

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne at 10.00 hours on Thursday 11 September 2008.

Present: Councillors Carden, Freeman, Gadd, Harmer-Strange, Howson, Kemble, Kirby, Livings, Marsh, Murphy, Pidgeon, Rufus, Scott, Skilton, Sparks, Thomas and Wilson.

Councillor Marsh was welcomed as a new Fire Authority Member from the City of Brighton & Hove.

250. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 250.1 a. It was noted that all participating Members had undertaken to observe the Authority's Code of Conduct.
- b. It was noted that no Member wished to amend their written declarations of interests under Part 3 of the Code.
- c. It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, Councillor Scott declared a personal interest as his brother-in-law worked for the Fire & Rescue Service. No other Member wished to make any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest under Part 2 of the Code.

251. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 252.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Healy.

252. URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 252.1 The Chairman informed Members that Councillor Kemble, the Vice-Chairman, would be undertaking a sponsored cycle ride in aid of the Firefighters' Charity between 14 of the fire stations in East Sussex and the City of Brighton & Hove. This would start from Hove on Wednesday 17 September and finish there on Saturday 20 September, and Members were encouraged to give Councillor Kemble as much support as possible.

253. TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS, IF ANY

- 253.1 There were none.

254. MINUTES

- 254.1 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

255. **CALLOVER**

255.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

- 256. Notes of the Policy & Resources, Scrutiny & Audit and Standards Panel meetings held since the last meeting of the Fire Authority
- 257. Regional Management Board Issues including the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2008
- 258. South East Fire & Rescue Control Centre Limited
- 259. Draft 2009/10 Strategic Plan preparations
- 260. Draft 2009/10 – 2011/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan – public consultation version
- 261. Equality & Diversity Standard for Local Government
- 262. 2007/08 Performance Outcome
- 263. Progress Review of False Alarms from Automatic Fire Detection Systems 2007/08
- 264. Carbon Trust Survey of East Sussex Fire Authority Premises
- 267. Fire Authority Quarterly Report

255.2 **RESOLVED** – That all other reports be resolved in accordance with the recommendations as detailed below.

256. **NOTE OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES, SCRUTINY & AUDIT AND STANDARDS PANEL MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

256.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Clerk that set out the reports of the Chairmen and Chair of the Panels that had met since the last meeting of the Fire Authority. (Copy in Minute Book).

256.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Fire Authority:

- a) note the report; and

Scrutiny & Audit Panel (25 June 2008)

- b) determine that capital payments totalling £4.201m be financed as shown in paragraph 2.3ii of the report;

Policy & Resources Panel (4 September 2008)

- c) approve the draft public consultation version of the 2009/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan as amended (see also item 260 below);

Standards Panel (10 July 2008)

- d) approve the amendment of the constitution to record that a quorum of the Standards Panel should be at least two Members of the Fire Authority and one independent person;
- e) formally acknowledge that Members serving on the Standards Panel are not subject to the party whip in relation to any decisions of the Panel or its sub committees;

Standards Panel (4 September 2008)

- f) note Members' request that the Assessment Review Panel carry out its review within a maximum of three months of receiving the request, in line with the Standards Board for England's guidance, rather than the 20 days suggested in the appendix – this could be reviewed at a later date in line with experience.

257. **REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD ISSUES**

- 257.1 The Fire Authority considered the minutes of the meeting of the Regional Management Board (RMB) held on 9 July 2008. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 257.2 The Chairman reminded Members that they were welcome to attend meetings of the Board which took place at Surrey FRS HQ on a quarterly basis.
- 257.3 The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive informed Members that an Away Day had taken place where the Business Case for the South East was discussed. It had been confirmed that the £1.48m savings identified for the South East would come to the region, although it was not yet known how this would be distributed within the region, or how out of scope work would be financed.
- 257.4 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive had met with Ministers and Shadow Ministers who had made it clear that, even with a possible change of government, it was now unlikely that the Regional Control Centre project would be cancelled.
- 257.5 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

