

## **EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

**Minutes of the meeting of the POLICY & RESOURCES PANEL held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, at 10.00 hours on Thursday 13 November 2014.**

**Members Present: Councillors Barnes, Hawtree, Howson (Chairman), Lambert, Powell, Pragnell, Scott and Theobald.**

### **Also present:**

Mr. D. Prichard (Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Mr. G. Walsh (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Mrs. C. Rolph (Assistant Chief Officer – People & Organisational Development), Mr. D. Savage (Treasurer), Mr. W. Tricker (Head of Finance & Procurement), Mr. J. Salmon (Head of Estates), Miss L. Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Mrs. K. Ward (Clerk).

### **958. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

958.1 It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, no participating Member had any disclosable pecuniary interest under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.

### **959. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

959.1 There were no apologies for absence.

### **960. ANY OTHER NON-EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN/CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

960.1 There were no urgent items for consideration.

### **961. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES PANEL MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2014**

961.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (Copy in Minute Book).

### **962. CALLOVER**

962.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

963. 2014/15 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring

964. 2014/15 Treasury Management – Half Year Report

### **963. 2014/15 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING**

963.1 Members considered a joint report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Treasurer that reported on issues arising from the monitoring of the 2014/15 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme as at 30 September 2014. (Copy in Minute Book).

- 963.2 The Revenue Budget outturn for 2014/15 was projected to be £129,000 overspent. The Head of IMD was in the process of reviewing the IMD budget for which the current overspend forecast was £126,000. This was due to the replacement of the Wide Area Network (WAN) which would cause budgetary pressure during 2014/15 due to one off implementation costs, but would deliver significant savings in future years and provide support for the legacy mobilising system.
- 963.3 Members were informed that the additional cost incurred as a result of industrial action in 2014/15 currently stood at £121,000. The gross additional cost to the Authority did not include deductions from pay which totalled £119,000 and were part of the Operations budget. The total net cost to the Authority of the current dispute stood at £59,000 with £220,000 total additional costs off-set in part by deductions of £161,000.
- 963.4 Members were advised that the Capital Programme was subject to a variation for the Newhaven scheme. Project partners Lewes District Council and Sussex Police had agreed to contribute and a joint bid with Lewes District Council had been submitted to the 2015/16 Local Government Transformational Challenge Award. If successful, the grant would result in a grant receipt to the Authority of £663,000. A decision on the bid was hoped for around December 2014.
- 963.5 It was recommended to Members that a revised Newhaven scheme with a total gross cost be approved. It was expected that, after partner contributions of £1,002,000, the net cost to the Authority would be £2,558,000 which was a reduction of £512,000 on the original scheme total of £3,070,000.
- 963.6 **RESOLVED** – that the Panel:
- i. note the projected 2014/15 Revenue Budget outturn;
  - ii. note the projected 2014/15 Capital Budget outturn;
  - iii. note the projected use of Reserves and the creation of an earmarked reserve for sprinklers;
  - iv. note the monitoring of savings taken in 2014/15;
  - v. note that borrowing and investment activity are in line with the Treasury Management Strategy; and
  - vi. approve the variation to the Capital Programme for the revised Newhaven scheme.

964. **2014/15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT – HALF YEAR REPORT**

- 964.1 Members considered a report of the Treasurer on the half yearly report which is a requirement of the Fire Authority's reporting procedures and covers the treasury activity for the first six months of 2014/15. The report included an update on the first half year of Prudential Indicators which related to treasury activity. (Copy in Minute Book).

964.2 Councillor Barnes noted the current financial climate and approved of the prudent approach taken to date which had helped the Authority through the recent difficulties experienced by the public sector. Councillor Barnes suggested that the Authority should be asking questions about whether it was appropriate to look at capital need again and review the current policy to allow officers to look at a range of alternative options that may be available.

964.3 The Treasurer advised that work was currently being undertaken on the Capital Strategy. It was noted the reviews due to be carried out in phase 3 of the Service Prioritisation work would have an impact and, therefore, there was some uncertainty with regard to capital provision for the future. It was suggested that the Service needed to get smarter with regard to bidding for grants and in the following months may need to consider alternative, sustainable options for funding.

964.4 **RESOLVED** – That the treasury management performance for the first half year of 2014/15 be noted.

965. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

965.1 **RESOLVED** – That items 966 and 967 be exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to 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 the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

The meeting concluded at 11.40 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this Day of

2014