



CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2006

- PRESENT:** **CHAIRMAN**
Councillor B Forster – Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
- HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL:**
Councillors Payne, Waller, Tumilty
- MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Clark, Jones, Porley, Biswas, Mawston
- REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Briggs, Dunning, Cooney, Walker
- STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:-**
Councillors Brown, Kirton, O'Donnell, Roberts, Salt, Woodhead, Walmsley
- PROPER OFFICERS:-**
Clerk, Deputy Legal Adviser, Treasurer
- FIRE BRIGADE OFFICERS:-**
Chief Fire Officer, Executive Director,
- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Councillor Pearson – Middlesbrough
Councillor Smith – Redcar & Cleveland

Members congratulated the Learn and Live Team on their excellent presentation and the Chair agreed to forward a letter of appreciation to the Learn and Live Team.

John Doyle informed Members that the Fire Control Project Regional Director had recently taken ill and Members asked the Chairman to pass on their best wishes.

98. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2006 AND SPECIAL CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2006**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Meeting held on 29 September 2006 and the Special Cleveland Fire Authority Meeting held on the 20 October 2006, be confirmed.

99. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2006 and 3 NOVEMBER 2006; TENDER COMMITTEE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2006; AND POLICY COMMITTEE – 3 NOVEMBER 2006**

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 29 September 2006 and the 3rd November 2006; the Tender Committee on the 29 September 2006; the Policy Committee on the 3 November 2006, be confirmed.

**100. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING – 6 OCTOBER 2006**

100.1 RMB EXPENDITURE AND INCOME 2005/6

The Chief Fire Officer provided Members with information on expenditure and income of the RMB and asked for approval of the accounts for 2005/06.

RESOLVED – that Members approved the RMB accounts for the year end 31 March 2006.

100.2 APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO RMB

The Chief Fire Officer informed Members that at the RMB Annual Meeting held 13 July 2006, Councillor Magee from Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority was appointed Chair of the RMB. Councillor Mrs B Forster from Cleveland Fire Authority was appointed Vice Chair. It had now been proposed that the position of Clerk rotates with the appointment of the Chair and the position of Treasurer rotates with the appointment of the Vice Chair.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that Members approved the appointment of Mrs L A Davies, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Authority as Clerk to the RMB.**
- (ii) that Members approved that the position of the Clerk rotates with the appointment of Chair to the RMB.**
- (iii) that Members approved that the position of the Treasurer rotate with the appointment of Vice Chair to the RMB and that Mr A Emmerson be appointed to the position of Treasurer to the RMB.**

100.3 REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRE – PROJECT MANAGER

Due to the illness of the Project Manager, the Chief Fire Officer advised members that his workload had been spread across the Project Team and this will be under constant review with any changes reported to the Authority.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the appointment of Project Director for the period 1 February – 31 March 2007 and for 2007/08 be approved.**
- (ii) That each constituent authorities be requested to provide further funding for the post in the region of £2,877/authority for 2006/07 and £17,262/authority for 2007/08 (subject to pay awards) plus travel and subsistence incurred.**
- (iii) Agree to further written representations being made to the DCLG regarding financial support for the post of Project Director**

100.4 REGIONAL CONTROL CENTRE/FIRELINK – PROGRESS REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer updated members of the progress within each of the projects of RCC and FireLink and sought approval for financial resources in 2007/08.

Councillor Payne asked that “celebration” be omitted from the commemorative marking of the completion of the RCC due to the uncertainty of people jobs. The Chair agreed to raise these comments at the next meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that members approved an event to mark the completion of the RCC building with commemorative marking but that “celebration” not be used.
- (ii) members agreed that, as required, the RMB net balance of £87,000 be utilised to fund the project costs outlined in paragraph 3.3 of the report.
- (iii) that members approved to recommend that the constituent authorities consider the appointment of a full time Firelink day-to-day contact from April 2007 and make provision in their budget for 2007/8 for additional Firelink resources identified in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4.
- (iv) that members approved the project management structure outlined in Section 5 and Appendix C.

