



**MINUTES OF THE  
6<sup>th</sup> Shadow Policy and Resources Committee  
of  
WILTSHIRE & SWINDON and DORSET FIRE AUTHORITIES  
17 September 2015 Milford Hall Salisbury**

Members Present: Cllr Chris Devine, Cllr Mollie Groom , Cllr Bob Jones, Cllr Trevor Jones, Cllr Rebecca Knox, Cllr Graham Payne, Cllr Garry Perkins, Cllr Christopher Rochester, Cllr Ann Stribley, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Mike Byatt, Cllr Peter Edge

Officers also in Attendance: DCFO John Aldridge, ACFO Colin Chapman, Mr Phil Chow, Mr Derek James, Mr Jonathan Mair, Mrs Jill McCrae, Mrs Vikki Shearing, Ms Jenny Long.

Apologies: Cllr Spencer Flower

**1. Welcome**

1.1 The Chairman, Cllr Chris Devine opened the meeting and welcomed Members and the public in attendance.

**2. Apologies**

2.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Spencer Flower.

**3. Declaration of Interest and Notification of Any Other Business**

3.1 There were no declarations or notifications.

**4. Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Shadow Policy and Resources Committee Meeting and Matters Arising**

4.1 Cllr Chris Devine asked Members to approve the minutes of the 5th Shadow Policy and Resources Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2015.

4.2 Cllr Rebecca Knox and Cllr Trevor Jones noted that they required clarity on point 6.7 of the minutes, with regards to the year of the meeting (2015) and to include that they welcomed the opportunity to attend further meetings. Cllr Chris Devine confirmed that this amendment would be made.

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- 4.3 Member approved the minutes with the amendment to point 6.7 and confirmed that all matters arising had been actioned
- 4.1 **Action – Amendment to be made to point 6.7 of the 22 July 2015 minutes to confirm year of meeting and include that Cllr Rebecca Knox and Cllr Trevor Jones welcomed the opportunity to attend further meetings.**

## 5. Combination Programme Progress Report

- 5.1 Mr Derek James took Members through the first part of the progress report, noting that this report covered up to the 31 August 2015. He provided assurance to Members that the programme continues to progress well and remains on target in terms of securing the necessary success factors.
- 5.2 Cllr Chris Devine confirmed to the meeting that the transformational fund should be used to gain support where workloads require, preventing stress and pressure on existing staff.
- 5.3 **Workstream 1**
- 5.3.1 Cllr Chris Devine highlighted that in the absence of CFO Darran Gunter, Mr Derek James will present to Members the progress of workstream 1.
- 5.3.2 Mr Derek James confirmed that the preferred branding option, approved by the Shadow Policy & Resources committee at their meeting in July is currently being registered as a trademark.
- 5.3.3 It was confirmed that the two Authorities' Annual Governance Statements and Statements of Assurance will be taken to the Shadow Authority meeting on the 23 October to ensure that the Committee were aware of the auditors respective positions.
- 5.3.4 Members were advised that, as determined by the Shadow Authority, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services from Dorset County Council will undertake the role of Monitoring Officer for the Shadow and new Authority. Confirmation was given that work is progressing with regard to the democratic services/clerking function and a service level agreement was being developed. This will be progressed via workstream 1 at their November meeting.
- 5.3.5 The critical policies and procedures work is continuing on track, with a delivery plan for each policy area within each workstream.
- 5.3.6 Work on the ceremonies and awards is progressing with an intention that the Service will hold a large central event along for such awards as long service and good conduct with additional local ceremonies to recognise staff for professional achievements and local employers.
- 5.3.7 Mr Derek James then asked Members for any observations or questions regarding the workstream.
- 5.3.8 Cllr Ann Stribley noted that it would be good for Members to get to know each other better and therefore would like this to be through a programme of seminars and general induction.

