



CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 31 JULY 2009

PRESENT:	HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL: Councillors Brash, Flintoff, Lilley
	MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Brunton, Clark, Rogers, Thompson
	REDCAR AND CLEVELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Briggs, Cooney, Dunning, Forster, Fitzpatrick
	STOCKTON ON TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL:- Councillors Cherrett, Larkin, O'Donnell, Salt, Stoker
	PROPER OFFICERS:- Deputy Legal Adviser, Treasurer
	FIRE BRIGADE OFFICERS:- Director of Community Protection, Director of Technical Services, Head of Planning and Democratic Services
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:	Councillor Payne (Hartlepool) Councillors McTigue, Porley (Middlesbrough) Councillors Ovens (Redcar & Cleveland) Councillors Beall, Woodhead (Stockton on Tees)

Councillor O'Donnell in the chair.

The Chairman wished to place on record the Authority's thanks to Councillors Shaun Cook, Tim Fleming and Edna Wright for the commitment and support they had given during their time as Members of the Cleveland Fire Authority. The Chairman welcomed Councillors Alison Lilley, Jonathan Brash and Bob Flintoff to the Authority.

29. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS INTEREST

It was noted that no declarations of interest were submitted to the meeting.

30. MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Cleveland Fire Authority Meeting held on the 5 June 2009 be confirmed.

31. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 26 June 2009, Policy Committee held on 3 July 2009 and the Standards Committee held on 14 July 2009 be confirmed.

32. TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Vice Chairman informed Members that since the last meeting the following correspondence had been received:

- Letter from John Hindmarch, Regional Control Centre Project Director regarding the rescheduling of the FiRe Control Project
- Letter from Shahid Malik MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State regarding the rescheduling of the FiReControl Project and reasons behind it
- Copy of a letter written by Claire Ward MP to Dari Taylor MP regarding assaults on firefighters

RESOLVED – that the communications be noted.

33. TO RECEIVE THE REPORTS OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

33.1 Cleveland Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-2011: Savings Proposal: 'Outsource Information and Communication Technology'

The Director of Technical Services reported that following an extensive consultation programme, the IRMP 2008-2011 was approved by the Authority on 28 March 2008. The proposals in the IRMP originated from the financial pressures being exacted upon the Authority following changes in the way the Government funded the Fire and Rescue Services. Members had requested that each proposal be further explored and that a full service review be produced prior to a final decision being made by the Fire Authority regarding the implementation of any proposal. A full review of Information and Communication Services (ICT) was undertaken.

The Director of Technical Services advised that the Scoping Study which was attached at Appendix 1 had considered the value for money of the ICT service and also its scope and challenges. The Scoping Study concluded that the current ICT service was providing value for money and any outsource arrangements would be more costly than the existing provision. External providers who were contacted had advised that the Brigade was too small to be considered as an outsourced provision.

In reply to a query from Councillor Larkin regarding which companies had been contacted, the Director of Technical Services advised advice had been taken from Hartlepool Borough Council and the company who provided the service to Durham and Darlington FRS, and those who provided the service to the Regional Control Centre.

The Director of Technical Services reported the scoping study had revealed there was scope to look into the sharing of the service/help desk with other agencies, and one of the recommendations was to look at sharing with our partners in FRSs, regional and local authorities. The Director of Technical Services advised that the government had set down 70 benchmarks for public scrutiny and management information covering the way information is managed, stored and shared, not just in relation to computers but also premises and security clearance for those who access the information. There was a need to make efficiency savings and the Brigade would continue to build upon existing ICT arrangements, improve internal services, ensure the services are value for money and progress opportunities for shared services.

Councillor Thompson referred to points 36 to 38 of the Scoping Study and the impact on budgets to sustain the purchase of equipment in years to come. The Treasurer stated the report recommended the present in-house ICT provision be maintained and looked into the possibility of the potential of sharing with partners of core utility and network services only. Regarding the Regional Control Centre, the Treasurer advised there was likely to be some future investment in improved communications but there was provision for this within the plans the Government has for funding RCCs.

