AT A MEETING of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY held at the Borough Council Offices, Eastleigh on 9 February, 2011

PRESENT:

Councillors: R. Smith (Chairman); C. Carter; K. Chapman; Sam Darragh; A. Evans; L. Fairhurst; J. Frankum; A. Fraser; D. Fuller; D. Harrison; F. Jonas; R. Kimber; T. Knight; R. McIntosh; J. Moulton; E. Neal; F. Pearce; R.H. Price; M. Tucker; A. Weeks.

149 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I. Beagley; A.S. Carew; P. Marsh-Jenks; D. Simpson and J. West.

150 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed they had 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.

All Members declared a personal interest in the item about the Members' Scheme of Allowance : Travel Mileage Rates (Minute 163 refers) but were advised by the Clerk that they need not treat this as a prejudicial interest and therefore could speak and vote during the course of any debate in the normal way.

151 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Authority held on 8 December, 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

152 **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations to this meeting.

153 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT**

There were no Members' questions.

Councillor Chapman reported on his recent visit to Basingstoke Fire Station and wished to record his thanks to Blue Watch for making it such an informative and interesting day.

154 **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

After an assessment on 19 January, 2011, the Chairman was pleased to announce that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority had been awarded the South East Employers Charter for Elected Member Development. Being valid for three years, it was the first such award for a fire authority in the South East and East of England. Members were thanked for supporting the assessment and a special tribute was paid to Councillor Sam Darragh and to other Members of the Member Development Steering Group and Officers from the Training and Development Department for their valuable work, in making this reward possible. A presentation of the award was to be made at the commencement of the Members' Awareness Session that afternoon.

The Chairman was delighted to report that following the recent visit from the Investors in People (IiP) assessors, the Service had been awarded silver status. It was noted that only 5% of the 40,000 organisations who have achieved IiP status had been awarded this level.

Finally, the Chairman reported with some sadness that Assistant Chief Officer, Kevin Butcher had announced that he would be retiring on 31 August, 2011. His substantial and noteworthy contributions to the development of the Service would be reported upon at the next Authority meeting on 15 June, 2011.

155 **ACTIVITY REPORT**

The Authority received and noted the report of Chief Officer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) highlighting prevention, protection and response activities in each of the group areas covering the period 23 October to 23 December, 2010.

156 **HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE PLAN 2011 TO 2014 : PROPOSED CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 8 in the Minute Book) on the outcome of consultation with staff and stakeholders on seven proposed corporate objectives for inclusion in the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2011 to 2014. As a result of the valuable feedback from the consultation, it was recommended that one of the seven proposed objectives "we will create a business centre at a retained station" should be removed – mainly because it had caused confusion about the Service's intentions and the wording of the remaining objectives clarified and/or improved. Members supported each of the revisions being proposed as highlighted in the report. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

(a) That the feedback from staff and stakeholders on the seven draft corporate objectives for 2011 to 2014, as summarised in Appendix A to the report, be noted.

(b) That the revised set of six proposed corporate objectives, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved for inclusion in the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Plan 2011 to 2014.

157 **MINUTES OF FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 14 JANUARY, 2011**

The Authority received the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 January, 2011 (Item 9 in the Minute Book) which included recommendations to the Authority in relation to the budget for 2011/12 (Minute 158 of this meeting refers). The Authority adopted the recommendation about an amended corporate objective and target for introducing an Environmental Management System (Minute 54 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting refers).

158 **HFRA BUDGET 2011/12**

The Authority considered the report of the Treasurer and Chief Officer (Item 10 in the Minute Book). Details of the new fire funding grant (rolling-up of the current specific grants) for 2011/12 were given at the meeting and it was noted that these are broadly in line with the 2010/11 funding. The unexpected increase in formula grant for 2011/12 and 2012/13 had added to the uncertainty over the scale of grant cuts for 2013-2015. As a result, Members supported the proposed cautious approach in its medium-term financial planning by assuming a 12.5% grant reduction in each of 2013/14 and 2014/15. In view of continuing uncertainty over some aspects of future funding, the risk assessment detailed in the budget report made provision for increases in the Authority's general reserve (from £2m to £2.5m) and increases in the capital payments reserve. Given the one year announcement of Fire Capital grant funding for 2011/12, the Authority agreed to consider the capital programme (beyond 2011/12) once the long-term capital funding settlement was clearer. Members noted that the trade unions, business and community representatives had been consulted on the proposal and raised no particular concerns over the proposed medium-term financial plan and assumptions made about potential council tax increases in future years (in the range of 0% to 2.5%). Members wished to record their thanks to the Treasurer and Chief Officer and other appropriate staff for their much appreciated work on the budget.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the revenue budget for 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 2c of the report be approved.

(b) That the Capital Programme for 2011/12 set out in Appendix 6 of the report be approved.

(c) That the recommendations set out in Appendix 8 of the report covering the Treasury Management Strategy, associated Prudential Indicators and the Policy on Minimum Revenue Provision be approved.