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- 5.3.9 Cllr Chris Devine requested that Members receive a document on the roles and responsibilities of the members of the top team along with an introduction on each member of the team.
- 5.3.10 **Action - A document to be produced to introduce the members of the top team, along with roles and responsibilities.**
- 5.4 **Workstream 2**
- 5.4.1 Mr Derek James provided the update for workstream 2, confirming to Members that the vision work is being used to support the progression of the functional reviews
- 5.4.2 It was noted that a corporate video is currently being put together with involvement of the Members in workstream 2. Cllr Jones advised that workstream 2 Members have asked for a storyboard for the corporate video and confirmation of the audience this is for.
- 5.4.3 A group of staff from both Services have been brought together to form a 'change forum', to be used by officers as a staff sounding board. The first meeting was recently held and will continue bi-monthly. Both CFO Darran Gunter and CFO Simon Routh-Jones will attend these sessions.
- 5.4.4 Members were advised that the work to implement a single finance system (Agresso) continues on track along with the progression the new internal audit arrangements, with a draft specification of requirements currently being further defined. Members were advised that once agreed the tendering for the new Service provision will commence.
- 5.4.5 Cllr Bob Jones advised that within the workstream 2 meetings a concern was raised with regard to schedule for insurance being too tight and that this would now be reviewed.
- 5.4.6 Cllr Rebecca Knox highlighted the progression of work within Quality Standards, confirming that she was personally very pleased with the level of quality standards and thanked ACFO Colin Chapman for his work to date.
- 5.4.7 Cllr Christopher Rochester queried the progression of work with the Aerial Appliances. ACFO Colin Chapman advised that this work is included within a future wider Emergency Cover Review.
- 5.5 **Workstream 3**
- 5.5.1 DCFO John Aldridge advised that an update on the Strategic Hub and Safety Centre will be provided in exempt business.
- 5.5.2 An update was given on the Joint Command and Control Centre (now Service Control Centre) , confirming that 13 members of staff had transferred from Dorset Fire Control to Potterne and that a minimum of 2 had been allocated against each watch to ensure experience across at the watches.

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- 5.5.3 Members were advised that this was the first time that the Dorset and Wiltshire FRS branding had been used in Fire Control and that all Fire Control staff are wearing the new uniform.
- 5.5.4 Whilst there were still a number of issues, it was confirmed that the transfer over to the NFCSP was a success. DCFO John Aldridge confirmed that he expected the minor issues to be ironed out before the end of the month.
- 5.5.5 Cllr Chris Devine raised with the meeting that the Authority has a corporate duty of care for the Dorset staff travelling and therefore must continue to consider the health and safety of these staff. He went on to request that a third party review of travel should be complete in around 3 months time.
- 5.5.6 Cllr Ann Stribley noted that she had spoken to the staff during the opening on the 8<sup>th</sup> September and that they advised that the shift structure helped greatly with regards to travelling.
- 5.5.7 Cllr Bridget Wayman commended the use of twitter by the Service Control Centre.
- 5.5.8 Cllr Graham Payne noted a press article by Joanne Moore and asked how the Service could counter such articles.
- 5.5.9 DCFO John Aldridge confirmed that Louise Knox reviews all press articles and responds where necessary. He advised that this article will be reviewed with Louise and action taken if required.
- 5.5.10 Cllr Mike Byatt noted that consideration needs to be made to ensure that smooth communications and information is passed onto the communities in an appropriate and timely manner.
- 5.5.11 Cllr Chris Devine confirmed that the Combination has a communication strategy and that further decisions made within exempt business will be taken into consideration.
- 5.5.12 **Action - Third party review of staff welfare arrangements in the Service Control Centre to be undertaken in 3 months time.**
- 5.6 **Workstream 4**
- 5.6.1 ACFO Colin Chapman provided an update behalf of the workstream lead, ACFO Ben Ansell, confirming that the response standards update will be provided in exempt business.
- 5.6.2 It was confirmed that there has been positive progress within the workstream and that work is on track.
- 5.6.3 Members were advised that a new risk has been raised within the programme regarding negotiation and consultation, due to potential to cause delays. Members were advised on the progress of the flexi-duty system.

