

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 10.30 hours on Thursday 12 September 2013.

Present: Councillors Barnes, Buchanan, Butler, Carden, Earl, Galley, Hawtree, Howson (Chairman), Lambert, Peltzer Dunn, Powell, Rufus, Sheppard, Taylor, Theobald and Wincott.

Also present:

Mr. D. Prichard (Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive), Mr. G. Walsh (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Mr. G. Ferrand (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Mr. D. Savage (Treasurer), Miss. L. Woodley (Deputy Monitoring Officer), Mr. R. Charman (Director of Financial Services) and Mrs. K. Ward (Clerk).

733. **DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

733.1 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.

734. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

734.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pragnell and Scott.

735. **URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

735.1 The Chairman welcomed Beryl Healy, Carolyn Heaps, Martin Kenward, Pat Ost, Paul Sparks and Sylvia Tidy. The Chairman thanked them for their hard work and commitment during their term and presented them with rose bowls as a token of the Fire Authority's appreciation.

735.2 Councillor Powell and Councillor Sheppard informed Members that on 8 September 2013 they had attended a Firefighters' Memorial Service in London to mark the Annual Firefighters' Day of Remembrance, followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the National Firefighters' Memorial.

735.3 The Chairman was pleased to announce that, in its commitment to reducing the impact of fire on people, property and the environment, he would be formally signing a Fire Sprinkler Position Statement on behalf of East Sussex Fire Authority.

735.4 Members strongly supported the benefits of sprinklers and were committed to installing sprinklers in all new Fire Authority premises built or re-furbished in the future. This also included working in close collaboration with local housing and planning authorities in order to influence building, planning, design and development, at every stage so that the benefits of automatic suppression can be considered before the design and costing decisions are so far advanced that it is too late to include sprinklers.

736. **TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS, IF ANY**

736.1 There were none.

737. **TO ACCEPT PETITIONS, IF ANY**

737.1 There were none.

738. **NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2013**

738.1 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 be approved and signed by the Chairman. (Copy in Minute Book).

739. **CALLOVER**

739.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:

740. 2012/13 Performance Outcome Report

741. Review of Members' Allowance Scheme

742. Quarterly Report (April to June 2013)

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

740. **2012/13 PERFORMANCE OUTCOME REPORT**

740.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive which presented the 2012/13 Performance Outcome Report. (Copy in Minute Book).

740.2 The report highlighted the Service's overall performance improvement and demonstrated the Fire Authority was continuing to build upon achievements made in previous years.

740.3 Members were advised the report was an overview of the work undertaken. It would not be possible for the report to include every aspect of work being undertaken by the Service however, if Members required specific information or clarification on points highlighted within the report, Officers could provide this upon request.

740.4 Members discussed the importance of educating the public and the impact the services offered by the Prevention and Protection Directorate has on the incidence of fire.

740.5 The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised Members that education was a vital part of the work of this Service and the steady decline in the number of call outs was a testament to the wide range of activities undertaken. Members were informed of a study carried out by Sussex University into the effectiveness of the LIFE course run by East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, the results of which indicated an 80% success rate.

740.6 **RESOLVED** – That the Fire Authority note the 2012/13 performance results.

741. **REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME**

- 741.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Clerk to the Fire Authority which advised the Fire Authority of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Advisory Group following its review of the Members' Allowance Scheme. (Copy in Minute Book).
- 741.2 Councillor Wincott wished to express his dissatisfaction with the current Allowance Schemes at Brighton & Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council and East Sussex Fire Authority and the inability of Members with caring responsibilities to be able claim a carer's allowance. He urged the Chairman to speak to his counterparts in order to recompense him for future child care costs.
- 741.3 **RESOLVED** – That the Fire Authority approve the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Advisory Group (IRAG) set out below:
- i. the Members' Allowance Scheme should remain unaltered except for any minor consequential amendments;
 - ii. the reviewed Members' Allowance Scheme should be implemented with effect from 1 April 2014 for the years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18;
 - iii. the Co-optees' allowance should be removed from the Scheme, but if the Authority decides to appoint Co-optee(s), IRAG should consider the amount of any entitlement at that time;
 - iv. the special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the Chairmen of all Panels should remain unaltered unless the work of any Panel is subject to significant change, at which point such SRAs should be the subject of review by IRAG;
 - v. travel allowances should remain consistent with the limits set by HM Revenue & Customs for approved mileage allowance rates;
 - vi. the rates at which subsistence allowances are paid should remain unchanged;
 - vii. the arrangements for the updating of Members' Allowances, travel and subsistence set out at Section 10 of, and Schedule 3 to, the current Members' Allowance Scheme should be amended to refer to the periods commencing 1 April 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, but otherwise remain unaltered; and
 - viii. IRAG should be recalled to consider the appropriateness of revising the Members' Allowance Scheme should there be any significant constitutional changes to the structure of the Authority or its governance arrangements.

742. **QUARTERLY REPORT FOR APRIL TO JUNE 2013**

- 742.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive which provided the quarterly results for the period 1 April to 30 June 2013. (Copy in Minute Book).

742.2 Councillor Lambert was pleased to note the reduction in the number of calls but was concerned that almost 50% of calls received were false alarm calls. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive informed Members that a call challenge process had been introduced which had reduced the numbers but many of the calls come from call monitoring centres which are not on the site of the alarm being sounded. A previous decision of the Fire Authority had reduced the response to Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) calls sending one appliance as opposed to two. The Fire Authority could review this position and amend the response currently made. The Chief Fire Officer & Chief Executive advised that the Chief Fire Officers Association were considering advice on response options to AFA's and the Fire Sector Federation had also commented on the response arrangements Fire Authorities were making to a AFA calls.

742.3 **RESOLVED** – That the Fire Authority note the report.

743. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

743.1 **RESOLVED** – That the following items be exempt under the paragraphs indicated 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 the financial or business affairs of any particular person and 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:

744. Paragraph 3

745. Paragraph 4

746. Paragraphs 3 and 4

The meeting concluded at 14.10 hours.

Signed

Chairman

Dated this day of

2013.