

CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH FIRE AUTHORITY - MINUTES

Date: Thursday 24 May 2007

Time: 14:30 – 15:35

Place: Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, Hinchbrooke Cottage,
Brampton Road, Huntingdon

Present: Cambridgeshire County Council
Councillors: B Boddington, R Butcher, C Carter, D Harty, G Harper, S
Giles, L McGuire, R Moss- Eccardt, L Oliver, R Pegram, M Smith, H
Williams.

Peterborough City Council
Councillors: M Collins, G Murphy, D Raines, I Walsh.

Officers

Present: Tom Carroll, Lawrie Booth, Matthew Warren, Geoff Taylor,
Michael Brown, Victoria Lomas-Farley.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor R. Pegram was elected as Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor S Kindersley.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2007

The minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on 15 February 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor G Murphy was elected as Vice – Chairman.

5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed two newly appointed members to the Fire Authority - Cllr R Moss- Eccardt, a Liberal Democrat appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council, and Cllr I. Walsh, a Conservative appointed by Peterborough City Council.

The Chairman paid tribute to former Chairman Cllr Mac McGuire for his leadership and commitment to the Fire Authority over the past ten years. The Chairman thanked Cllr McGuire on behalf of the Fire Authority for all his work

and support to the Fire Service locally, regionally and nationally and expressed best wishes to him for the future.

The Chairman congratulated ACFO Graham Stagg on his future appointment as CFO on the retirement of Tom Carroll in the autumn. He informed members the recruitment process for the new ACFO would shortly be underway.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by members under the Code of Conduct.

7. SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007/08

Members of the Fire Authority considered a report from the Director of Operational Support on the Service Improvement Plan 2007/08.

The Service Improvement Plan was approved by the Fire Authority for consultation in February 2007. Since then 7000 leaflets had been distributed to libraries, Parish Council representatives, local businessmen and CFRS staff inviting feedback on proposals contained in the Service Improvement Plan.

Members received an Appendix setting out the views received in response to the consultation. The consultation response from stakeholders was disappointing with only 59 responses received. Generally comments received were supportive of the proposals in the Plan although some respondents wanted more information or expressed reservations about some of the proposals.

Some members of the Fire Authority expressed concern about the cost effectiveness of the consultation exercise due to the limited reaction from the public. The use of Village Parish newsletters and attendance at Cambridge City area committees were suggestions put forward as ways to improve the effectiveness of the consultation process. The Director of Operational Support agreed to provide members with information on the cost of the consultation.

Members noted that the Authority was fully engaged with Cambridgeshire Horizons regarding developer contributions towards the cost of fire cover for new developments. The Chief Fire Officer advised that a Section 106 agreement relating to proposal 14 for the new community safety station at Northstowe was very likely to be agreed.

Members of the Fire Authority unanimously agreed to approve the Service Improvement Plan for 2007/08

8. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT UPDATE 2007

Members received a report on the Audit Commission's national assessment of fire and rescue authorities, the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority and the CPA Improvement Plan 2007.

The full corporate assessment review in 2005 assessed how well Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority was being run at a corporate level and concluded that it was a 'good' Authority. In July 2006 a revised performance framework was published for Fire and Rescue authorities. The framework was largely based around the Local Government Framework entitled "CPA Framework 2005 – the harder test". The results were published on 4 April 2007 and highlighted that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority consistently performing well across all three elements of the assessment. Performance against each of the elements was as follows: –

Assessment Criteria	Result
• Direction of Travel	Improving well
• Use of Resource	Performing Well
• Operational Assessment	Performing Well

The CPA Improvement Plan was designed to ensure the Authority continually improved through focused action in keys areas. Progress against the improvement plan would be monitored and challenged through the Scrutiny & Performance Committee.

Members congratulated and thanked everyone involved in the success of the CPA results.

Members unanimously agreed to note the CPA results and to approve the CPA Improvement Plan for 2007.

9. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN

The Fire Authority received the draft Best Value Performance Plan setting out details of performance in 2006/07 and setting Improvement targets for 2007-2011.

Members of the Authority raised queries on performance including:

- The implementation of an audit and review process to enable the Service to review the delivery and effectiveness of work undertaken at both a strategic and local level.
- The welcome reduction in the number of Road Traffic Collisions and associated casualties and fatalities in 2006/07.
- The implementation of local systems for data collection in order to achieve the Level 2 Equality Standard.
- The review of targets in order to ensure that they were realistic and achievable.

The Fire Authority unanimously approved the Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/07, including the improvement targets for 2007-2011.

10. REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 30TH MARCH 2007

The Fire Authority received a report of the Standards Committee meeting held on 30 March 2007.

Members noted information on Committee's consideration of the Members' Allowances Scheme and Members' Code of Conduct and that separate reports on these items were contained elsewhere on the agenda.

The Fire Authority unanimously approved the recommendation to appoint Mrs P Kingham and Mr W G Billing as Independent Members of the Standards Committee for a 5 year term of office from 24 May 2007.

11. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The Fire Authority received a report on the outcome of a review of the Members Allowances Scheme and considered a revised Scheme as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

Members supported the review's recommendations:

- (i) That the Basic Allowance for 2007/08 payable to all members of the Fire Authority be increased by 3.7 % from £2159 to £2239.
- (ii) That the Special Responsibilities Allowances (SRA) for 2007/08 payable to the holder of positions which are required to exercise responsibilities over and above of other members of the Authority be increased by 3.7 %
- (iii) That the Cooptees allowance for 2007/08 currently paid to Independent Members of the Standards Committee be increased to £50.00 per meeting attended.
- (iv) That the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Cooptees Allowance be increased each year by the median increase in the white collar salary as notified by the Local Government Association.
- (v) That the mileage rates payable in 2007/08 and subsequent years be fixed at the rate determined by the Inland Revenue as not incurring an liability for Income Tax- currently 40 per mile.

Members noted that unless reviewed in the interim the Members Allowances Scheme will operate from 1 April 2007 until 31 March 2011.

The Fire Authority agreed that the Members Allowances Scheme set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved for application from 1st April 2007.

12. MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

The Authority received a report on the proposed adoption of a revised Code of Conduct for Members. The Government had published a revised Model Code of Conduct and that all relevant authorities were required to adopt a revised Code by 1st October 2007. Members received the recommendations of the Standards Committee on the adoption of the new Code as follows:

- **The adoption of the Model Code by the Fire Authority:** Members noted that the legislation allowed authorities to add to the model code but not to delete words from it or to reduce its requirements. The Standards Committee confirmed this approach and agreed that the Fire Authority should be recommended to adopt the new Code un-amended.
- **Briefing on the requirements of the new Code:** Members were advised that the same Model Code was likely to be adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. Both those authorities were expected to arrange a briefing for their members on the requirements of the new Code and reliance would be placed on those arrangements to brief Fire Authority members. Members agreed that a separate briefing by the Fire Authority would only duplicate those arrangements.
- **The date the new Code came into effect:** The legislation required the adoption and implementation of the Code within 6 months of publication, otherwise the model Code applied by default. The Standards Committee recommended that there should be a gap between the adoption of the new Code by the Fire Authority and its implementation to allow members to be briefed on its requirements using material produced by the Standards Board for England.

The Fire Authority was recommended to incorporate Paragraph 12(2) into the Code of Conduct so that it would be available for application in the event of the Fire Authority introducing provision for the public to speak at meetings.

The Fire Authority unanimously approved;

- (i) The Code of Conduct for members including the application of paragraph 12(2) for implementation from 1 August 2007.
- (ii) The inclusion of the 10 General Principles of Public Life as a preamble to the Code of Conduct.

13. COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

The Fire Authority received a report on minor amendments to the membership, quorum and substitution arrangements for a number of the Fire Authority's Committees.

The Fire Authority agreed unanimously:

- (i) That the following changes be made in the quorum of meetings:
 - Standards Committee: the requirement for all members to be present for the discussion of items relating to Members Allowances be deleted as recommended by the Standards Committee.
 - Appointments Committee: the requirement for a member of both Authorities to be present be deleted.
 - Performance Review Committee: the requirement for a member of both Authorities to be present be deleted.
- (ii) That 2 Substitutes be appointed to each of the following committees:
 - Performance Review Committee
 - Fire Authority Discipline Committee
 - Fire Authority Appeals Committee
 - Appeals Pensions Committee
- (iii) That Paragraph 4 (Quorum) and Paragraph 10 (Appointment of Substitute Members of Committees) be amended accordingly.

14. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

The Fire Authority approved a schedule of appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies.

The Chairman advised that the following members would be put forward as Chairmen of the following committees for approval at their next meetings and that in the meantime they be regarded as lead members and consulted informally about the business of each committee:

- Policy and Finance Committee : Councillor D R Pegram
- Community Safety Committee: Councillor L Oliver
- Scrutiny and Performance Committee: Councillor M Collins

15. MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD - 21ST MARCH 2007

The Fire Authority received the minutes of the Regional management Board meeting on 21st March 2007. The Committee noted progress with the establishment of the company which was to be set up to run the new Regional Control Centre at Waterbeach. Proposals were to be submitted to the next RMB meeting on 13th June 2007.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE – 4TH APRIL 2007

The Authority received the report of the meeting of the Community Safety Committee held on 4th April 2007 and noted information on:

- The options and cost of improving security in CFRS premises.
- Proposals for the installation of improved signage at CFRS premises.
- Changes in the arrangements for reporting Best Value performance indicators by categorising them under headings of demand, dwelling fires and arson.
- The ability of CFRS to respond to a “New Dimensions” incident through the provision of specialist equipment to support the New Dimensions Mass Decontamination and Water capabilities.

17. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2006/07

The Fire Authority received an update on revenue and capital spending as at 31st March 2007. Members noted:

- The costs associated with the rank to roll review and the subsequent back pay would result in payments of around £400,000 in May 2007 but charged to the 2006/07 Accounts.
- The carry forward of provision for the purchase of combined appliances to 2007/08.
- The bringing forward of spending to 2006/07 on non-appliance vehicles following the Best Value Review of Transport.
- The estimated net underspend of £35,000 on the Revenue Budget 2006/07

CHAIRMAN