



**DORSET & WILTSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE
AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority held
at 10:00 hours on Tuesday 12 February 2019 at the
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Salisbury**

Members present: Cllr Spencer Flower (Chairman); Cllr Garry Perkins (Vice Chairman); Cllr Abdul Amin; Cllr Richard Biggs; Cllr Kevin Brookes; Cllr Ernie Clark; Cllr Malcolm Davies; Cllr Peter Hutton; Cllr Bob Jones; Cllr Rebecca Knox; Cllr Brian Mattock; Cllr Paul Oatway; Cllr Byron Quayle; Cllr Pip Ridout; Cllr Vikki Slade; Cllr Ann Stribley

Officer attendance: Chief Fire Officer, Ben Ansell; Director of Finance and Treasurer, Mr Phil Chow; Clerk & Monitoring Officer, Mr Jonathan Mair; Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), Derek James; Director of Service Support, Temporary Assistant Chief Fire Officer (T/ACFO) Byron Standen; Director of Community Safety, ACFO Jim Mahoney; Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead; Director of People Services, Ms Jenny Long; Head of Financial Services, Mr Ian Cotter; Head of Strategic Planning & Corporate Assurance, Mrs Jill McCrae; Head of Information and Communications, Mrs Vikki Shearing

19/01 Welcome

19/01.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

19/02 Apologies

19/02.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Christopher Newbury and Cllr Beverley Dunlop.

19/03 Code of Conduct, Declarations of Interest and Notifications of Any Other Business

19/03.1 The Chairman asked the meeting for any disclosures of pecuniary interests under the Localism Act. Cllr Amin and Cllr Hutton declared an interest as Members of the Wiltshire & Swindon Police and Crime Panels. The Clerk & Monitoring Officer advised that this was not a disclosable pecuniary interest for the purposes of this meeting.

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19/04 Minutes of the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority meeting on 13 December 2018.

- 19/04.1 The Chairman asked Members to review and approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- 19/04.2 Responding to the Chairman's enquiry for any comments relating to the minutes of 13 December, CFO Ben Ansell reiterated his pride in the Service's achievement of the British Standards Institution (BSI)18001 accreditation, noting that to his knowledge just three other fire and rescue services had received the 'Certificate of Compliance'.
- 19/04.3 Members showed their appreciation of the accolade bestowed upon the Service.
- 19/04.4 CFO Ansell confirmed to Members that the Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead, would be taking the revised Integrated Risk Management Plan Strategic Principles to the next Finance & Governance meeting on the 7 March.
- 19/04.5 The Head of and Strategic Planning and Corporate Assurance, Mrs Jill McCrae confirmed that details of Member development opportunities and attendance would be provided to Group Leaders towards the end of the Authority year.
- 19/04.6 The Chairman confirmed the number of Members who had attended the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Member Development opportunities and encouraged all Members to attend any Member Development events as they arise.
- 19/04.7 **RESOLVED that the minutes be confirmed without amendment and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.**

19/05 Receive the draft Minutes of the Finance & Governance Committee meeting on 7 December 2018.

- 19/05.1 Chairman of Finance & Governance advised no further comments to be made and, there being no questions, Members moved to the resolution.
- 19/05.2 **RESOLVED: Members noted the draft minutes of the Finance & Governance meeting of the 7 December 2018.**

19/06 Budget 2019-20 and Precept Implications

- 19/06.1 The Director of Finance and Treasurer, Mr Phil Chow, introduced the report which sets out the revenue and capital budget requirements for 2019-20, based on the financial principles agreed by Members in September 2018.

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He added that despite efforts to lobby for a £5 de-minimis increase in the fire precept, the Final Local Government Finance Settlement (Final Settlement) only allowed a 2.99% increase for fire authorities for the coming year. This resulted in a Band D Fire Precept of £74.87, an increase of only £2.17 (or 4p per week).