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- 5.6.4 Cllr Chris Devine asked if this risk is to be escalated; this was confirmed, advising that the risk was included within the risk section of the report and was being monitored by the Joint Leadership Team.
- 5.7 **Workstream 5**
- 5.7.1 Ms Jenny Long took the meeting through Workstream 5, advising that work on the competence framework was progressing well. Confirming that operational training delivery models for 2016/17 will largely remain the same with a single approach being developed during 2016/17.
- 5.7.2 Members were advised that the HR Framework has been legally checked and policy and procedures have been reviewed to identify those that require negotiating, consulting or communicating. Ms Jenny Long confirmed that there has been good dialogue between the Services and the representative bodies.
- 5.7.3 The main focus for the workstream at present is the organisational design and staff transition. Officers were working closely with legal advisors and a HR consultant who has knowledge and experience with mergers.
- 5.7.4 Members were advised that the structure is to be planned to be finalised by the end of October, job evaluations have been completed by South West Councils and an experienced pay modelling consultant has been commissioned.
- 5.7.5 Cllr Rebecca Knox highlighted her awareness of the amount of work currently underway internally for the staff briefing sessions, with over 74 sessions being held at locations throughout both counties. She went on to advise how well these sessions were being received by staff. Cllr Chris Devine supported this.
- 5.7.6 Cllr Trevor Jones queried if the Service is likely to have to do all this work again when the Adrian Thomas paper is published. Cllr Rebecca Knox added that the paper has not yet been published, however, a number of areas of the paper are in the public domain due to the Fire Ministers presentation, however there is also a report from the Fire Brigades Union which should also be considered.
- 5.7.7 Ms Jenny Long advised that both Services are aware of the papers and also noted that there is national awareness that Services need to have due regard to them.
- 5.7.8 Cllr Graham Payne queried if disabled access had been considered for new sites and if considerations had been made for occupational health units. DCFO John Aldridge advised that new builds must comply with disabled access and most other properties have been adapted as required. Ms Jenny Long confirmed that occupational health is included within the review.
- 5.7.9 Cllr Graham Payne asked if consideration will be made of the pension review and age of people throughout the Service, questioning if occupational health will be a more strategic requirement for Fire and Rescue Services, in order to meet the challenges ahead. Ms Jenny Long advised that the Services currently run two different systems, a firm decision on the occupational health provisions moving forward can not be considered fully until it goes out to

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procurement. She went on to advise that a working party has been put together in Wiltshire to look at fitness tests on station, with the view to building a similar arrangement as in Dorset currently.

5.7.10 Cllr Mike Byatt noted that whilst in a process of significant change the Services need to be mindful of ministerial change in policy asking whether there is process for identifying this Cllr Rebecca Knox advised that this is being considered by both CFA's and should be deliberated by the Shadow Authority.

5.7.11 Cllr Trevor Jones asked if there was anything in the Adrian Thomas review that could cause any issues to this work. Cllr Chris Devine noted he was confident that there was nothing within the report that would cause issue. Cllr Rebecca Knox advised that the Fire Brigade Union are working with CFOA and the Service should continue to monitor this work.

### 5.8 **Workstream 6**

5.8.1 Mr Derek James advised that the workstream continues to work closely with a technical auditor from South West Audit Partnership.

5.8.2 Confirmation was given that the station end arrangements are now harmonised with the connection to the Service Control Centre.

5.8.3 Members were advised that the infrastructure work was on schedule and the software systems are currently being evaluated as part of the functional reviews in order to develop a 3 year migration plan for incorporating within Service delivery plans.

5.8.4 Mr Derek James highlighted that the internal communications website is up and running for both staff and Members and the Wiltshire website was being amended to provide the updates from the Service Control Centre, in line with Dorset's website.

5.8.5 Cllr Ann Stribley queried if the spend for this establishing the Service Control Centre work was coming out of basic funds or the transformation fund. Mr Phil Chow referred Members to Appendix B of the Combination Programme Progress report advising all funds had been reported together and that both Services had set aside £500,000 each on top of the Governments' Transformation Grant. He went on to suggest for the next Shadow Policy and Resources Committee meeting he would provide updated detail within the financial reporting.

