

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY held at the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 24 February, 2016

PRESENT:

Councillors:

a	John Bennison	p	Geoff Hockley
p	Ann Briggs	p	Chris Lagdon
p	Graham Burgess	p	Robin McIntosh
p	Adam Carew	p	Sharon Mintoff
p	Chris Carter	p	Frank Pearce
p	Roz Chadd	p	Sally Spicer
p	Keith Chapman	p	Roger Price
p	Mark Cooper	p	David Simpson
p	Liz Fairhurst	p	Phil Smith
p	Jane Frankum	p	Mark Staplehurst
p	David Fuller	p	Luke Stubbs
p	David Harrison	p	John Wall
p	Hannah Hockaday		

188 BROADCASTING ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman announced that the meeting was being recorded for broadcast on the Authority's website and would be available for repeated viewing. The press and members of the public were also permitted to film and broadcast this meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recording for broadcasting purposes.

189 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor John Bennison.

190 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 personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

The Chairman read an additional statement with particular regard to the item on Risk Review (Minute 194 refers):

“In the preparation of the item on Risk Review on today's agenda at Item 6, Members of the Fire Authority have been extensively involved and engaged at various levels, in particular throughout the recent Consultation period. Members will have quite properly participated in consultation meetings and debates within their wards. Legal advice that I have received is that this level of

engagement constitutes the normal work of a Member and therefore does not of itself need to be declared as an interest. Members are entitled to have a pre-disposition towards a particular position, based on their personal or political views. However Members must not have pre-determined any decision. All Members must approach each decision today with an open mind, having due regard to relevant information available.

Any Member who feels that they are unable to meet this requirement, or who has made any previous statement or taken action which might demonstrate that they are pre-determined towards a particular decision is advised to declare such as a non-pecuniary, prejudicial, interest in that item and withdraw from the meeting.”

In response, Councillors Mintoff and Spicer respectively declared:

“Whilst I was concerned about the proposals in the Risk Review consultation, therefore predisposed, I have maintained an open mind throughout the consultation, during which I have attended every meeting that was offered to members of HFRA, I therefore do not believe that I have predetermined the outcome of the Risk Review process. I come to today’s meeting with an open mind and will make my decision based on all relevant information presented.”

191 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 2 December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

With regards to Minute 180 (Governance Review) it was explained that the Governance Working Group, established at the December meeting had met and agreed a number of work streams for further consideration for the future efficiency and effectiveness of the Authority. A series of Working Group meetings were scheduled to take this forward and other Members would likely be asked for their views as part of the process. It was anticipated that the Group would report back to the Authority at its June meeting.

192 **CHAIRMAN’S COMMUNICATIONS**

On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman expressed sympathy to the victims of the fire at Didcott Power Station. He confirmed that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service had been supporting the rescue effort with a specialist team.

It was brought to Members’ attention that responsibility for the Fire Service had recently moved from the Department for Communities and Local Government to the Home Office, in line with responsibility for the Police. The Chairman noted that in Hampshire, the Fire and Rescue Service was already working in collaboration with the Police, including through the joint Headquarters. The new Fire Minister had recently visited Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service in Eastleigh and met with the Chairman and senior officers.

The Chairman noted that it was the final Full Authority meeting for Councillors Chapman and Phil Smith and on behalf of the Authority, thanked them for their effort and commitment.

193 DEPUTATIONS

Councillor Vernon-Jackson (Portsmouth City Council) and Gary Jackson (FBU) made deputations in accordance with Standing Order 19, with regards item 6 on the agenda (Risk Review Final Proposals).

Councillor Vernon-Jackson presented a petition signed by 3500 people concerned about the proposals and, on their behalf, called for re-consideration of the proposals for Portsmouth. He summarised concerns relating to the size of vehicles, the risk to people in living in high-rise buildings, risks to fire-fighters, the significance of supporting the docks and the feeling that changes were being made too quickly. He noted that there had been a lack of support at public meetings to discuss the proposals.

Gary Jackson addressed the Authority on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). He recognised the financial constraints that the Authority was operating within and expressed a commitment to work with the Authority to maintain standards. In the interests of maintaining a strong service delivery, the FBU was opposed to any transfer of Fire Authority responsibilities to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Mr Jackson expressed his support for the consultation process, in which FBU members had been fully engaged, and recognised that proposals made through it had been taken into account. He welcomed a commitment to no compulsory redundancies, but expressed concern at a general reduction in cover, the level of risk relating to vehicle movements and the assessment of risk relating to night time incidents, calling for equal levels of cover both day and night. Mr Jackson called on the Authority to fully scrutinise the proposals before making a decision and made himself and his FBU colleagues available for further advice or input.