33.1 Cleveland Fire Authority Integrated Risk Management Plan 2008-2011: Savings Proposal: 'Outsource Information and Communication Technology' contd

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that at the meeting on the 17 July 2009 it had been agreed that, in the light of the announcement by the Fire Minister, there was to be a further delay in commencement of operations at the Regional Control Centre, the decision had been made to undertake a further risk assessment to scrutinise the impact this would have on the Cleveland Control Room and upon completion this would be reported to a future Fire Authority meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (i) that Members approve the implementation of the Integrated Risk Management Plan proposal option to 'Maintain the provision of ICT services in-house whilst continuing to build upon existing arrangements and explore potential with partners for the sharing of core utility and network services only'**
- (ii) that the updated risk assessment of the Cleveland Fire Brigade Control Room be presented to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

33.2 Operational Assessment Peer Review Preliminary outcomes

The Director of Community Protection stated that from April 2009 the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) replaced the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) as the performance assessment framework for Fire and Rescue Authorities. Detailed preliminary outcomes from the Operational Assessment Peer Review were appended at Appendix 1 for Members information and the following 4 areas of good practice were recognised:-

- Good employee relations;
- The work of Members and the support and commitment from them;
- The Concept of Operations was recognised as exemplar practice;
- The Authority's problem solving approach in our service delivery into our service delivery actions.

The Director of Community Protection reported that a final report from the Operational Assessment Peer Review would be presented to a future Fire Authority meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Members noted the preliminary outcomes from the Operational Assessment Peer Review as outlined in Appendix 1**
- (ii) that the final Operational Assessment Peer Review outcome report be presented to a future Fire Authority meeting**

33.3 Chief Fire Officer's Information Pack – July 2009

- 33.3.1 Fire and Rescue Service Circulars
- 33.3.2 Employers Circulars
- 33.3.3 National Joint Circulars
- 33.3.4 Response to Fire and Rescue Circular 29/2009

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

34. REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

34.1 Forward Work Programmes 2009/10

The Head of Planning and Democratic Services advised Members that Fire Authority Standing Orders required that the Audit and Governance and Overview and Scrutiny committees set their own work programmes for the year. The Audit and Governance Committee had agreed the Work Plan for the year but the Overview and Scrutiny committee had recommended to review their Forward Work Plan after six months. Both Forward Work Programmes were appended for Members information.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Audit and Governance Committee Forward Work Programme 2009/2010 as attached at Appendix 1 be approved**
- (ii) that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2009/2010 as attached at Appendix 2 be approved pending a review**

34.2 Member Attendance at Conferences

The Head of Planning and Democratic Services sought Members views on attendance at the following conferences:

- (a) LGA annual Conference**
- (b) Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition**

After discussion and taking into account Members feedback, it was proposed that three Members would continue to attend the LGA Annual Conference and only one Member would attend the Annual Fire Conference and Exhibition.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Chair, Vice Chair and 1 minority Member (or substitutes) attend the LGA Annual Conference**
- (ii) that one Member attend the Annual Conference and Exhibition**

34.3 Safer Communities Annual Conference and Exhibition 2009

The Head of Planning and Democratic Services sought the views of Members in respect of Member attendance at the LGA Safer Communities Annual Conference and Exhibition 2009 to be held on 13-14 October 2009 in Bristol.

Members agreed that one Member, preferably the Chairman, should attend on this occasion, but as this conference covered the community safety agenda, it was agreed that the Member Champion for Safer Communities should attend future conferences.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Chairman attend the LGA Safer Communities Annual Conference and Exhibition 2009 to be held on 13-14 October 2009 in Bristol**
- (ii) that the Member Champion for Safer Communities attend LGA Safer Communities Annual Conference and Exhibition future conferences**

34.4 Corporate Governance Information Pack

34.4.1 Executive Committee 26 June 2009

The Head of Planning and Democratic Services reported the Executive Committee had met under Delegated Powers on the 26 June 2009 and had approved the write-off of the outstanding debt against Bad Debt provision to enable the completion of the Statement of Accounts 2008/2009.