- 19/06.2 Mr Chow confirmed that based on the Final Settlement (our overall level of Government funding) the Settlement Funding Assessment showed a decrease of £467k or 3.2% compared to 2018-19. This was in line with expectations but remained one of the highest funding reductions for combined fire authorities.
- 19/06.3 Mr Chow added that the report included provisional sums in respect of business rates income however, as at the time of writing this report, final confirmation of amounts had not been received from the billing authorities. He added that any adjustment to the final figures will be made through general balances shown in Section 2 of the report.
- 19/06.4 Mr Chow advised Members that the revenue budget requirement for 2019-20 was £55.845m as set out in Section 3 of the report and the capital programme totals £8.404m.
- 19/06.5 Members were concerned about the recent media reports regarding John Dennis Coachbuilders (JDC) going into receivership. T/ACFO Standen advised Members that the Service had received confirmation that any technical support requirements would be fulfilled.
- 19/06.6 Members asked about the burden imposed following Government Actuary's Department (GAD) notifications in relation to future employer pension contributions and wondered if there was any indication of costs falling to the Authority. CFO Ansell responded that conversations were taking place between the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Government Ministers about this. The Chairman confirmed with Members that they were still content that he continued to lobby Government about future fire precept and de-minimis levels. Members confirmed their agreement adding that the Authority regrets the inability of Government to apply the £5 de-minimis precept increase.
- 19/06.7 **RESOLVED: Members approved the revenue budget of £55.845m and capital budget of £8.404m for 2019-20.**
- 19/06.8 **RESOLVED: Members approved the basic amount of Band D Fire Precept for the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority at £74.87**
- 19/06.9 **RESOLVED: Members authorised the Treasurer to issue precept notices on the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset Council, Wiltshire Council and Swindon Council**

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19/06.10 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Medium Term Finance Plan 2019-20 to 2022-23**

19/07 Treasury Management Strategy 2019-20

19/07.1 The Head of Financial Services, Mr Ian Cotter, confirmed to Members that his report incorporated the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Capital Strategy for 2019-20.

19/07.2 Mr Cotter reminded Members that under the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management (TM) Code of Practice, the Authority was required to publish a Treasury Management Strategy each year. Adding that the strategy supported the provision of all services and functions by the management of the Authority's cash flow, debt and investments operations, and effectively controls the associated risks, and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks. He added that the Authority must balance the risks with due regard to security, liquidity and investment yield.

19/07.3 Mr Cotter also reminded Members that the CIPFA Prudential Code, aligned to the CIPFA TM Code of Practice, also highlights particular aspects of the planning of capital expenditure and funding. The Prudential Code requires the publication and monitoring of certain Prudential Indicators which informed Members of the scope and impact of capital spend and the treasury management activities of the Authority.

19/07.4 Mr Cotter added that aligned to the capital programme and the Treasury Management Strategy was the annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement. This was the Authority's policy on setting aside revenue funds each year as provision for the repayment of debt. Section 3 of the report included the statement for 2019-20.

19/07.5 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices (including the Annual Investment and Treasury Management Strategy) as outlined in Appendix A.**

19/07.6 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Capital and Treasury Management Prudential Indicators as outlined in Appendix B.**

19/07.7 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Capital Strategy 2019-20 as outlined in Appendix C.**

19/07.8 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement as defined in paragraph 3.11 of the report.**

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19/08 HMICFRS

- 19/08.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Ben Ansell introduced this paper which updated the Authority on the current inspection process being undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) across all fire and rescue services (FRS) in England.
- 19/08.2 CFO Ansell advised Members that it covered the background and methodology of the inspection process and details the findings and outcomes of the Tranche 1 inspections.
- 19/08.3 CFO Ansell added that it provided Members with an update on the early findings and progress of Tranche 2 inspections and the next steps for HMICFRS.
- 19/08.4 All reports for Tranche 2 are anticipated for the end of June; CFO Ansell added that there was good engagement between the Service and the Inspectors. Cllr Jones reminded Members that HMICFRS inspectors attended an Authority meeting earlier in the year.
- 19/08.5 CFO Ansell advised that the Service was considering a LGA peer review later in the year to review the Governance arrangements. A paper would be tabled to the Authority at its June meeting.
- 19/08.6 **RESOLVED: Members noted the content of the report.**

19/09 Revised Corporate Targets for 2019-20

- 19/09.1 The Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead, introduced the paper and highlighted the Community Safety Plan (CSP) 2018-22 which sets out the Authority's corporate targets. ACFO Stead added that the intention was to undertake a full review of the CSP in the Autumn of 2019 in readiness for February 2020.
- 19/09.2 ACFO Stead advised that the timing of this was aligned to the planned announcement of the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). It was therefore considered prudent to review our existing corporate targets to provide better clarification up until 2020 and ensure they continued to drive forward Service improvement.
- 19/09.3 Members requested that the corporate target for increasing diversity in the operational workforce wording should be amended to "We will seek to ensure that at least 20% of recruitment into our operational workforce is from under-represented groups...".
- 19/09.4 Following Members' consideration, the Director of People, Ms Jenny Long, confirmed that she was happy that the corporate target for sickness absence be amended to read: "For sickness absence to be lower than average ..." to ensure it was aspirational.