### 5.9 **Financial**

5.9.1 Mr Phil Chow referred Members to Appendix B in the Programme Progress Report, noting the low level of expenditure, advising that this was mainly for the Service Control Centre.

5.9.2 He went on to advise that due to the scale of expenditure, formal procurement processes will need to be followed for example with the progression of ICT, the Safety Centre and Strategic Hub. It was also advised that the majority of spend planned this year will fall into next years expenditure due to the procurement processes and contract negotiations.

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5.9.3 Cllr Rebecca Knox asked if there is on-going discussion with DCLG with regards to committed spend and actual spend. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that there are on-going discussions and confirmation in writing was received from the Fire Minister that there is full flexibility as the grant had been issued as revenue grant. He advised that DCLG do however require our commitment to the Safety Centre and the monitoring of spend will need to be reported back.

### **5.10 Risks**

5.10.1 Mr Derek James took the Members through the combination programme risks, confirming that the risks are reviewed formally on a monthly basis by the senior leadership team.

5.10.2 He went on to advise Members of movement reflected in risks, highlighting the new risk in relation to consultation and negotiation, which was discussed previously within the meeting.

### **5.11 Stakeholders**

5.11.1 Mr Derek James confirmed the progress of the stakeholder engagement plan, highlighting the current staff briefings being undertaken.

5.11.2 Members were advised that the external consultant continues to work with the CFO designate and the programme team to provide assurance of our arrangements. In addition, Members were advised that dates are being scheduled for external political and meetings between November and January to ensure high level stakeholder engagement is setting out the direction for the new Service.

### **5.12 Work Programme**

5.12.1 Mr Derek James confirmed the next steps in the work programme, highlighting the items on the agenda for the Shadow Authority meeting in October.

5.12.2 Members were also reminded that there would be a Members seminar preceding the Shadow Authority meeting on October 23..

## **6. Delegations to Officers**

6.1 Mr Jonathan Mair took the meeting through the paper, highlighting that the CFO's of Wiltshire FRS and Dorset FRS have the authority to act and delegate duties within their Service areas, this comes within their job descriptions and specific delegations from the Fire Authority.

6.2 Members were advised that at present the CFO designate currently has a job description; however there is no scheme of delegation. Therefore it was recommended that the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee should agree delegations to the CFO designate in order that there is certainty as to his ability to act and take necessary action to progress the combination of the two Services.

6.3 Cllr Chris Devine asked if there were any areas requiring clarification or any questions. As no queries or questions were raised he went on to confirm the recommendations to the

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committee who all confirmed their approval. Endorsement was also given for actions taken by the CFO designate to date.

- 6.4 **Resolve – Members approved and endorsed the proposed delegations to the Chief Fire Officer Designate including all actions taken to date to support the combination programme.**

## 7. Pensions Administration

- 7.1 Mr Phil Chow confirmed with members that at present for both Authorities' the pension administration for the Fire Fighters Pension Scheme (FPS) and the Local Government Pension Scheme is completed by Dorset County Council, for Dorset and Wiltshire Council, for Wiltshire under separate arrangements for both schemes. It has been recognised that there could be further efficiencies and economies of scale if the schemes administration was brought under one administrator.
- 7.2 Mr Phil Chow went on to advise the meeting of the options available to how these arrangements could be considered by the new Authority beyond April 2016, highlighting issues and on-going costs associated with the current arrangements.
- 7.3 Members were advised of the recommendation requesting that a cost-benefit analysis is commissioned to identify whether it would be beneficial to have one LGPS administrator and what the future revenue service impacts are likely to be, and for future work to be undertaken to identify a suitable timescale for implementation should the decision be for a single administration.
- 7.4 Cllr Mike Byatt highlighted to the meeting that he is a member of the Dorset Pension Fund Committee noting that consideration should also be made of the performance of the administration and the delivery. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that the LGPS Committee will scrutinise the performance of the LGPS pension funds and that a Pension Board will be required for the FPS.
- 7.5 Cllr Ann Stribley asked if the transitional funds could be used for the additional costs as it would not be advantageous for this to come from the pension funds, noting that it would be easier and clearer to use one administration. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that pension funds can not be used; the Service would be required to cover this, and that this would be a legitimate cost funded from transformation funds.
- 7.6 Cllr Graham Payne queried if it was possible to identify a third provider for administering the LGPS or if it is limited to the current providers. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that the Service is statutorily required use a local pension scheme under current LGPS legislation.
- 7.7 Cllr Chris Devine confirmed with Members that they were happy with the recommendations made. All Members gave their endorsement and approval.
- 7.8 **Resolve – Members endorsed and approved for a full cost benefit analysis to be commissioned to identify whether it would be beneficial to have one LGPS administrator and what the future revenue service impacts are likely to be, and for**