258. **SOUTH EAST FIRE AND RESCUE CONTROL CENTRE LIMITED**

- 258.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Vice-Chairman that informed Members of the meetings of the South East Fire & Rescue Control Centre Limited held on 20 June and 14 July 2008, a workshop held on 15 August and gave an oral update on the meeting of the company held on 5 September. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 258.2 The relationship between the SEFRCC, RMB and LGA had been considered and it had been agreed that the relationship between the RMB and LACC was that of customer and supplier. SEFRCC Ltd had considered an overview of the CLG's business case and proposals on how the RCC would meet those costs; several concerns had been discussed, particularly that the business case assumptions were unclear and based on regional rather than local information. Many of the concerns were for FRAs to take through the RMB as the LACC could only concentrate on LACC costs.
- 258.3 Members were concerned that ESFRS might not be able to send a substitute member if the Vice-Chairman was unavailable for a meeting of the SEFRCC, as they had not provided a named substitute. This was, apparently, required to enable security clearance to be obtained, but the Monitoring Officer is investigating whether this was necessary.
- 258.4 **RESOLVED** – That report be noted.

259. **DRAFT 2009/10 STRATEGIC PLAN PREPARATIONS**

259.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that advised Members of the preparations in hand for the development of the draft 2009/10 Strategic Plan. (Copy in Minute Book).

259.2 The Policy & Resources Panel and the Fire Authority would consider further reports between November 2008 and January 2009 culminating in the precept setting meeting on 5 February 2009.

259.3 **RESOLVED** – That the preparations in hand for the development of the draft 2009/10 Strategic Plan over the forthcoming months, as previously agreed by the Policy & Resources Panel on 10 July 2008, be noted.

260. **DRAFT 2009/10 – 2011/12 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) – PUBLIC CONSULTATION VERSION**

260.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that sought approval to the public consultation version of the draft 2009/10 – 2011/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan. (Copy in Minute Book).

260.2 Members were informed of the call-off contract which provides the Service with a translation and interpretation service on an 'as required' basis and Members asked that the IRMP include that the information is also available in Braille format.

260.3 **RESOLVED** – That the public consultation version of the draft 2009/10 – 2011/12 Integrated Risk Management Plan be approved.

261. **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY STANDARD FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

261.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that set out progress on preparations to achieve Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government. (Copy in Minute Book).

261.2 The Fire Authority aimed to achieve Level 3 by 31 March 2009, and a detailed action plan would be developed as the self-assessment in Levels 2 & 3 was undertaken. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) workshops were scheduled for the Autumn to ensure that EIAs were integral to the risk management process.

261.3 The Chairman thanked Councillor Scott for his support as lead Member for Equalities & Diversity and ACO Rolph and her staff were complimented on the progress they were making in this field.

261.4 **RESOLVED** – That

- i) the progress made against the Standard and, in particular, against key areas for improvement, be noted; and
- ii) the revised terms of reference for the Equality & Fairness Steering Group be noted.

262. **2007/08 PERFORMANCE OUTCOME REPORT**

- 262.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that presented the 2007/08 Performance results. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 262.2 The report highlighted the overall performance improvement and demonstrated that the Fire Authority was continuing to build upon achievements made in previous years.
- 262.3 **RESOLVED** – That the 2007/08 performance results be noted.

263. **PROGRESS REVIEW OF FALSE ALARMS FROM AUTOMATIC FIRE DETECTION SYSTEMS 2007/08**

- 263.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that set out details of the annual 2007/08 performance results for false alarm calls from automatic fire detection (AFD) systems. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 263.2 It was noted that Table 3 of the report should have been for 2007/08 and not 2006/07 as shown.
- 263.3 In overall terms, the number of calls from AFDs had increased, and the level of unwanted signals from AFDs placed a significant burden on the service. One of the proposals within the 2009/10 to 2011/12 IRMP was to review the speed of attendances to calls, including those from AFDs which had not been corroborated by a confirmed report of fire.
- 263.4 Members also considered lobbying the government, via the LGA, to change legislation to enable FRAs to charge for attendance at false alarm calls from AFDs.
- 263.5 **RESOLVED** – That the following be noted:
- i) annual 2007/08 statistics for false alarm calls; and
 - ii) actions being taken to reduce the incidence of unwanted calls both within ESFRS and nationally.

