



DORSET
Fire & Rescue
Service



WILTSHIRE
Fire & Rescue
Service

Working together to make our communities safer

**MINUTES OF THE
3rd JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING
of
WILTSHIRE & SWINDON and DORSET FIRE AUTHORITIES
30th April 2015 Milford Hall Hotel**

Members Present: Chris Devine (CD), Spencer Flower (SF), Mollie Groom (MG), Bob Jones MBE, Rebecca Knox (RK), Sue Levell (SL), Graham Payne (GPa), Garry Perkins (GP), Christopher Rochester (CR), Ann Stribley MBE (AS), Bridget Wayman (BW), Trevor Jones (TJ)

Officer Attendance: John Aldridge (JA), Phil Chow (PC), Lindsay Gowland (LG), Darran Gunter (DG), Derek James (DJ), Jonathan Mair (JM), Stephen Taylor (ST), Jill McCrae (JMc), Vikki Shearing (VS), Barbara Owen (BO), Marianne Abley (MA).

1. Welcome

1.1 The Chairman (CD) opened the meeting and welcomed Marianne Abley (MA).

2. Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from Simon Routh-Jones.

3. Declaration of Interest and Notification of Any Other Business

3.1 There were no declarations or notifications.

4. Minutes of 2nd Joint Committee Meeting and Matters Arising

4.1 The minutes of the 2nd Joint Committee Meeting held on 19 March 2015 were approved. All matters arising had been actioned

5. Combination Programme progress report

5.1 DJ took members through the programme performance since the Joint Committee in March.

5.2 Workstream 1

5.3 DG reported that the first meeting of this workstream had taken place with Members and that there were no significant issues for Members to be advised of.

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- 5.4 ST advised that existing standing orders already in place will be used for the new authority.
- 5.5 DG advised that the cost of branding will be presented to Members of Workstream 1 on 1st June.
- 5.6 DG asked Members to discuss long term ambition for the authority's expectation to become paperless. After some discussion around the security of personal devices for accessing electronic documents and printing costs, CD summarised that the authority's aim would be to become paperless and clarified that it would be the role of workstream 6 to identify technical solutions to deliver this effectively.
- 5.7 **Workstream 2**
- 5.8 RK and CD reported their attendance at the Joint Leadership Team meeting held on the 22 April and found the feedback from this very useful.
- 5.9 DG advised that the Vision workshop took place on the 17 April and this was an extremely positive event. RK confirmed that this was a really helpful day which demonstrated officers clearly working together on a joint future, focused on prevention and protection.
- 5.10 GP asked what differences and similarities could be learnt from Scotland and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Services and the approaches they took to combination. DG assured members that officers have been in discussions with both, as well as with the District Councils. He advised that a mini-peer review may be carried out by Scotland and that the National Audit Office have also requested that the combination is used as a case study for which Members agreed.
- 5.11 **Workstream 3**
- 5.12 JA provided an overview of the progress for workstream 3. He advised that one meeting with Members has taken place and the options paper is on target to be delivered to the Authority on the 4 June 2015.
- 5.13 JA advised that there is every confidence the go live date for JCCC on the 1 July 2015 will be met.
- 5.14 In relation to the Safety Centre a site visit will be made in the first week of May.
- 5.15 **Workstream 4**
- 5.16 DG advised that work is being progress to deliver an Integrated Risk Management Plan for the new Service coordinating with the Vision setting work being progressed in workstream 2. There are no issues or risks to report at this time.
- 5.17 A discussion was had in relation to charges for special services following comments from BW regarding costs for animal rescue. DG confirmed to members that this workstream would consider various means of cost recovery for the new Service.

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- 5.18 RK asked for clarification on where prevention and protection targets would be addressed. DG confirmed that these, as well as response, will form the IRMP delivered under this work stream. RK suggested that the same members on work stream 4 are those on work stream 2. DG confirmed he was happy, that where appropriate, these Members will be involved.
- 5.19 **Workstream 5**
- 5.20 BO provided an update to members on this workstream. She advised that work is progressing as expected in terms of aligning contracts, policies and procedures, training for Inclusive Impact Assessments and the functional review process. BO advised that a template for functional reviews has been developed from the business case process and this will now involve draft job descriptions and consider software integration planning. Informal discussions with representative bodies were taking place. . There are no issues and risks to report to members.
- 5.21 SF asked BO how union relations were currently in both services. BO provided a view from Wiltshire's perspective. The unions in Wiltshire are keen to be involved and are willing to sit with Dorset counterparts and the Joint Leadership Team (JLT).
- 5.22 CD asked if it was necessary for a third party review to be carried out of the proposed structure. DG advised that the initial department reviews were driven by financial constraints and it is these that are being refreshed. The structures will be subject to the Job Evaluation process for costing purposes and two days have been set aside in September to enable JLT to validate these for consistency of application. External auditors will be invited to provide external assurance of this process. Sign off of critical department structures will be made by JLT. DG advised that full convergence will not be complete on the 1 April 2016; a steady state will be reached after this date.
- 5.23 **Workstream 6**
- 5.24 DJ reported that the workstream is being progressed as expected with no issues to report to Members. The immediate focus is to harmonise ICT infrastructures to support work during the transitional phase. A measured approach to software is being taken with only 3 systems being fully harmonised for 1 April 2016.
- 5.25 CD noted that there are no Members on this work stream. He was pleased that critical software was not being changed for the 1 April and asked who would be assisting in the migration process.
- 5.26 DJ advised that 3 tenders are currently being evaluated and that we would not be held down purely by the lowest, but would also consider the most experienced with a track record of delivering.
- 5.27 **Financial**
- 5.28 PC provided an overview of the financial report. He reported that the full DCLG grant will be paid and will have flexibility in terms of revenue use..

