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 13 January, 2012

**PRESENT:**

Councillors : I. F. E Beagley (Chairman); A.S. Carew; C. Carter; M. Cooper; F. Jonas; J. Moulton; F. Pearce; R.H. Price; D. Simpson; R. Smith .

77 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for this meeting.

78 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed that they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should normally, at the time of the debate, declare their interest and having regard to the circumstances described in Paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code.

There were no declarations of interest made by Members under this item.

79 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October, 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

80 **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations to the meeting.

81 **BUDGET MONITORING – 3RD QUARTER 2011/12**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer and Treasurer (Item 5 in the Minute Book) on the third quarter analysis of expenditure to date. It identified a projected underspend of £3.6m (5.0%).

The Chief Officer presented the report and summarised the main variations and total net savings to date. Also a supplementary report (Item 5(a) in the Minute Book) was tabled at the meeting. This reported an opportunity that had just arisen to purchase a second-hand water reserve vehicle in the current financial year at a cost of £48,000 including livery and adaptation. The vehicle was required to implement a powered boat rescue capability to support National Resilience for Wide Area Flooding and provide an addition to existing water rescue provision. As it would be funded 100% by a DEFRA grant ,there was no cost to the Authority in acquiring the vehicle. Members supported the proposed addition of this vehicle to the current year's capital programme and noted it would require an amendment to recommendation 3 of the report.

In the course of discussion a number of points were clarified for Members who agreed the proposals contained within the report.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the 3rd quarter budget monitoring report and the projected underspend for 2011/12 be noted.

(b) That the virements over £100,000, as listed in Section 5 of the report, be approved.

(c) That it be a RECOMMENDATION to the Authority.

That the changes to the capital programme, as set out in Section 7 of the report, be approved and in addition a second-hand water rescue vehicle at a cost of £48,000 be added to the 2011/12 capital programme.

82 **UPDATED DRAFT BUDGET 2012/13**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer and Treasurer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) on the updated draft budget 2012/13.

By way of introduction, the Committee received a brief summary of the questions and main issues raised at the two budget consultation meetings held on 9 January, 2012 (Item 6(a) in the Minute Book). The Committee in welcoming the value of such meetings in enabling Members to hear the comments of individuals and other relevant interests' on the budget proposals felt the existing arrangements would benefit from a further review , particularly in relation to individual organisations' representation .The Chief Officer agreed to investigate this with a report to Corporate Management Team at a later date.

The County Treasurer presented the main report along with a supplementary report (Item 6(b) in the Minute Book) with an update on the latest tax base and collection fund balances .Whilst the increased tax base and further income was regarded as good news, Members were mindful of the need to ensure HFRS resources were capable of supporting the cover required by the additional housing being built within the County. The Chief Officer reported that this was something which had already been discussed and would continue to be monitored.

After a full discussion , the proposed budget for 2012/13 was unanimously supported by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That it be a RECOMMENDATION to the Authority that it approves proposals set out in the report for the:

- revenue budget for 2012 /13.
- capital programme for 2012/13 (including the addition of the projected underspend in the current year and budget surplus in 2012/13 being added to the capital payments reserve)
- Treasury Management Strategy including the policy on Minimum revenue Provision and the Treasury Management Policy Statement
- total budget requirement
- Authority's basic council tax of £61.38 and to the proportional equivalent for each property band (details of which will be included in the budget report presented to the Authority next month)

- precepts made on each of the billing authorities based on their tax base (details of which will be included in the budget report presented to the Authority next month)

83 **PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF NEW ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPION MEMBER**

The Committee considered the appointment of a new Environmental Champion Member to the Authority to replace Councillor A. Weeks in his former role of helping to promote carbon reduction activity within the Service. It was intended that the Member would provide support to the valuable work being undertaken on the carbon management plan and on environmental management systems.

RESOLVED:

That it be a RECOMMENDATION to the Authority

That Councillor A.S. Carew be appointed as lead Authority Member to help promote carbon reduction activities.