

At a meeting of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastleigh on 1 February 2017.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

p	John Bennison	p	Fiona Mather
p	Graham Burgess (Vice Chairman)	p	Sharon Mintoff
p	Chris Carter	p	Roger Price
a	David Fuller	p	David Simpson
p	Geoff Hockley	p	Luke Stubbs (Chairman)

The Chairman announced that the press and members of the public were permitted to film and broadcast the meeting. Those remaining at the meeting were consenting to being filmed and recorded, and to the possible use of those images and recordings for broadcasting purposes.

178 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from David Fuller.

179 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Members were mindful of their duty to disclose at the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interest they had in any matter on the agenda for the meeting, where that interest was not already entered in the Authority's register of interests, and their ability to disclose any other personal interests in any such matter that they might have wished to disclose.

There were no declarations of interest received for the meeting.

180 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes from the meeting on the 1 November 2016 were agreed to be correct and signed by the Chairman.

181 DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations received for the meeting.

182 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

183 REVISED 2016/17 BUDGET AND DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

The Committee considered a report from the Treasurer and Chief Officer (Item 6 in the Minute Book) which presented Members with an update as to the budget

and a draft budget for 2017/18.

It was confirmed that there was an anticipated underspend of £1.8 million in the current year, which was going to be added to the Transformation Reserve. This was mainly due to staff savings, and vacancies were still being held and temporarily back-filled, which would enable future planned reductions in staffing, which are part of the Service Delivery Redesign, to be achieved without the need to resort to making redundancies. The levy for Apprentices was a standard amount and the project regarding Apprentices was currently being looked into, along with the most effective use for levy.

For the 2017/18 budget it was outlined that the previous expected deficit of £909,000 was now expected to be a surplus of £2.117million as set out in paragraph 5.2.

Appendix C showed a reduction in reserves from £40 million to £10 million up to 2020. It was confirmed that the general balance would need to maintain at a particular level which was proportional to and appropriate for the size of the business. Consequently, it was unlikely that this would fall any lower than the amount stated under that column.

RESOLVED:

The Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- a) Noted the latest 2016/17 budget position (Appendix A) and the changes to the capital programme (Appendix D).
- b) Approved the proposal to transfer the 2016/17 year end underspend and the 2017/18 budget surplus to the transformation reserve.
- c) Approved the proposed Phase 3 efficiencies programme (Appendix B).
- d) Approved the proposed use of reserves (Appendix C).
- e) Approved the use of £0.838m of Transformation Reserve funding for the ICT Transformation Programme as detailed in section 7.3 of this report.
- f) Approved the transfer of ICT savings to a specific reserve to provide for future replacement requirements, as explained in section 7.4 of this report.
- g) Adopted the principles for allocating funding sources for the capital programme as outlined in section 8 of this report.
- h) Delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Chief Officer to make amendments to the final budget to be presented to the Authority to take account of late changes in the figures, in particular those notified by Government and Local Councils.
- i) **RECOMMEND** to the Authority that council tax is increased by 1.98%

(equivalent to £1.24 for average Band D households) for 2017/18.

- j) **RECOMMEND** to the Authority the draft budget for 2017/18 (summarised at Appendix F).
- k) **RECOMMEND** to the Authority the updates to the capital programme and the proposed financing of it (Appendix G & H).
- l) **RECOMMEND** to the Authority the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix I) and approve that the:
 - Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2017/18, (and the remainder of 2016/17) including:
 - Prudential Indicators for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 – Annex C
 - Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement – Annex D
 - That authority is delegated to the Treasurer to manage the Fire & Rescue Authority's investments according to the risk assessment process in the Investment Strategy as appropriate.

184 AN UPDATE ON THE AUTHORITY RISK PROTECTION AND INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee received a report from the Chief Officer (Item 7 in the Minute Book) which provided an update on the arrangements for providing risk protection and insurance cover to the Authority which have been in place since November.

It was explained that the Authority was in a consortium with eight other Fire Authorities, who all paid contributions and worked collaboratively to cover risks. It was proving to be a great opportunity to share best practice and going forward there were plans for premiums to be proportionate to the claims of each Authority. Paragraph 6.3.1 in the report detailed the ambition for claims to be reduced through the use of CCTV in cases where the Authority were not liable.

RESOLVED:

The Finance and General Purposes Committee noted the contents of the report and supported the approach taken by the Service to deliver further improvements to reduce risk and drive claims down in order to help reduce costs.

185 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) FUNDING

The Committee received a report from the Chief Officer (Item 8 in the Minute Book) which looked at Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the Service going forward. A layered approach had been proposed, which meant that officers were able to have a range of PPE available depending on what

they required at the time. This would mean that they always had the best available kit to utilise and that the higher value items were not worn more than necessary, prolonging their life. Various options had been considered, with Option 2 being put forward as the most cost effective, as well as offering immediate operational benefits.

There was a collaborative procurement exercise in progress that the Service had belatedly become involved with. Whilst it was acknowledged that the kit was currently being tested by 22 other Authorities and not Hampshire, it was accepted that the testing being done was more extensive than what could have been done in house. Unions had been consulted as a part of this collaborative procurement exercise which was being led by Kent FRS and were content with the approach. It was concluded that the testing done would be reliable. The full range of PPE would be kept in responding emergency vehicles to ensure that officers always had the right clothing and equipment to hand. It was clarified that the Service maintained an emergency stock which would always be available should extra PPE be needed.

RESOLVED:

The Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- a) **RECOMMEND** that Full Authority approve £1.71 million (Option 2) from the Service Transformation Review for the purchase of firefighting PPE.
- b) **RECOMMEND** that Full Authority approve to allocate the revenue budget surplus for the remaining years of the product life to be transferred to a specific reserve to fund the next PPE replacement in 10 years time.
- c) Noted the options for the route to market.

186 FIRE AS A HEALTH ASSET

The Committee received a report from the Chief Officer (Item 9 in the Minute Book) regarding the Fire as a Health Asset project.

This was a project which had benefited from £1.4 million of national funding. The name and concept had been adopted more widely and was now being used nationally. The aspects of the initiative included increasing the medical response capability, working closer with young people and a focus on falls response. This last aspect results in people being assisted sooner should they have a fall but were not injured which provided significant knock on benefits to both the individual and the wider public service agencies who may otherwise be required. The training had been completed and this project was being rolled out. It was confirmed that all front-line staff were now trained in Immediate Emergency Medical (IEC) techniques and vehicles were equipped to respond to

medical emergencies if required.

The officers were thanked for their work on such a successful project, which had been well received.

RESOLVED:

The Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- a) Supported the direction to move the Fire as a Health Asset work-stream from Service Delivery Redesign implementation to a fully integrated way into the organisation.
- b) Agreed to fund the work over a two year period to a sum of £522,227 capital support from the Service Transformation Fund, which will be used on a planned tapered approach to deliver the prevention courses/products and to continue the Medical Response transformation work into business as usual.
- c) Noted that the anticipated net draw from the transformation reserve over the two year period could be as low as £146,000 based on current income predictions from delivery the work.

187 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

The public were excluded from the meeting during the following item of business, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would have been disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

188 EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes from the meeting on the 1 November 2016 were agreed to be correct and signed by the Chairman.