100.5 NORTH EAST REGIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

The Chief Fire Officer informed members that the RMB were requested to endorse a Regional Human Resources Management Strategy for the North East Fire and Rescue Service. There were three approaches: Policies; Working Relationships and Human Resource Functions and in considering the future HR strategy and the way in which the RMB need to respond to the many pressures and influences, this three way phase implementation will ensure the provision of common HR arrangements that will facilitate the most efficiency and cost effective means at regional and/or local level.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that members noted the contents of this report.
- (ii) that members approved the endorsement of the Human Resources Management Strategy for the North East Fire and Rescue Services and the strategy of implementation.

100.6 REGIONAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

The Chief Fire Officer sought Members endorsement of the North East Equality and Diversity Strategy as recommended by the Regional Management Board. All four NE Fire and Rescue Services have contributed to the development of this strategy and it is therefore anticipated that this document should meet the needs of those staff who are charged with the principle responsibility for ensuring all obligations are met.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that members noted the contents of this report
- (ii) that members endorsement the Equality and Diversity Strategy for the North East Fire and Rescue Services.

100.7 NEFRA PROJECT – 4P’S GATEWAY REVIEW 2 – PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Chief Fire Officer informed members of the outcome of the most recent Gateway Review, the recommendations of the Review Team and the initial responses and proposes to address them.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that members approve the proposals for action as detailed in the report.
- (ii) that members agree to an interim review/health check at an appropriate time.
- (iii) To receive further reports as appropriate.

100.8 RMB REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

The Chief Fire Officer informed members of the minutes and reports presented to the Board for noting.

RESOLVED – That members noted the minutes and reports for information.

101 TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

101.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION STRATEGY, FRAMEWORK FOR THE DELIVERY OF VALUE FOR MONEY AND THE CAPITAL STRATEGY

Ian Hayton presented the Policy Framework, Stakeholder Consultation Strategy, Framework for the Delivery of Value for Money and the Capital Strategy which had been recommended by the Policy Committee. The Policy Framework ensures that all policies and procedures are constructed in a robust and consistent manner with clearly identified outcomes which can be performance managed and are fit for the purpose for which it was intended.

RESOLVED – that the Policy Framework, Stakeholder Consultation Strategy, Framework for the Delivery of Value for Money and Capital Strategy be approved

101.2 SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/08 (IRMP4)

Ian Hayton informed Members that the recommendations that the Policy Committee had made had now been included and sought Members approval of the Draft Safety Improvement Plan 2007/08 (IRMP 4), the Public Consultation Leaflet and the Consultation Plan.

RESOLVED -

- (i) that Members approve the draft version of the Authority's Draft Safety Improvement Plan 2007/08**
- (ii) that Members approve the draft Public Consultation Leaflet, at Appendix 2 to the report**
- (iii) that Members approve the Consultation Plan of the Authority's Safety Improvement Plan of the Authority's Safety Improvement Plan 2007/08 (IRMP 4) as at Appendix 3 to the report.**

101.3 LGA CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – FIRE AND RESCUE IN 2017

Ian Hayton sought Members views on the LGA's consultation document Fire and Rescue in 2017: He reported that the vision of the DCLG, LGA and CFOA were outlined within P4 of the document. The Chief Fire Officer reported that this Authority are already doing a lot of what is in this document now and that Fire and Rescue Services should do whatever it takes to save lives and continue to help and support the community. Members reported that we are already doing most of the things referred to in the document and our progress should not be stopped by this.

RESOLVED - that Members views be forwarded to the Executive Director by 10 December 2006 and that the Chairman, Vice Chair and one minority member be given the delegated powers to approve the submission of the Consultation of the Fire and Rescue in 2017: Rising to the Challenge document.