34.4.2 New Fire Minister

34.4.3 Standards Committee

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

35. REPORTS OF THE LEGAL ADVISER

35.1 Business Report – CFA Vacancies 2009/10

The Deputy Legal Adviser requested that the various political groups provide their nominations to the vacancies on Committees as well as the Member Champion (Safer Communities) and outside bodies as outlined at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that Councillor Cherrett be appointed to the Standards Committee**
- (ii) that Councillors Flintoff and Brash be appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee**
- (iii) that Councillors Ovens, Brash and Lilley be appointed to the Joint Consultative Committee**
- (iv) that Councillor Lilley be appointed to the Member Development Group**
- (v) that Councillor Brash be appointed as the Safer Communities Champion**
- (vi) that Councillor Cherrett be appointed to the Regional Management Board and that Councillor Flintoff be the named substitute for Councillor Cherrett**
- (vii) that Councillor Brash be appointed as the Hartlepool Safer Partnership/CDRP representative**
- (viii) that Councillors Porley, O'Donnell, Forster and Cooney be the nominated members of the Fire Improvement Group**

35.2 Monitoring Officer Protocol

The Deputy Legal Adviser requested Members to consider the adoption of the Monitoring Officer Protocol as detailed in the attached Appendix 1 following the recommendation of the Authority's Standards Committee.

RESOLVED – that Members adopt the Monitoring Officer Protocol as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

35.3 Electronic Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality

The Deputy Legal Adviser reported that as part of the ethical government arrangements the Standards Committee considered a report concerning the maintenance of such Registers in electronic, as well as in the present 'hard copy', format. The Deputy Legal Adviser reported to members that particularly 'sensitive' information could be exempt from inclusion within a Register of Interest provided that such information was brought to the attention of the Authority's Monitoring Officer. At the meeting of the 14 July 2009 members of the Standards Committee recommended the adoption of an electronic Register of Interests.

RESOLVED – that the maintenance of a Members Register of Interests through Electronic means be approved.

35.4 Amendments to Standing Orders and Contract Procedure Rules

The Deputy Legal Adviser advised that under Standing Order No 27 any motion to add to, vary or revoke Standing Orders other than for the purpose of compliance with any statutory requirements shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority. At the CFA meeting of the 5 June 2009, Members approved the updated Standing Orders in respect of Proceedings and Contract Procedure Rules. Under Standing Order No 27 the amendments had stood adjourned since the CFA meeting of the 5 June 2009.

RESOLVED – that Members noted the updated Standing Orders

36. VERBAL BRIEFING ON THE NE FIRE CONTROL COMPANY BOARD

Councillor Forster updated Members and expressed her disappointment regarding the delay to the commencement of operations at the Regional Control Centre as announced by the new Fire Minister Shahid Malik.

RESOLVED – that Members noted the briefing.

**37. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Information Pack**

- 37.1 LAA Performance Report 2008/09 and Annual Performance 2008/09
- 37.2 Comprehensive Area Assessment
- 37.3 Revenue & Capital Budget Outturn 2008/09
- 37.4 Progress against Revenue & Capital Budgets 2009/10
- 37.5 Audit Commission Report – Fraud letter
- 37.6 2008-2009 Outturn Position and Statement of Accounts

The Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee confirmed he had responded to the Audit Commission regarding its requirement to comply with International Standards on auditing as recommended by the Committee and the Treasurer.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**38. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Information Pack**

- 38.1 Fire Brigade Control – Review of Risk Assessments
- 38.2 Reducing Road Traffic Collisions

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

**39. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) (VARIATION ORDER) 2006
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 defined in the paragraphs below of Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006".**

Minute Number 40

Paragraph 4 – namely information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority"

Minute Number 41

Paragraph 1– namely information relating to any individual

40. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

40.1 Utilisation of Resources

The Director of Community Protection outlined the report to Members.

41. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Confidential Minutes of the Executive Committee held on 26 June 2009 and the Policy Committee held on 3 July 2009 be confirmed.

**COUNCILLOR JEAN O'DONNELL
VICE CHAIRMAN**