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- 5.29 SF reinforced the importance of key dates, timescales and the need to have assurance of this for the success of the combination. PC clarified that the process for workstream reporting incorporates financial status. DG provided further clarification that there are trigger points for financial spend throughout the work stream reporting.
- 5.30 RK expressed concern about what level of flexibility DCLG have provided. She asked that Members still have the assurance that the original business case objectives will be met and there is due consideration to any major change.
- 5.31 PC confirmed that the stipulation of the grant is the delivery of the safety centre and the flexibility is over revenue and capital spend.
- 5.32 TJ recognised that the transformation bid had been trimmed by DCLG and queried what part of the business case had been excluded from this. DG confirmed that there was no specific item excluded from the business case but this funding received the least amount of trimming.
- 5.33 **Risks**
- 5.34 DJ advised that there was no change since the last meeting on the programme risks. He also advised that auditors will review the risk process on the 21 May 2015.
- 5.35 GP requested that the wording for item 11 is changed in that the wording should not state 'downgrade service delivery,.
- 5.36 TJ suggested that the risk register needs to make clear the reason why a risk is there and confirmation that the register has been validated.

Action: DJ change wording of programme risk item 11

- 5.37 **Stakeholders**
- 5.38 DG provided an update on the communications which have taken place face to face with staff, partners and members across the two services.
- 5.39 RK suggested that work needs to start on how communities are engaged in discussions about changing priorities for the new service, not just combination.
- 5.40 CD requested that public communications comes from the vision work. DG advised that this will come from the Community Safety Plan consultation in late Summer.

Action: DG to send staff podcast to members.

- 5.41 **Work programme**
- 5.42 DJ provided an overview of the work programmes report structure which Members were all happy with.
- 5.43 Shouldn't we mention members agreed the recommendations of this report?

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6. Industrial Relations

- 6.1 CD invited BO to present to Members her paper on Industrial relations protocol.
- 6.2 BO advised Members that both Services are committed to the principle of collective bargaining at both national and local level and that they recognise the important role of the Representative bodies and this helps to promote and develop good employee relations.
- 6.3 BO and DG highlighted that the only difference between the two Services is that Wiltshire FRS recognise the Retained Firefighters Union (RFU) for negotiation and consultation rights, however, at present the RFU are not recognised within Dorset FRS for negotiation. A paper to recommend this will be presented at the next Dorset Fire Authority Meeting.
- 6.4 BO advised that learning from other Services, such as the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service confirmed that engaging early with representative Bodies is critical.
- 6.5 BO went on to advise that the adoption of this protocol will help to ensure that opportunities are provided for issues to be raised and considered during consultation and negotiations and advised that the correct application of this protocol should reduce any legal or financial claims against the Service.
- 6.6 CD gave Members the opportunity to highlight any concerns or ask further questions.
- 6.7 CD took Members through the recommendations of the paper and asks Members to confirm their agreement of the four recommendations made. Members confirmed approval to all 4 recommendations.

Resolved: Members approved the draft protocol to be put forward to representative bodies for consideration and agreement.

Resolved: Members agreed the levels for negotiation and consultation within the report.

Resolved: Members agreed for contact to be made with the representative bodies to formalise the joint meeting structures and invite nominations for relevant representatives for strategic level discussions.

Resolved: Members agreed for a proposal paper for representative body recognition for the new Authority to be taken to the June Shadow Board meeting.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 GPa emphasised his concern regarding the possibility of funding being taken away from Fire Cadets, highlighting that these could be our future fire-fighters. DG advised that the Fire Cadets are a key priority in Dorset and it is his intention that this will continue into the new Service.

8. Date of Next Meeting

- 8.1 CD confirmed the next meeting of the Joint Committee will take place on 4 June 2015, 1000-1230 at Salisbury City Hall.

9. Exclusion of the Public

- 9.1 CD addressed all attendees to confirm the closure of the meeting to the public; with the following statement;

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.