

**BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**

**5 FEBRUARY 2010**

**PRESENT**

Councillors: C Atkins, M Ayub, A Brown, N Bullock, R Davies, A Green, R Gwynne-Jones, M Headley, P Snelling, J Street and S Timoney (Chair)

**09-10/fa/066 APOLOGIES**

Councillor Saunders had tendered his apologies.

**09-10/fa/067 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

**09-10/fa/068 COMMUNICATIONS**

**ACFO Sears**

Members congratulated ACFO Julian Sears on his recent award of the Queen's Fire Service Medal.

**09-10/fa/069 MINUTES**

Members noted Minutes of the Authority meeting held on 11 December 2009.

**RESOLVED:**

That, the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2009 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

**09-10/fa/070 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Members noted that no questions had been received in accordance with the public participation scheme approved at the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 5 April 2000 (Minute 99/fa/94 refers).

**09-10/fa/071 THE FIRE AND EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICE (FESS)**

The meeting welcomed Lynne Hartley, Senior Services Manager Emergency Planning and Response; Tricia Earp, Operations Manager, and Steve Alexander, FESS Co-ordinator, of the British Red Cross (Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex).

Ms Earp and Mr Alexander gave a short presentation on the Fire and Emergency Support Service.

FESS was delivered by trained British Red Cross volunteers using a specially adapted vehicle, and provided practical help and emotional support to vulnerable people affected by a domestic fire or similar incident.

A Memorandum of Understanding to formalise the partnership between the Red Cross and the Fire and Rescue Service was signed after the meeting.

### **09-10/fa/072 PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENT SCRUTINY GROUP: 13 JANUARY 2010**

Councillor Headley, Chair of the Scrutiny Group, presented the draft Minutes of the Performance Achievement Scrutiny Group held on 13 January 2010.

The Scrutiny Group had made two recommendations relating to the Authority's General Reserves and its Anti-Fraud and Corruption Statement and Fraud Response Plan.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That,

1. the submitted draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2020 be noted.
2. the level of General Reserves for 2010/11 be set at £2.460 M.
3. the submitted draft Anti Fraud Statement, Policy and Fraud Response Plan be approved for consultation with employee representative bodies and the Authority's Standards Committee.

### **09-10/fa/073 COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING SCRUTINY GROUP: 20 JANUARY 2010**

Councillor Atkins, Chair of the Scrutiny Group, presented the draft Minutes of the Community Risk Management Planning Scrutiny Group held on 20 January 2010.

The Scrutiny Group had made four recommendations relating to the Service's community safety activity, enforcement of fire safety law, flood contingency arrangements and community safety volunteers.

Councillor Atkins also referred Members to a report on extensive investigations carried out on breathing apparatus equipment following reports by some users of a smell of smoke through the face mask. The Scrutiny Group had commended officers for their comprehensive report and requested that a Members' visit to the Fire House be arranged.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That, the submitted draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2010 be noted.

#### ***CRMP 2009 – 2012 Project – 'Boost Our Community Safety Activity'***

That,

1. Service personnel involved in this work be congratulated for their hard work and dedication.
2. Members recognise the wide range of prevention activities being undertaken to reduce the risk of fire and other emergencies in the community.
3. A report be made to a future meeting on the Young People of the Year initiative, which could also be the subject of a Thematic Briefing Note to Constituent Authorities.

#### ***CRMP 2009/12 Project – 'Enhance Our Enforcement Of Fire Safety Law'***

That,

1. Service personnel involved in this work be congratulated for their hard work and dedication.
2. Members recognise the wide range of prevention activities being undertaken in the enforcement of fire safety law.
3. All Members become 'Sprinkler Champions' to encourage colleagues involved in the provision of education services to ensure sprinkler systems are installed in schools.

### **CRMP 2009/12 Project – ‘Enhance Our Flood Contingency Arrangements’**

That,

1. Service personnel involved in this work be congratulated for their hard work and dedication.
2. Members recognise the wide range of activities being undertaken to ensure flooding contingency arrangements.
3. Members urge Government to make a decision on whether response to flooding should be a statutory duty of the fire and rescue service and, if so, to provide the necessary funding to ensure a national response capability.

### **Community Safety Volunteers**

That,

1. Service personnel involved in this work be congratulated for their hard work and dedication.
2. Members recognise the value gained by the Service in recruiting community safety volunteers.

### **09-10/fa/074 HUMAN RESOURCES SCRUTINY GROUP: 26 JANUARY 2010**

Councillor Street, Chair of the Scrutiny Group, presented the draft Minutes of the Human Resources Scrutiny Group held on 26 January 2010.

Following a visit to Harrold Station on 4 November 2009, Members had expressed concern about reports from station personnel relating to the Appointment Process for Retained Duty System Firefighters. This had been considered by the Scrutiny Group and four suggested points of action were noted which, it was hoped, would help to minimise the effects on the retained duty system selection process. These actions were to be reported back to the personnel at Harrold Station.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the submitted draft minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2010 be noted.