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19/09.5 Members discussed realistic aims of the corporate target for response times and Members discussed the value of numbers being more beneficial than percentages. CFO Ansell confirmed that changes requested by Members would be implemented and advised that the Service would be further developing its approach to attendance times for CSP 2020. The key focus being to ensure that we have the right people in the right place at the right time.

19/09.6 **RESOLVED: Members approved the revised corporate targets and changes as outlined in 19/09.3; 19/09.4 and 19/09.5 above.**

19/10 National Armed Forces Day 2019

19/10.1 The Director of Community Safety provided an update for information on the Armed Forces Day National Event which was successfully bid for and secured by Wiltshire Council. This prestigious event is to be held in Salisbury over the weekend of 28-30 June 2019. ACFO Mahoney added that this was a significant event with a number of 'run – up events' with family events, parades and displays taking place. Hudson's Field was the venue for most events with a parade taking place in the city centre and on 29 June and on 30 June there would be a veterans and youth event. It is anticipated that 40,000 members of the public will attend each day, with the parade attracting up to 100,000 visitors.

19/10.2 ACFO Mahoney advised Members that the Service will be supporting from both a safety management point of view and will also be participating in the event. CFO Ansell added that approximately 25% of the British Army, along with both Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel are based in our Service area, across both Wiltshire and Dorset.

19/11 Draft Pay Policy Statement 2019-20

19/11.1 The Director of People, Ms Jenny Long, reminded Members that the Localism Act 2011 places an annual requirement on all fire and rescue authorities to produce and publish a statement setting out their policies on the remuneration of their chief officers and lowest paid employees. This paper fulfilled this requirement.

19/11.2 Ms Long advised Members that the ratio between the Chief Fire Officer and the lowest paid employee was 8.65. In relation to the Chief Fire Officer and those employed on Grey Book terms and conditions the ratio was 4.13 and the ratio between the Chief Fire Officer and those employed on Green Book terms and conditions the ratio was 5.97.

19/11.3 There being no questions and comments Members were moved to the resolution.

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19/11.4 **RESOLVED: Members approved the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2019-20**

19/12 Gender Pay Gap Report 2018

19/12.1 Ms Long reminded Members that The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 came into force on 31 March 2017. These regulations impose a legal obligation for employers with 250 or more employees, to publish gender pay gap details by 30 March each year and to highlight the difference in gross pay and bonus payments made to female, as compared with male, employees. Ms Long added that this was the second year of publication and again our pay gap was below the national average.

19/12.2 Ms Long advised Members that the Service has clear, national negotiated pay structures in place which ensures equal pay for both men and women across the roles throughout the organisation, and therefore in this regard the Service does not have an equal pay issue. However, it was recognised that, like all fire and rescue services, the Service has an imbalance of male and female staff in some of the different occupational staff groups and at different role levels. This was therefore the main reason for the gender pay gap.

19/12.3 Ms Long added that as part of our Service Delivery Plan and the corporate target agreed by the Authority the Service had plans in place to address the gender pay gap.

18/12.4 Members noted the risk associated with the comparison graphs on page nine of the report (Appendix A) which did not include all fire and rescue services due to the variety of governance arrangements in place. CFO Ansell advised Members that this situation had also been noted by the NFCC.

19/12.5 **RESOLVED: Members approved and endorsed the contents of this report.**

19/13 Members Podcast

19/13.1 The podcast updated Members on the activities undertaken by the Service since the last podcast in December. The podcast included the former Olympic swimmer, Ms Sharron Davies and her promotion of on-call firefighter opportunities. A number of projects and events were also promoted, these included: Survive the Drive and the Prince's Trust Team. The podcast can be found here: https://youtu.be/sQuThjd_apE

- 19/13.2 The Chairman thanked the Director of Service Improvement, ACFO Mick Stead and the Director of Finance, Phil Chow for their hard work and support to the Authority since the combination as they are both due to retire soon.
- 19/13.3 Cllr Stribley advised Members that Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP) and Dorset would be holding local elections on 2 May, following the recent Local Government Review for Dorset, and hoped to see Authority colleagues again after that date.
- 19/13.4 Cllr Pip Ridout tendered her apologies for the annual meeting of the Authority taking place on 6 June 2019.

19/14 Date of Next Meeting

- 19/14.1 The Chairman confirmed the date of the next Authority meeting as Thursday 6 June 2019 at Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre, Hulse Road, Salisbury SP1 3NR, from 10am.

Meeting closed at 11:15hrs

Signed: _____