



MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE held on Wednesday 7 September 2011 at Fire Service Headquarters, Winsford at 10 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors J Joyce (Chair), B Crowe, G Merry, R Polhill, L Redhead, C Thorley and J Weatherill.

PART 1 – MATTERS CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC

1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Sherlock and Topping.

B DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Members interests.

C MINUTES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2011

RESOLVED: That

the Minutes of the meeting of the Policy Committee held on 15 June 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

D NOTES OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT BOARD

RESOLVED: That

the notes of the meeting of the Risk Management Board held on 4 July 2011 be received, for information.

2 SPRINKLER POLICY

The Head of Community Fire Protection introduced the report which presented the Sprinkler Policy to Members for approval.

The paper proposed a formal policy on sprinkler systems (including mist and other automatic water suppression systems). At present the Authority did not have a formal policy on sprinklers, although there were general references to sprinklers in the IRMP, Community Fire Protection Strategy and Business Liaison Strategy and the Service was already proactively engaged in the promotion of sprinkler systems to building owners and developers.

The Head of Community Fire Protection explained that the implementation of a Sprinkler policy would ensure that there was a consistent message being promoted by Service staff, both internally and to external organisations. The adoption of a Sprinkler Policy was in line with the Government's change of emphasis where the expectation was for Fire and Rescue Services to promote sprinklers directly with the business community without more regulation.

Members discussed the content of the Policy and the work that the Service was already doing in respect of proactive promotion. The need for elected Members to support the Service's message and promote within their own Local Authorities was highlighted.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed Members that the Service was planning to carry out an exercise to demonstrate the effectiveness of sprinklers in properties in conjunction with Wulvern Housing. Members would be invited to attend the exercise which was provisionally planned to take place by the end of the year.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Sprinkler Policy be approved; and

[2] the Head of Community Fire Protection be authorised to make such minor amendments to the Sprinkler Policy as are deemed necessary without further approval from Members.

3 ADULT SAFEGUARDING – PROTECTING ADULTS AT RISK FROM ABUSE & NEGLECT

The Group Manager, Community Safety Delivery presented the paper that provided details of the policy that had been developed in respect of Protecting Adults At Risk from Abuse & Neglect (Adult Safeguarding). The Policy had been developed in line with current adult safeguarding policy and procedure in the four constituent authorities comprising the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service delivery area and had been the subject of extensive internal and external consultation. He explained that the Policy contributed to the aims and objectives of the Local Safeguarding Adults Boards of the four constituent areas and the Service was a member of all four Boards.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer commented that the Service was also taking a lead role in the development of Safeguarding policies within the North West Fire and Rescue Services.

Members welcomed the development of the policy and commended the Service on its partnership work in this area.

RESOLVED: That

[1] the Adult Safeguarding – Protecting Adults at Risk from Abuse and Neglect Policy be approved; and

- [2] the Head of Community Fire Safety be authorised to make such minor amendments to the Policy as are deemed necessary without further approval from Members.**

4 REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer introduced the report and explained that the Health and Safety Management Policy was a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He explained that the Act also required the policy to be revised as often as necessary and this report provided details of the revised Health & Safety Management Policy in line with these requirements.

The Health, Safety and Well-Being Manager presented the revised Health & Safety Management Policy for Members approval and provided more details on the changes that had been made. The revisions of the policy reflected changes in personnel, changes identified as part of continuous improvement and changes as a result of recommendations made in a number of audits of the Service's Health and Safety Management System conducted in 2009/10.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the revised Health and Safety Management Policy be approved for the Chair of the Fire Authority and the Chief Fire Officer to sign; and**
- [2] the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager be authorised to make such minor amendments to the Health and Safety Management Policy as are deemed necessary without further approval from Members.**

5 PROPOSED SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) INSTALLATION

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer introduced the report which contained a proposal for the installation of Solar Photovoltaic Panels at Fire Service HQ as one of the environmental projects that would assist the Service in meeting its carbon reduction targets.

The Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Officer presented the details of the report to Members. The report provided an overview of a proposal for the installation of a Solar Photovoltaic (PV) system at Service Headquarters. Further details were included in the Business Case which was attached as an appendix to the report. Members were also shown diagrams which illustrated the proposed installation at Fire Service HQ.

Members were asked to approve the proposal and the capital funding required for the implementation of the proposal. The cost of installation was estimated to be £150,000, although the tendering process would determine the supplier and total delivered cost of the system. There would be revenue savings

realised as the Service would benefit from a Government subsidised payment as well as a saving on electricity.

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the installation of solar photovoltaic panels at HQ and allocation of funding from the environmental reserve to meet the capitals costs be approved; and**
- [2] the transfer of the annual savings back into the environmental reserve until the capital costs have been recouped be approved.**

6 CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCE REVIEW

The Director of Finance and Corporate Planning introduced this report which presented Members with an outline of a response to the Communities and Local Government consultation paper 'Local Government Resource Review: Proposals for Business Rates Retention' for approval.

He explained that the report only provided the outline of a response as the technical papers had only just been issued when the report was published and there was considerable debate regarding some of their meaning. The Fire Finance Network would be meeting on 12 September to debate the proposal and this may result in some consensus about what issues should be emphasised in individual and collective responses from Fire Authorities.

Members were therefore asked to authorise the Chair of the Fire Authority to agree the final response with the Director of Finance and Corporate Planning on behalf of the Authority,

RESOLVED: That

- [1] the outline response detailed in the report be approved; and**
- [2] the Chair of the Fire Authority be authorised to agree the final response on behalf of the Authority.**

PART 2 – BUSINESS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PRIVATE

NONE