### **09-10/fa/075 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING – 2009/10**

Mr Osborne, Head of Finance and Corporate Support, presented his fourth budget monitoring report for 2009/10.

Members noted that, to date, £109,100 had been allocated from the Prices Contingency of £180,000. Twenty-six capital programme property projects had been completed with eighteen others either in progress or awaiting approval before work commenced.

All items were within Budget, which had a projected underspend.

Referring to his last report, Mr Osborne advised that £143,983.91 had been received from FRAML with regard to the Authority’s capital contribution and 1<sup>st</sup> phase of ‘surplus’.

Mr Osborne was to attend a meeting of fire and rescue service representatives later in the month to assess any appetite for the re-establishment of FRAML now that the legal position had been clarified to permit fire authorities to engage in such activity.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the report be received.

## **09-10/fa/076 BUDGET 2010/11 TO 2012/13**

Mr Osborne, Head of Finance and Corporate Support, referred to the Members' Budget Workshops held on 11 December 2009 and 26 January 2010, which had considered the detail of the proposed Budget as set out in the submitted Budget Book.

The proposed Budget would involve an increase in Council Tax for 2010/11 of 1.0% for all properties.

In their further review of the Budget Book, Members asked to receive at the next meeting, the comparative numbers of personnel for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Members also had regard to the Treasurer's statement that he was satisfied on the robustness of the Budget setting process and the adequacy of General Reserves; the latter having been reviewed by the Performance Achievement Scrutiny Group and reported elsewhere on the Agenda.

The recommendations of the report were considered separately

### **RESOLVED:**

That,

1. the Revenue Budget be approved at £28,498,725, including a contingency for pay and prices inflation of £322,000, and reduced by contributions of £183,052 from ear-marked and general reserves to £28,315,673.

2. the Budget requirement of £28,315,673 be met through:

Revenue Support Grant	£1,443,676
Business Rate Income	£9,942,037

and that subject to (3) below the Fire Authority Precept requirement be determined at £16,929,960.

3. the precept in (2) above be increased by £25,052, being the Fire Authority's share of the estimated net deficit on the Council Tax Collection Funds for 2009/10 for each of the Unitary Councils, to £16,955,012.
4. pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Finance Acts 1992 and 1999 and all other relevant statutory powers, the Secretary of the Authority issue Precepts in the necessary form to each of the Unitary Councils indicated in Column 1, requiring those Authorities to make payments of the sum indicated in Column 2 in eleven equal instalments, and payments for the Authority's share of the estimated surplus or deficits on the Council Tax Collection Funds for 2009/10, in ten equal instalments on the agreed dates, of the sum indicated in Column 3.

<b>Unitary Councils (1)</b>	<b>£ (2)</b>	<b>£ (3)</b>
Bedford Borough	4,553,892	67,734
Luton Borough	4,552,337	(103,532)
Central Bedfordshire	7,848,783	10,746
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,955,012</b>	<b>(25,052)</b>

5. the amount of Council Tax calculated, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, to be payable in respect of each category of dwelling be confirmed as follows:

Valuation Band	Tax Payable Compared to Band D (Expressed in Fractions)	Council Tax for Band £
A	6/9	54.96
B	7/9	64.12
C	8/9	73.28
D	1	82.44
E	11/9	100.76
F	13/9	119.08
G	15/9	137.40
H	2	164.88

6. the submitted Budget Book 2010/11 be approved.
7. Members be advised at the next meeting of the comparative numbers of personnel for the years 2009/10 and 2010/11.

### **09-10/fa/077 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2010/11**

Mr Wansbrough, Secretary and Monitoring Officer, submitted a proposed calendar of meeting dates for the Fire Authority and its associated Committees and Groups in 2010/11.

The Executive Members had been tasked to review the future arrangements for the Authority's Scrutiny Groups dealing with Performance Achievement, Community Risk Management Planning and Human Resources, and were to report in this regard to the CFA meeting in April 2010. Pending any decisions on the future arrangements for the Groups, the submitted calendar included proposed dates for three Scrutiny/Challenge Groups.

In view of the local government elections to be held in May 2011, Members advised that the submitted calendar should be agreed up to and including the CFA meeting on 12 April 2011, with the proposed meetings of the Scrutiny/Challenge Groups in May 2011 being considered at a later date.

It was also agreed that the Scrutiny Group meetings scheduled in the current year for 5, 12 and 19 May 2010 should be cancelled.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That,

1. The submitted calendar of meetings for 2010/11 be agreed up to and including the CFA meeting on 12 April 2011.
2. The Scrutiny Group meetings scheduled for 5, 12 and 19 May 2010 be cancelled.

### **09-10/fa/078 INFORMATION BULLETIN**

The Combined Fire Authority received a Bulletin containing information on various matters relating to the Fire and Rescue Service.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That,

1. the Members' visits to Bedford and Pottton Stations be rescheduled to 23 March 2010 (10am) and 15 April 2010 (7pm) respectively.
2. future Information Bulletins include comparative statistics for previous years.