The Chairman thanked both Councillor Vernon-Jackson and Gary Jackson for their respective deputations.

194 RISK REVIEW FINAL PROPOSALS

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer, Item 6 in the Minute Book, setting out the final proposals for consideration by the Fire Authority covering Frontline Capability and Activity Based Crewing.

The engagement and dedication of firefighters as well as the engagement of Authority Members throughout the consultation process was acknowledged. The strategic direction for the Fire and Rescue Service was set out and it was noted that the proposals were based on the most comprehensive review of risk ever undertaken in Hampshire, spanning two and a half years. It was emphasised that the proposals were part of the evolution of the Service and represented a new and dynamic approach to tackling fires, deploying capability and wider service delivery to the community in partnership with the health service.

It was confirmed that the process had been closely overseen by the PRSC Committee, details of which were included in the report. The performance targets incorporated in the Risk Review proposals were designed to be challenging, but it was believed that they were achievable. The significance of the savings targets were also highlighted to Members. It was noted that the consultation had revealed support for multiple deployment and support for an increase in Council Tax, alongside concerns regarding different levels of cover day and night and concerns regarding vehicles. It was confirmed that crews of two would never deal with an incident alone.

The Authority heard that the proposals before them were considered to be operationally fit for purpose for the future of the Service and that the methods and techniques to be adopted were tested and established and being innovatively combined. Whilst cost saving was a driver for change, the outcome would be to improve firefighter and public safety through new technology as well as securing the financial position of the Authority. It was explained that robust incident control and task analysis would continue to ensure correct deployment of capacity. Specific changes resulting from the consultation in Rushmoor, Havant, Fleet, Redbridge, Winchester, Andover, Gosport and Hightown and to the co-responder team were detailed.

Members raised questions relating to a number of specific areas and specific stations, in particular relating to the input from firefighters to the proposals. An assurance was given that engagement levels and support for the proposals was high and that work would continue with crews during implementation, through which there would be continual monitoring of risk. The effectiveness of the high pressure lance on industrial buildings was questioned and it was confirmed that work was underway to understand this better. It was furthermore noted that there was considerable high pressure lance capacity across the area included in the proposals.

Whilst recognising the work of all involved in the consultation and acknowledging and welcoming the changes to the proposals that had been made as a result, Councillor Price expressed concern about crewing numbers at Southsea fire station as he felt there remained unanswered questions. Accordingly, he proposed an additional recommendation, seconded by Councillor Smith that:

In light of the comments made regarding cover at Southsea fire station and for the city of Portsmouth, the officers re-look at the proposals for this fire station and report back at the next Fire Authority meeting.

The proposed recommendation was discussed by the Authority, with a particular focus on the use and deployment of the aerial ladder platform, the capacity required to support the dockyard and high-rise student residences. It was noted that Southsea would remain the largest fire station in the area and that changes would improve response times. There was concern that any delay in making a decision about Southsea fire station would leave Portsmouth in a state of uncertainty and was unnecessary given the comprehensive analysis already undertaken. In contrast to this, it was noted that the residents of Portsmouth did not feel safe, as demonstrated in the petition. It was felt that further work would give another opportunity for the City Council to express a view, as they had not responded to the consultation. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that throughout

the two and a half years of the review, equal attention had been paid to Southsea. He explained that the proposals were based on a whole solution for Hampshire and to pick out one station would be detrimental to that. He confirmed that ongoing performance management would continue through the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee and on this basis encouraged the Authority to support a full implementation of the proposals.

A vote was held on the inclusion of the proposed additional recommendation, with the result:

For – 7

Against – 16

Accordingly the proposed recommendation was not adopted.

The Authority continued to discuss a number of other key points arising from the report. The input from firefighters was acknowledged and Members recognised and welcomed that the proposals did not include station closures or redundancies. The thoroughness of the consultation was noted and it was agreed that the issues raised through it had been taken into account. The changes being proposed amounted to modernisation and an improvement in safety and would likely not be felt by the public.

The recommendations at 2.1 and 2.2 of the report were proposed, with a minor amendment in each to substitute “agrees” for “approves” and put to a vote, with the result:

2.1:

For – 24

Against – 0

2.2:

For – 23

Against – 1

Accordingly it was resolved:

- a) That the Fire Authority approves the revised definitions of Activity Based Crewing model under section 7.7.
- b) That the Fire Authority approves the final proposals for Frontline Capability and Activity Based Crewing model as amended following extensive formal consultation as described in Section 7 Appendix 1.