101.4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS INFORMATION PACK NO. 65 – NOVEMBER 2006

- 101.3.1 Fire and Rescue Service Circulars
- 101.3.2 Fire Brigade National Employers Circulars
- 101.3.3 Merger of Devon FRA and Somerset FRA
- 101.3.4 National Mutual Aid Protocol.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**102.1 REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
CO-RESPONDER SCHEME – SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT UPDATE**

Councillor Cooney informed Members of the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee's recommendations with regard to the conclusion of the Scrutiny Review of the Co-responder Scheme. She reported that the Cleveland Area are now serviced by North East Ambulance (NEAS) and their approach to co-responder has now changed and we are unclear at this time whether they are seeking expansion. Councillor Cooney informed Members that NEAS had also set a budgetary limit at £16,000 for the co-responder service and this change in provision had been brought to the attention of the MP for East Cleveland. Members discussed this scheme at length and expressed concern at the budgetary limit and agreed to a further deferment.

RESOLVED -

- (i) that the expansion of the Co-Responder Scheme be deferred until such time as a refined agreement with the North East Ambulance Service regarding the Scheme and how it operates within the Cleveland Fire Authority is available and has been agreed by the CFA.
- (ii) That the co-responder scheme is monitored by both the Performance Service Delivery Scrutiny Committees until such time as a decision has been made with regard to the future of the Co-responder Scheme by the CFA.
- (iii) That the MP for East Cleveland area be contacted via the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee advising of the possible changes to the Co-responder Scheme in the area and the potential impact this may have on the community response available.

102.1 CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE CONTROL ROOM – DRAFT SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT

Councillor Cooney informed Members on the proposed content and recommendations of the draft report on the scrutiny review of Cleveland Fire Brigade Control Room, following completion of research and interviews. Councillor Payne asked if the scrutiny review had been undertaken on the basis of moving to RCC in 2008 or the last quarter of 2009 as now reported. Ian Hayton reported that the scrutiny and risk assessment was based on 2008.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that the Brigade Control Room Risk Assessments are submitted to the Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis – February/March each year, or whenever equipment or systems are changed, until such time as the Regional Control Centre is active. Members will consider any changes to the risk ratings identified in the Risk Assessments and make recommendations to the CFA
- (ii) that the CFA is informed of any significant occurrences which may impact the effectiveness or resilience of the Cleveland Fire Brigade control room.
- (iii) that the CFA is informed of any changes to the implementation date for the Regional control Centre – currently last quarter of 2009.

**103.1 REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – FORWARD LOOK 2005/06 & BACKWARD
LOOK 2005/06**

Councillor Porley appraised Members of the Brigade's performance against the Forward and Backward Look Annual Efficiency Statement (AES). He reported that the Fire Authority are obliged to submit efficiency statements for 2005/06 and confirmed nothing of concern was found in the statements and that the backward look actually shows savings saved were even larger than previously estimated. Councillor Payne asked if we were on target for the efficiency targets and if we are on target would this be taken from our budget.

The Treasurer informed Members that the efficiency target for the Fire Service was a national one not disaggregated to individual FRS's. The Clerk informed Members that in distributing government support (grants) the only way the Government is able to proceed is to differentiate between class of Authorities. If Cleveland should exceed the Gershon targets it is highly unlikely that this would be reflected in future settlements other than at an aggregate level for all FRS's.

RESOLVED – that Members note the contents of the annual efficiency statement.

104. REPORTS OF THE CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY

104.1 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT CONFERENCE – 11 JANUARY 2007

The Clerk sought the Authority's wishes in respect of member attendance at the LGA local Area Agreement Conference – looking to 2008 and beyond which is to be held in London on 11 January 2007. Councillor Payne suggested that the 4 Safer Partnerships representatives attend and re-affirmed the importance of the CFA in LAA's. Members considered 3 option of attendance; one member for each district; one member each party; chairman, vice chair and one minority member. After discussion Members agreed that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and one minority member attend and inform all other CFA members.

RESOLVED – that the Chairman, Vice Chair and one Minority Member attend the Local Area Agreement Conference in London on 11 January 2007.

