in the Minute Book) regarding potentially working with RBFRS with fleet maintenance. Whilst there was still work to be completed, section 7 of the report detailed the anticipated way forward. Officers confirmed that the arrangement would very much be an equal partnership, rather than HFRS running the service. Environmental impacts would be looked at as part of the assessment of how the operation would be managed.

RESOLVED:

The Committee approved the proposal to enter into a co-operation arrangement between RBFRS and HFRS for the provision of fleet maintenance services.

**113. DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DCLG) CONSULTATION ON ASSURANCE STATEMENTS AND INTERVENTION PROTOCOL**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Officer (Item 9 in the Minute Book) regarding two consultation documents released by the DCLG.

The officer summarised the sections of the consultation, highlighting the new assurance requirements and the draft intervention procedure, if required. Members were concerned that the work relating to the intervention protocol was duplicating procedures already in place for local government, and it was agreed that this would be fed back as part of the response.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

- a) Noted and commented on the proposed Guidance on Statements of Assurance; and
- b) Noted and commented on the proposed Protocol on government intervention

**114. JOINT WORKING IN HAMPSHIRE – PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Officer (Item 10 in the Minute Book), which updated the Committee on progress with the joint working arrangements.

Joint Occupation Health arrangements were in place with Hampshire Constabulary and interim arrangements for Finance and Procurement were anticipated to be in place from April 2013.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the progress to date of the Joint Working in Hampshire project.

## **115. FIREWATCH UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Officer (Item 11 in the Minute Book), which updated Members on the FireWatch system.

The officer highlighted significant areas that had been completed and interfaces currently in development. Phase 1 was nearing completion and it was confirmed that the programme mandate would be reviewed to take account of other changes including joint working arrangements..

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

- a) Noted the programme on the programme, which was within the approved budget; and
- b) Supported the review of the mandate requested by the Programme Board, which would be reported back to SMT.

## **116. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

The public were excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would have been disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

## **117. EXEMPT MINUTE FROM 31 JULY 2012**

The Committee received the exempt Minute from the 31 July 2012 (Item 13 in the Minute Book) and it was confirmed that Cllr Cooper was not in attendance for the meeting.

## **118. VEHICLE REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME: PROPOSALS FOR 2012/13 TO 2016/17**

The Committee considered an exempt report from the Chief Officer (Item 14 in the Minute Book) regarding the vehicle replacement programme [SUMMARY OF EXEMPT MINUTE]

## **119. WORKING WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR INCLUDING TENDERING FOR DEFENCE FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (DFRMO) CONTRACT**

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Chief Officer (Item 15 in the Minute Book), regarding working with the private sector and DFRMO contract. [SUMMARY OF EXEMPT MINUTE]