195 **BUDGET AND PRECEPT REQUIREMENT 2016/17**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, Item 7 in the Minute Book, regarding the budget and precept requirement for 2016/17.

The report was introduced and key points drawn to the attention of the Authority; in particular, the medium term financial position as set out in paragraph 5 and the overall budgetary position.

Members welcomed the report and the financial position. The purpose of the delegation to officers proposed in recommendation 2.1 was questioned and it was confirmed that this only related to technical changes arising from changes to the final figures. It was therefore proposed, in this case, to substitute “subsequent” for “technical or minor” in that recommendation. With regards to recommendation 2.8 in the report, the Chief Financial Officer alerted the Authority to very minor changes to the precept level for Band C and G properties.

Taking into account the above amendments a vote was held and the recommendations unanimously agreed. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

- a) That if any technical or minor changes are required to the budget, the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority and the Chief Fire Officer is given delegated authority to reflect the actual position in the budget.
- b) That the revenue budget for 2016/17 as set out at Appendix A is approved.
- c) That the capital programme for 2016/17 as set out in appendix E and the funding of this as set out in appendix F be approved.
- d) That the recommendations set out in Appendix G covering the Treasury Management strategy which incorporates the Prudential Indicators and the policy on the minimum revenue provision is approved.
- e) That the budget requirement for the general expenses of the Authority for the year beginning 1st April 2016 be £64,562,963.54.
- f) That the council tax requirement for the Authority for the year beginning 1st April 2016 be £38,031,693.50.
- g) That the council tax is increased by 1.99% for 2016/17 which equates to a £1.22 increase for the year on a Band D property.
- h) That the Authority’s council tax for the year beginning 1st April 2016 for the properties in each band be:

Band A: £41.73	Band E: £76.51
Band B: £48.69	Band F: £90.42
Band C: £55.64	Band G: £104.33
Band D: £62.60	Band H: £125.20

- i) That the precepts, as set out below, totalling £38,031,693.50 are issued on the billing authorities in Hampshire, requiring the payment in such instalments and on such dates set by them and previously notified to the Authority, in proportion to the tax base of each billing authority's area as determined by them.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	3,928,788.52
East Hampshire District Council	3,044,088.39
Eastleigh Borough Council	2,712,837.98
Fareham Borough Council	2,629,556.82
Gosport Borough Council	1,624,213.34
Hart District Council	2,409,299.35
Havant Borough Council	2,459,585.30
New Forest District Council	4,358,981.97
Portsmouth City Council	3,351,528.88
Rushmoor Borough Council	1,888,808.52
Southampton City Council	3,785,046.40
Test Valley Borough Council	2,907,081.40
Winchester City Council	2,931,876.63
Total	38,031,693.50

- j) That in accordance with the set of principles set by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for the year, it is determined that the relevant basic amount of council tax for 2016/17 is not excessive.
- k) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with Chief Fire Officer, Chairman of the Authority and Chairman of F&GP Committee to apply for a four year settlement if it is considered to be financially advantageous to the Authority.

195 **ACTIVITY REPORT**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer, Item 8 in the Minute Book, regarding activity in the period 1 October 2015 to 31 December 2015.

Member queries relating to individual incidents and to the report in general were responded to. A specific update was given on the recent incident at Didcott Power Station and in particular the HFRS support that had been provided.

RESOLVED:

The Authority noted the report.

196 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT**

Councillor Wall reported on his participation in an equipment tour in Rushmoor.

Councillor Fuller gave details of a beneficial day he had spent with his local Watch.

**197 MINUTES OF STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 17
DECEMBER 2015**

The Authority received and noted the Minutes of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 17 December 2015.

**198 MINUTES OF PERFORMANCE REVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26
JANUARY 2016**

The Authority received and noted the Minutes of the Performance Review & Scrutiny Committee held on the 26 January 2016.

199 MINUTES OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 27 JANUARY 2016

The Authority received and noted the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 27 January 2016.

The recommendation to the Authority at Minute 117 was agreed.

**200 MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 3
FEBRUARY 2016**

The Authority received and noted the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes held on 3 February 2016.

The recommendations to the Authority at Minutes 129 and 130 were agreed.

It was noted that the recommendations to the Authority at Minute 131 had been considered and agreed earlier on the agenda.