

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
MINUTES
25TH MARCH 2010

PRESENT: Councillors: Jack Colbert (Alternate Chair) and Denise Roberts

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Lesley Rennie and Betty Lowe M.B.E
Independent Member Linda Phillips

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors Jimmy Kendrick (Chair), Steve Niblock, Sharon Sullivan and Martyn Barber

At the start of the meeting, the Chair informed Members of Councillor Sharon Sullivan's recent bereavement and passed on condolences to her and her family at this difficult time.

The Chair of the Committee also commended the crews in attendance at a recent serious domestic fire within Crosby.

Members welcomed Robin Baker and Paul Basnett from the Audit Commission, who were in attendance to present Item 9 on the Agenda – Audit Commission Plans. Members agreed to consider this Item as the first on the Agenda to enable Robin Baker to attend another appointment.

1. Preliminary Matters

- (A) There were no declarations of interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda.
- (B) There were no additional items of business which the Chair deemed should be considered as a matter of urgency.
- (C) There were no items of business which required the exclusion of the press and public because of the disclosure of exempt or confidential information

9. **Audit Commission Plans:**
Use Of Resources
Audit Opinion

Members were presented with the Audit Commission Plans by Robin Baker from the Audit Commission, concerning Use Of Resources and Audit Opinion.

Members noted the content of the plans.

2. **Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 19th November 2009 were approved as a true record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

3. **Complaints**
(Verbal Update)

Members were provided with a verbal update by Philomena Dwyer – Professional Standards Manager, concerning an overview of the Complaints and Compliments Procedure.

Members resolved that:

- (a) the Professional Standards Manager be copied into correspondence sent personally by Members, to staff, in recognition of good work to enable the compliments to be included within the compliments statistics for the Service.
- (b) any compliments conveyed to Members from the public, regarding the good work of the Service or individual employees, be forwarded onto the Professional Standards Manager for the reasons outlined above.
- (c) a further presentation be delivered to a future meeting regarding the internal complaints procedure.

4. **MF&RS Equality Scheme 2010-13**
(CFO/041/10)

Members were provided with a presentation by Jayne Monkhouse – Strategic Equality Advisor, concerning the scrutiny and implementation of the MF&RS Equality Scheme 2010-13.

Members then considered Report CFO/041/10 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

Members resolved that:

- (a) a consultation process commence around the Equality Scheme 2010-13
- (b) comments from Elected Members are to be included within the foreword to the document.
- (c) their thanks be conveyed to all staff involved for their great work.

5. **3rd Quarter Service Plan Review 2009/10**
(CFO/053/10)

Members were provided with an update presentation by Jan Finneran – Planning Officer.

Members proceeded to consider Report CFO/053/10 of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, concerning the 3rd Quarter Service Plan Review 2009/10 and approved it for publication within Public Folders.

6. **International Financial Reporting Standards**
(CFO/050/10)

Members considered Report CFO/050/10 of the Executive Director Of Resources, concerning the implications of the pending introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Members resolved that:

- (a) they note the implications for the Authority.
- (b) they be provided with a copy of the guidance paper produced by the Audit Commission, containing a series of questions for Members of local authority audit scrutiny committees, regarding the IFRS challenge.
- (c) the above paper be included for discussion at the next meeting of the Budget Working Group.

7. **Scrutiny Of The Authority's Treasury Management & Investment Strategies**
(CFO/054/10)

Members considered Report CFO/054/10 of the Executive Director Of Resources, concerning scrutiny of the Authority's treasury management policies and activities.

Members resolved:

- (a) to note that this Committee is now responsible for the effective scrutiny of the Authority's treasury management strategy and policies following the approval of Report CFO/013/10 at the Authority's Budget Meeting on 18th February 2010.
- (b) to request the Director Of Finance to work with the Chair of Performance & Audit Committee, to arrange treasury management training for Members of this Committee.
- (c) to agree the unique appointment of an independent external Non-Executive Advisor to Members of this Committee on treasury management and investment matters.
- (d) that a "snap-shot" of Authority investments, be brought back to the Budget Working Group for their information, as an indication of what investments the Authority have on an average day.

8. **Response To Audit Commission Report "Protecting The Public Purse"**
(CFO/051/10)

Members considered and noted Report CFO/051/10 of the Executive Director Of Resources, concerning the Audit Commission Report "Protecting The Public Purse"

Date of the next meeting:

Thursday 24th June 2010

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