264. **CARBON TRUST SURVEY OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY PREMISES**

- 264.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that set out the outcomes of a survey undertaken by the Carbon Trust into the energy consumption on ESFA properties. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 264.2 The survey had been carried out to ascertain the Authority's carbon footprint and to assess the potential for future financial savings on energy. It had identified that savings had been made since the earlier survey carried out in 2004, but that additional savings could be made with further investment. The Property Strategy Group was developing an action plan and further savings would be brought forward via the Policy & Resources Panel.

264.3 It was noted that it was a legal requirement to have display energy certificates in place by next year.

264.4 **RESOLVED** – That

- i) the Assessment of Energy Savings Opportunities Report ('The Report) compiled by the Carbon Trust, be noted;
- ii) it be noted that an Internal Action Plan will be developed based on the Report with regular monitoring reports to be provided to the Scrutiny & Audit Panel; and
- iii) the principle of investment to deliver savings in energy usage and costs over the medium to long term, be approved.

265. **MEMBERS' SEMINAR 11 JULY 2008**

265.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that informed Members of the details of the Seminar held on 11 July 2008 and sought their approval of dates for future Members' Seminars. (Copy in Minute Book).

265.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report and dates of future Members' Seminars be noted: Fridays 24 October 2008, 13 March 2009, 10 July 2009 and 23 October 2009.

266. **PROGRESS UPDATE ON CURRENT FIRE AUTHORITY BUSINESS ISSUES**

266.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that gave an update on business issues impacting upon the fire service generally and also those relating to the Authority specifically. (Copy in Minute Book).

266.2 Notably, Members were advised of the following appointments:
Shona Dunn as Director of Fire and Resilience
Peter John Field Esq DL as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for East Sussex
Max Hood as County Fire Officer with West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service

266.3 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

267. **FIRE AUTHORITY QUARTERLY REPORT (APRIL TO JUNE 2008)**

267.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive that considered the quarterly results for the period April to June 2008. (Copy in Minute Book).

267.2 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive drew Members' attention to the appointment of nine RDS staff and to the wide variety of work being undertaken in community safety – Councillor Carden had secured £100 from Brighton, Hove & Worthing Football Association for the Coaching in the Community project.

267.3 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

268. **FIRE AUTHORITY AND PANEL MEETINGS**

268.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Clerk to the Fire Authority setting out dates for future meetings of the Authority and its Panels. It was noted that it was still not known whether local elections would be held on 4 June 2009 and, therefore, whether the Fire Authority could meet on that day.

268.2 **RESOLVED** – That the following dates be approved:

- 1) Fire Authority meetings be held on the following Thursdays, at 10.30 hours (unless otherwise stated) at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastbourne:

11 December 2008

15 January 2009 – special meeting to consider IRMP

05 February 2009

04 June 2009 – to be confirmed once election date known

10 September 2009

- 2) Panel meetings be held on the following Thursdays at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastbourne:

25 September 2008 Scrutiny & Audit

21 November 2008 Scrutiny & Audit, Policy & Resources, Standards
(Friday)

9 January 2009 Scrutiny & Audit, Policy & Resources and Standards

21 May 2008 Scrutiny & Audit, Policy & Resources and Standards

25 June 2009 Scrutiny & Audit Panel

09 July 2009 Policy & Resources and Standards Panels

03 September 2009 Policy & Resources and Standards Panels

24 September 2009 Scrutiny & Audit Panel

Commencement times for these Panels, to be notified in advance of the meetings, are generally likely to be: Scrutiny & Audit 10.00 hours; Policy & Resources 11.00 hours; and Standards 14.00 hours. Members to note there may be some delay in start times if earlier meetings over-run.

269. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

269.1 **RESOLVED** – That items 270 and 271 be exempt under paragraphs 1, 3 and 4, that item 272 be exempt under paragraph 1, 4 and 7, and that item 273 be exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 and accordingly are not open for public inspection on the grounds that they include information relating to any individual; information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information); information relating to any consultations or negotiations or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations

matter arising between the Authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the Authority; and information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

The meeting concluded at 13.23 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this day of

2008.