

**MINUTES of a MEETING of the WILTSHIRE & SWINDON FIRE AUTHORITY  
held at the WILTSHIRE FRS TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, DEVIZES  
on MONDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2011**

**Present :** Cllr Brigadier Robert Hall (Chairman), Cllr Mike Bawden, Cllr Peter Davis,  
Cllr Mrs Mollie Groom, Cllr Howard Marshall, Cllr Derique Montaut,  
Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Mrs Bridget Wayman, Cllr David Wren.

**7 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Devine, Martin, Newbury and Payne.

**8 Members' Interests**

The Chairman reminded members of the need to declare any personal or prejudicial interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

Councillors Wren and Cllr Marshall each declared a personal interest in the business discussed under minute no's. 15 and 21 by reason of their positions as Director and Alternate Director respectively of South West Fire Control Limited. The Clerk to the Authority also declared an interest in the same item of business because of his position as Company Secretary of the Company.

**9 Chairman's Announcements**

Members noted the retirement of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive Andy Gove, which was due to take place on the 31st March. The Chairman outlined Mr Goves' distinguished career and achievements since joining Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service. Members and Leaders of the Political Groups joined the Chairman in placing on record the thanks and appreciation of the Fire Authority and wished Mr Goves well in his retirement.

The Chairman congratulated officers on the successful completion of the new Service Workshops. He referred to members' attendance at the official opening on the 15th February and said how impressed they had been with this excellent example of improvement in operational service, particularly as it would give the opportunity of collaborative working with partners in the future.

The Chairman advised members that the Fire Minister had written in very complimentary terms to the Chief Fire Officer regarding the response submitted to the Fire Futures Review by the Authority.

Members were advised that the Authority's representatives at the LGA Annual Fire Conference in March would be Cllr Brigadier Robert Hall, Cllr Christopher Newbury (who would also be attending as part of his role on the LGA) and the Chief Fire Officer.

**10 Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from the public.

**11 Programme & Scrutiny Board**

A report of the meeting of the Programme & Scrutiny Board held on 20 January 2011 was received.

**12 Finance Review & Audit Committee**

The minutes of a meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2011 were received.

**13 Medium Term Financial Plan**

On considering a paper by the Finance Director,

Resolved:

- (a) *To approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2011/12 to 2014/15.*
- (b) *To invite the Lead and Deputy Lead Members for the Finance and Resources Workstream to meetings of the Programme and Scrutiny Board whenever the financial strategy for the future is being discussed.*

**14 Protection, Prevention and Intervention**

A short visual presentation was made.

**15 Cancellation of FireControl Project**

On considering a paper by the Chief Fire Officer,

Resolved:

- (a) *To note the Fire Minister's decision to terminate the Regional Control Centre project and to place on record that, in the light of the termination of the project, this Authority does not wish to pursue any potential interest in the use of the RCC premises at Taunton.*
- (b) *To note the issue by the CLG of a consultation paper on the future of fire controls.*
- (c) *To agree that a response to the consultation paper and an urgent review of the Service's mobilising and communications systems takes place within the existing governance arrangements as a matter of priority and that officers be asked to present a report to a special meeting of the Programme and Scrutiny Board [subsequently fixed for 1 April 2011].*
- (d) *To authorise the Clerk to give formal notice withdrawing the Fire Authority's earlier notice of termination of the Authority's participation in the Emergency Communications Centre.*

**16 Fire Futures**

On considering a paper by the Chief Fire Officer,

Resolved:

*To note the report .*

**17 Localism Bill**

On considering a paper by the Clerk to the Authority and Chief Fire Officer,

Resolved:

*To note the report and to agree that representations be made to the Local Government Association and to Local Members of Parliament in support of the Chief*

*Fire Officers' Association's lobbying of an amendment to the Bill to ensure Fire and Rescue Authorities are included in the general power of competence.*

**18 External Support Services**

On considering a paper by the Clerk,

Resolved:

- a) *To note the position set out in the paper with regard to the procurement of payroll services and to extend the current arrangements until such time as a new contract is entered into.*
- b) *To delegate to the Finance Director the power to enter into arrangements for pensions administration with such provider and on such terms as he considers best meets the Authority's needs and best offers value for money.*
- c) *To extend the current arrangements for the procurement of legal advice for one year with effect from 1 April 2011.*

**19 Terms of Office of Independent Members of the Standards Committee**

On considering a paper by the Clerk to the Authority,

Resolved:

- a) *To extend the terms of office of Mr D Barker and Mr D Inight as lay members of the Standards Committee until the date on which the current statutory standards regime is abolished in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Bill when enacted.*
- b) *To extend the term of office of Mr D Barker as Chairman of the Standards Committee until the date on which his extended term of office as a lay member of the Committee expires or until he ceases to be a member of the Committee, whichever is the earlier.*

**20 Pool of Members for Appeals**

On receiving a verbal report by the Clerk to the Authority,

Resolved:

*That Cllr Derique Montaut be appointed to the pool of members eligible to serve on an Appeal Committee in place of Cllr Devine*

**21 South West Fire Control Limited**

The summary of the discussions and decisions of the Board of Directors held on 19 January 2011 was received.

**22 Date of Next Meeting**

On a verbal report by the Chairman,

Resolved:

*To change the date of the next meeting of the Authority to Wednesday 25th May 2011 (in place of 26th May)*

**23 Exclusion of the Public**

Resolved:

*In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the public from the business specified in minute no's.24, 25 and 26 below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.*

**24 Renewal of Insurances**

On considering a paper by the Chief Fire Officer,

Resolved:

*To approve the placement of insurance cover, as outlined in Appendix A of the paper presented, for an initial period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years thereafter.*

**25 Premises**

On considering a paper by the Chief Fire Officer on discussions at officer level on various matters to do with the Authority's premises,

Resolved:

*To note the report.*

**26 Retirement of Chief Fire Officer and Arrangements for a Successor**

On considering a paper by the Authority's Personnel Advisor and Clerk,

Resolved:

- a) *Formally to note the Chief Fire Officer's intention to retire on 31 March 2011 and to place on record the Authority's appreciation of his service.*
- b) *To appoint an ad-hoc panel to be known as the Appointments Panel comprising the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Group Leaders and Cllr Davis as Lead Member for the HR Learning & Development Workstream.*
- c) *To delegate to the Panel the power to make a temporary appointment to the post of Chief Fire Officer w.e.f. 1 April 2011 having regard to the advice of the Personnel Advisor on due process and on the length of the period of appointment.*
- d) *To ask the Panel as a matter of urgency to consider options for the structure of the Service in the light of the post of Chief Fire Officer becoming vacant, and to ask the Panel as part of its deliberations to consult with members of the Authority.*

- e) *In the event that the Panel's conclusion is to proceed with the appointment of a Chief Fire Officer on the same permanent basis as hitherto, to delegate to the Panel the power:*
- *to approve an advertisement and the arrangements for advertising,*
  - *to agree a shortlist of candidates,*
  - *to interview the shortlisted candidates,*
  - *to make an appointment, and*
  - *to take such other ancillary actions and decisions as may be appropriate.*

(Duration of meeting 10.40 a.m. to 12.20 p.m.)