

REPORT OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Report of a meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters at 10.30 hours on Thursday 15 January 2009.

Members present: Councillors Carden, Ensor, Freeman, Gadd, Harmer-Strange, Mrs. Healy, Howson, Kemble, Kirby, Marsh, Murphy (Chairman), Pidgeon, Scott, Sparks, Thomas and Wilson.

N.B. Councillor Ensor attended the meeting in place of Councillor Livings, having been nominated by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the relevant Group spokesperson.

1. Diana Williams, MBE – Assistant Chief Officer (Corporate Services)

1.1 The Fire Authority has congratulated Diana Williams, Assistant Chief Officer (Corporate Services) on her award of an MBE in the New Year's Honours, for services to local government. Diana, who had worked for 35 years in local government, started her career at Brighton Borough Council, then moved to East Sussex County Council, with the last 15 years with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.

2. Gary Walsh – Appointment to Post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer

2.1 The Fire Authority has congratulated Gary Walsh on his appointment to the post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer. He will be taking up the post from 9 April 2009.

3. Equality and Diversity Charter for Fire & Rescue Authority Members

3.1 Members of the Fire Authority have demonstrated their commitment to equality and diversity by publicly signing the Local Government Association's five-point Equality and Diversity Charter for Fire & Rescue Authority Members.

4. Consultation Outcomes Report On the Draft 2009/10 Integrated Risk Management Plan and Strategic Plan

4.1 The Fire Authority has given consideration to the results of the consultation exercise relating to the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2009-12. Opinions from staff, partners, stakeholders and the public were sought through various methods.

4.2 The Fire Authority was required statutorily to consult on the 3-year IRMP Plan and staff, partner organisations, stakeholders and the public had been consulted. The overall net response was that generally the respondents were supportive of the Plans.

4.3 The Fire Authority approved the Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2009-12.

5. Fire Authority Service Planning Process for 2009/10 and Beyond – Draft Revenue Budget 2009/10 And Capital programme 2009/10 To 2013/14

5.1 The Fire Authority has given consideration to the initial draft service planning document.

5.2 Members considered the draft detailed Service Planning documents, recognising the need for the continuation of existing service commitments in addition to the approved Improvement Agenda, and within the context of a tight financial regime.

5.3 The Fire Authority noted that the implications of the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme will be incorporated into the 2009/10 Strategic Plan and the 2009/10 Annual Plan once the Fire Authority has given final approval on 5 February 2009 for their publication by 30 June 2009 in line with amended legislation.

5.4 The following key issues were noted by the Fire Authority:

- a) the projected expenditure for 2008/09 of £36.892m which was unchanged from the original estimate;
- b) the continued Revenue Budget consultations taking place; and
- c) the proposed restricted budget pressures being considered this year and the compensatory savings already identified for subsequent consideration by the Fire Authority at its next meeting on 5 February 2009, which should help to contain Council Tax increases below the Fire Authority's original target of 4%, subject to the final Council Tax figures yet to be published.

5.5 The following key issues were approved by the Fire Authority:

- a) a committed budget of £37.927m for 2009/10 including provision for pay awards, price increases and net escapable commitments;
- b) Increases to fees and charges;
- c) an amended Capital Programme for 2008/09 totalling £3.911m and Capital Programme for 2009/10 totalling £5.162m and the related revenue consequences.

6. Draft 2009/10 Service Priorities for Inclusion within the Fire Authority's 2009/10 Improvement Plan

6.1 The Fire Authority has considered proposed key Service Improvements for the draft 2009/10 Improvement Plan which takes account of the Fire Authority's own improvement priorities, longer term projects being undertaken through Key Task Areas (corporate projects) and priorities arising from the Fire & Rescue Service National Framework 2009/11. Members considered the corporate priorities that will continue on into 2009/10 as well as the following new Key Task Areas for 2009/10:

KTA 5

Land acquisition for a new City Fire Station

KTA 6

Review fire cover and resilience in non-urban areas (IRMP outcome)

KTA 10

Implementation of VFM Review of Learning & Development

KTA 11

Review the long term needs of operational service delivery in order to sustain improvements in operational competence (IRMP outcome)

KTA 15

Expansion in capacity of Wide Area Network

KTA 16

Review the effectiveness of other support services in relation to local service delivery needs and corporate governance requirements (IRMP outcome).

6.2 The Fire Authority approved the proposed 2009/10 Service Improvements detailed in the report.

**COUNCILLOR MIKE MURPHY
CHAIRMAN OF EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY**

16 January 2009