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further work to be undertaken to identity a suitable timescale for implementation should the decision be made to move to a single administration.

### 8. Pension Board

- 8.1 Mr Phil Chow introduced the paper, advising Members that the new Authority will require a Local Pension Board in respect of the Firefighters Pension Scheme under the new Pension Regulations 2015, highlighting that consideration is therefore required for establishing a new Local Pension Board for 2016/17.
- 8.2 Cllr Mike Byatt asked if this will be on the agenda at the Dorset Pension Board. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that a new Fire Service Local Pension Board is required for the new Authority and the Dorset Pension Board will cease, and therefore have little or no influence.
- 8.3 Mr Jonathan Mair noted the comments from Cllr Mike Byatt regarding his position on the Dorset Pension Fund Committee and confirmed that this did not require disclosure.
- 8.4 Cllr Ann Stribley asked if there were legal requirements for this new Board. Mr Phil Chow confirmed that there were and noted that this included equal employee and employer representatives. He also advised that there could be independents members on the board; however they would have no voting rights.
- 8.5 Cllr Trevor Jones confirmed with the meeting that the recommendations should be approved. Cllr Rebecca Knox noted the pressure from Fire Authorities to try and have regional Pension Boards due to the costs occurred with Local Pension Boards, highlighting the need to ask the Shadow Authority to pursue a regional solution.
- 8.6 Cllr Mike Byatt noted the issues around regionalisation and it's the on-going consideration of this by Government, suggesting that this should not be pre-empted at this stage.
- 8.7 Cllr Chris Devine asked Members if they were happy to endorse and approve the recommendations of the paper, all were in favour.
- 8.8 **Resolve – Members endorsed and approved for workstream 1 to consider the arrangements in respect of establishing a new LPB for the new Authority from 1 April 2016.**

### 9. Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 Cllr Chris Devine confirmed to Members that the next meeting of the Shadow Policy & Resources Committee will be on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2015 at City Hall, Salisbury. With a Shadow Authority meeting and seminar on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015 at Milford Hall, Salisbury.

### 10. Exclusion of the Public

- 10.1 Cllr Chris Devine addressed all attendees to confirm the closure of the meeting to the public with the following statement:

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In accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public for the business specified below because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

### **11. Emergency Response Standards Presentation**

11.1 Members reviewed and discussed the paper and presentation.

11.2 **Resolve – Members endorsed and approved the recommendations within the paper.**

### **12. Progress Report for the Strategic Hub**

12.1 Members reviewed and discussed the paper.

12.2 **Resolve – Members endorsed and approved the recommendations within the paper.**

### **13. Options Paper for the Safety Centre**

13.1 Members reviewed and discussed the paper.

13.2 **Resolve – Members approved and endorsed the recommendations within the paper.**

13.3 **Action – A progress report to be included on the agenda for the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee meeting on the 5 November 2015.**

### **14. Progress Report for Property Assets Management**

14.1 Members reviewed and discussed the paper.

14.2 **Resolve - Members approved and endorsed the majority of the recommendations within the paper but required further information at their meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> November.**

### **15. Programme of Transition for our People**

15.1 Members review and discussed the paper.

15.2 **Resolve – Members endorsed and approved the recommendations within the paper.**

15.3 Meeting closed at 13:50 hours

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