104.2 THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICES CONFERENCE

The Clerk sought the authority's wishes in respect of Member attendance at the Future of Public Services Conference which is to be held 30 January 2007 in Manchester and 8 February 2007 in London. After a discussion Members agreed that the Chair, Vice Chair and one minority member should attend the Manchester conference on 30 January 2007

RESOLVED – that the Chairman, Vice Chair and one Minority Member attend the Future of Public Services Conference in Manchester on 30 January 2007

104.3 CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY'S INFORMATION PACK – NOVEMBER 2006

104.3.1 LGA Independent Commission: Review of Relationships

104.3.2 Fire Conference 8/9 November 2006, Telford

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**105. REPORT OF THE TREASURER AND CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
BUDGET STRATEGY 2007/08 TO 2010/11**

The Treasurer informed Members of the Authority's current financial position and challenging outlook for public expenditure over the new few years which is reflected in the existing budget strategy. He reported that the Authority have adequate balances to manage the position and could release part of these resources to meet one-off expenditure commitments, such as addressing the backlog of property maintenance. He advised members that at this stage the report assumes that Members will confirm the indicative Council Tax increase for 2007/08 of 5% which will result in a Band D Council Tax of £56.23 (2006/07 - £53.55). A further report will be submitted once details of the final 2007/08 grant allocation is know to enable Members to finalise the 2007/08 budget and council Tax levels.

Councillor Payne asked Members not to increase Council Tax by 5% this year and offset this by the £1M from the Authority's balances. He also requested further information on what this money would be used for. The Treasurer reported that if we did not increase the Council Tax the Authority would lose income for the future and we would be unable to balance the budget for the next 3 years without a significant increase in council tax or budget reductions and this was not an efficient use of balances. The Treasurer also informed Members that a suggested programme for the allocation of the investment resources would be presented to Members for debate and final approval before any of the resources were utilised.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That Members note the report.**
- (ii) That a detailed report be provided regarding the allocation £1m of balances and £1m of Prudential Borrowing prior to the usage of these resources.**
- (iii) That Members confirmed the indicative 2007/08 Council Tax increase of 5% pending the determination of the actual increase in February 2007.**

**106. REPORT OF THE TREASURER
TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Treasurer informed members that the current Investment and Borrowing Strategy was approved by members on 2 June 2006 and the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury management recommends as best practice, interim reporting of Treasury Management activities. He reported that the report provided details of Treasury Management events for the year to date and recommends changes to the Strategy as appropriate to reflect the prospects for short and long term interest rates. The review covers prospect for Interest Rates; Borrowing Strategy; Investment Strategy; Prudential code Monitoring.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that Members approve the borrowing and investment strategies outlined in the report.**
- (ii) that Members approve the extension of investment periods as set out in Appendix A to the report.**

**107. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OUTTURN BVPI INCLUSION INTO FIRE SERVICE COMMUNITY PLAN 2006-2007**

Ian Hayton informed Members of the inclusion of the final end of year performance outturns which have been inserted into the Authority's Fire Service Community Plan 2006/07 (FSCP) which was attached at appendix 1 to the report. The BVPI outturns have already been presented to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – that the new performance section which is part of the Fire Service Community Plan 2006/07 be approved and that the full version of the Plan is available to all stakeholders on the Authority’s intranet and internet and Members

108. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED – “That under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as declined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of schedule 12A to the Act namely information regarding an individual; namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information)”.

109. TO CONFIRM THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2006

RESOLVED – that the confidential minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority meeting held on 29 September 2006 be confirmed.

109a. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF COMMITTEES:- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2006 AND TENDER COMMITTEE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2006

RESOLVED – that the confidential minutes of the Executive Committee held 29 September 2006 and the Tender Committee held on the 29 September 2006 be confirmed.

**COUNCILLOR MRS BRENDA FORSTER JP
CHAIRMAN**