



EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

URGENCY PANEL

FRIDAY 14 JUNE 2013 at 10:15 HOURS

MEMBERS:

East Sussex County Council

Councillors Butler, Scott and Taylor.

Brighton and Hove Council

Councillor Peltzer Dunn, Rufus and Theobald.

You are requested to attend this meeting to be held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, at 10:15 hours in the Main Conference Room.

AGENDA

1. In relation to matters on the agenda, seek declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011.
2. Election of Chairman.
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Notification of items which the Chairman considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the end of the agenda/Chairman's business items.

(Any Members wishing to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chairman before the start of the meeting. In so doing they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently).

5. To consider any public questions.
6. To receive any petitions.

7. Non-confidential Minutes of last Urgency Panel meeting held on 15 March 2012 (copy attached).

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider whether, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that, if the public and press were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information. **NOTE:** Any item appearing in the confidential part of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public. A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne, and at Brighton and Hove Town Halls and County Hall, Lewes.

9. Confidential Minutes of last Urgency Panel meeting on 15 March 2012 (copy attached). (Exempt categories under paragraph 1 and 3 of the Local Government Act 1972).
10. Sussex Control Centre – confidential joint report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and Treasurer (copy attached). (Exempt category under paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972).

ABRAHAM GHEBRE-GHIORGHIS
Monitoring Officer
East Sussex Fire Authority
c/o Brighton & Hove City Council

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority URGENCY PANEL held at Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Eastbourne on Thursday 15 March 2012 at 11.30 hours.

Members present: Councillors Kenward, Livings, Rufus, Scott and Sparks.

Officers present: Mr. G. Walsh (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Mr. G. Ferrand (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Mrs. C. Rolph (Assistant Chief Officer, People & Organisational Development), Ms. L. Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer), and Mrs. S. Klein (Clerk to the Fire Authority).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 1.1 (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 declaration 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 works for the Fire & Rescue Service. It was noted that no other Member wished to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interests under Part 2 of the Code.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 2.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Waite.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

- 3.1 The Chairman agreed that the Deputy Chief Fire Officer could update Members of the Panel on Maritime Incident Response Group issues under the open part of the meeting. (See Minute No. 6 below).

4. TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS, IF ANY

- 4.1 There were none.

5. NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE LAST URGENCY PANEL MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2011

- 5.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Urgency Panel held on 1 July 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (Copy in minute book).

6. **MARITIME INCIDENT RESPONSE GROUP (MIRG) UPDATE**

- 6.1 The Deputy Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the future of the MIRG, now known as the Fire & Rescue Marine Response (FRMR) following the removal of government funding.
- 6.2 At their meeting in November 2011, members of the Policy & Resources Panel had considered the operational case for continuing to provide an off-shore response with the support of other Fire & Rescue Services. As a result of their approval, £150k had been allocated to Balances to enable the continued provision of this response, pending the outcome of consultations nationally.
- 6.3 DCFO Walsh informed Members that an Agreement with the Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) had been signed in February 2012 until 31 March 2012; however, no clear picture had emerged yet as to which Authorities might un-declare their commitment. Members were, therefore, asked to agree that the decision to declare or un-declare this asset, depending on what those other Authorities might do and in consideration of the risk to ESFRS and its personnel, should be taken by the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive.
- 6.4 Councillor Sparks confirmed that he was happy that the decision to declare or un-declare commitment be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive. He asked what would happen if there was a fire at sea, and DCFO Walsh explained that it was proposed by the Department of Transport that an initial Assessment Team would be sent to the vessel to decide how to respond. If the vessel was then towed into port it would become the responsibility of the local Fire & Rescue Service to respond to the fire. Councillor Scott asked for more details on the Assessment Team and DCFO Walsh explained that there was no clarity yet from the MCA on these arrangements.
- 6.5 Councillor Rufus agreed that the decision could be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive and was concerned that, if fewer FRAs declared their commitment, there would be more risk to the firefighters in the port if the fire was unchecked whilst the vessel was at sea. DCFO Walsh was in discussions with neighbouring FRAs about operational issues and the risks to passengers and crews as well as firefighters.
- 6.6 DCFO Walsh informed Members of the international regulations regarding firefighting aboard ships and training of the ships' crews and the representations made to the Select Committee through the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) about the level of training and competence of ships' firefighting crews. Members also noted that ships could refuse assistance from the Fire & Rescue Service. Councillor Livings reported that the Fire Minister had stated that there was no support from the shipping industry for a MIRG and asked about support from neighbouring authorities' boats, such as the Sea Fisheries; DCFO Walsh explained that not all FRAs utilised this provision in their local area.

7. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

- 7.1 **RESOLVED** – That items 8 and 9 be exempt under paragraphs 1 and 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 any individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The meeting finished at 12:15 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

2012