(d) That the total budget requirement for the general expenses of the Authority for the year beginning 1 April, 2011 be £68,674,000.

(e) That the Authority's basic council tax for the year beginning 1 April, 2011 be £61.38.

(f) That the Authority's council tax for the year beginning 1 April, 2011 for properties in each band be:

Band A	£40.92	Band E	£75.02
Band B	£47.74	Band F	£88.68

Band C	£54.56	Band G	£102.30
Band D	£61.38	Band H	£122.76

(g) That the Precepts be issued totalling £38,900,960.96 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 which are set out below:

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	64,655.00
East Hampshire District Council	48,332.33
Eastleigh Borough Council	44,368.15
Fareham Borough Council	42,796.00
Gosport Borough Council	27,595.10
Hart District Council	37,967.18
Havant Borough Council	42,925.00
New Forest District Council	73,047.60
Portsmouth City Council	59,914.90
Rushmoor Borough Council	31,671.86
Southampton City Council	66,644.00
Test Valley Borough Council	45,875.00
Winchester City Council	47,980.46
Total	633,772.58

159 **FIRE LINK AND FIRE CONTROL PROJECTS – UPDATE**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 11 in the Minute Book) giving an update on the Fire Link and Fire Control Projects. It highlighted in particular the Fire Minister's announcement last December to scrap the Fire Control Project.

In response to the above announcement, the Board of Directors of the South East Fire and Rescue Control Limited (SEFRCC) had met and were each asked to seek approval from their respective authorities to enable the SEFRCC Board to make a decision at its next meeting to wind-up the Company as soon as practicable. Members supported this way forward as proposed in the report. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Authority agrees to the winding-up of the "South East Fire and Rescue Control Centre Limited" and mandates Councillor R.H. Price to vote to dissolve the company on their behalf.

160 **CESSATION OF THE SOUTH-EAST REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 12 in the Minute Book) about the likely anticipated cessation of Regional Management Boards and makes proposals for how such work should be progressed in the South East

Region in the future. The draft Minutes of the South East Fire and Rescue Services' Regional Board meeting held on 6 October, 2010 were tabled for Members' information at the meeting (Item 12(a) in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Authority support the winding-up of the South East Fire and Rescue Services Regional Management Board at the appropriate time and the reinstatement of regular Chairs/Portfolio Holders and Chiefs meetings in its place.

(b) That the Authority note the update on the work of the South East Fire Improvement Partnership, along with the draft Minutes of the last Regional Board meeting held on 6 October, 2010.

161 **OLYMPIC GAMES 2012 : IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SERVICE**

The Authority acknowledged the contents of the report of the Chief Officer (Item 13 in the Minute Book) about the forthcoming Olympic Games in 2012 and its implications for the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

162 **LOCALISM BILL**

The Authority considered the report of the Clerk (Item 14 in the Minute Book) about the Localism Bill. It highlighted the proposed changes and new initiatives contained within the Bill (including abolishing the current standards regime governing the conduct of Members) to strengthen local democracy and empower local communities. It also focused on those provisions which relate to the powers and duties of Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Members wished to support the efforts being made by the Chief Fire Officers' Association for Fire and Rescue Authorities for fire authorities to be included in the "general power of competence" intended at present for local authorities ie a power to do "anything that individuals generally must do". The intention of the Bill at present was for Fire and Rescue Authorities to instead be granted wider powers to undertake activities in connection with their existing core functions. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

(a) That the implications of the Localism Bill for the Authority and the future development of services be noted.

(b) That the Authority support the Chief Fire Officers' Association in lobbying for Fire and Rescue Authorities to be included in the general power of competence in a similar way to Councils.

163 **MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES : TRAVEL MILEAGE RATES**

Pursuant to Minute 143 of the last meeting, the Authority considered the report of the Chief Officer (Item 15 in the Minute Book) in relation to Members' travel mileage rates. At the meeting, the Chairman put forward an amendment to the recommendation that the Authority, in seeking to pursue a move towards consistency in the mileage rate paid to staff, set an example by members re-aligning their motor vehicle travel mileage rate to the HMRC approved rate.

Following further discussion of the amendment, the Authority supported the way forward being proposed, along with its intention. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED:

That, with effect from 1 April, 2011, the members' motor vehicle allowance be aligned with the HMRC approved rate of 40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter.

164 MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 17 DECEMBER, 2010

The Authority received the Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 17 December, 2010 (Item 16 in the Minute Book).

165 MINUTES OF HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 JANUARY, 2011

The Authority received the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 19 January, 2011 (Item 17 in the Minute Book).

166 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2011 ON LOCALISM WORKS, 28 TO 30 JUNE, 2011, BIRMINGHAM

The Authority considered the appointment of Members to this Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition.

RESOLVED:

(a) That Councillor D. Harrison be appointed as the Liberal Democrat Member to attend the Local Government Annual Conference and Exhibition on "Localism Works" being held between 28 to 30 June, 2011 at the Birmingham International Conference Centre.

(b) That the Chief Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Authority, agree the other Member places to the above Conference and Exhibition.