



MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE held on 17 November 2010 at Fire Service Headquarters, Winsford

PRESENT: Councillors G Smith (Chair), P Booher, R Fletcher, J Joyce, G Merry, R Polhill, L Redhead and J Weatherill

PART 1 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Crockatt and Councillor Topping.

B Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of Members Interests.

C Minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 1 September 2010

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on Wednesday 1 September 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION / DECISION

2 MID-YEAR REVIEW OF FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE 2010-11

The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning presented the report which provided a review of the Authority and Service's financial position and performance based on the mid-year position for 2010-11. The report also included a risk and sensitivity analysis which identified how activity levels might affect the final outturn position.

The report contained a summary of departmental financial and service delivery performance with more detailed commentary provided in Annexes two to nine of the report. Key performance indicators were reported in the table in Annex one of the report with the projected year end Direction of Travel illustrated.

Members attention was drawn to the Authority's net budget position and the possible use of the projected Service underspend to develop the ICT infrastructure as an 'invest to save' project.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the performance and financial position of the Authority and Service be noted; and**
- [2] the possible use of the Service underspend be noted.**

3 TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF NEW DIMENSIONS ASSETS

The Group Manager, Policy and Planning introduced the report which provided Members with details of the latest position regarding the Government's intention to transfer ownership of the New Dimensions Assets to Fire & Rescue Authorities and approval was sought, in principle, to the transfer of the assets and to authorise Officers to conclude a satisfactory agreement governing the transfer. This would be a matter for the Fire Authority to determine.

Details of the current position and the wider position in respect of Fire and Rescue Services was provided and the key points for consideration were highlighted. The key points identified included future maintenance of the assets particularly in light of the Government's decision to abolish FireBuy and also that the assets were now an intrinsic part of the resources used by the Service. The financial and legal implications of the decision were also noted.

RESOLVED: That:

- [1] the latest position, in particular Community and Local Government's firm intention to conclude the transfer of the ownership of New Dimensions Assets to host Fire & Rescue Authorities be noted; and**

RECOMMENDED TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY: That:

- [2] it agrees, in principle, to take ownership of those New Dimensions Assets hosted by the Service; and**
- [3] it authorises Officers to conclude a satisfactory agreement governing the transfer of the New Dimensions Assets.**

4 SUB-REGIONAL UPDATE AND LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report which provided an overview of the major developments within the sub-regional tier of Local Government. The report provided information on the proposed Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region including the Partnership's vision, structures and funding and financial implications.

The report also covered an update on the seven sub-regional Commissions and changes to the Health structures. It was noted that further updates would be provided for Members as the sub-regional developments progressed.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the contents of the report be noted; and**
- [2] Members continue to promote the role of the fire and rescue service with partners in local government.**

4 REVISED CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK 2010

The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning introduced the report which presented the revised Corporate Risk Management Framework to Members for approval. The Corporate Risk Management Framework set out the Service's approach to identifying, analysing, managing and controlling the significant risks that threaten the organisations and its business activities. The report provided details of the development of the framework and how it was applied within the Service.

Members were informed that the Risk Management session for Members would be held at the next Members Awayday on 20th January 2010. This would provide a more detailed analysis of the revised framework and would also include a presentation of the current Corporate risk register.

RESOLVED: That

the Corporate Risk Management Framework 2010 be approved for implementation at all levels of Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service.

6 SPECIFIC DUTIES CONSULTATION – EQUALITY DUTY

The Head of Communications introduced the report which provided the proposed response to the Government's consultation document 'Equality Act 2010: The Public Sector Equality Duty – Promoting Equality through Transparency'. The proposed response had been formulated via the Service's Equality Task Group which consisted of representatives from all departments across the Service. Members were asked to approve the response for submission to the Government Equalities Office. It was noted that the consultation formally closed on November 10 but the Service had been granted an extension to that deadline to enable the response to be submitted following approval by Members.

The Head of Communications also asked Members to note that the Equality & Diversity Officer would be arranging a training session for Service Management Team and Members which would provide more specific details on the new Act and the impact of its implementation on the Service.

RESOLVED: That

the Service's response to the consultation on the Equality Act 2010, as detailed in Annex 2 of the report, be approved for submission to the Government Equalities Office.

PART 2 – BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

None