

Minutes of a meeting of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority, held at the Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters on Wednesday 12th February 2014

PRESENT

Cllr D Bajaj	Mr K Coles CC
Cllr S Barton	Cllr S Corrall (Chair)
Mr I Bentley CC	Mr J Coxon CC
Cllr C Bhatti	Mrs J Fox CC
Cllr K Bool	Ms B Newton CC
Mr S Bray CC	Mrs C Radford CC (Vice Chair)
Mr M Charlesworth CC	Mr M Wyatt CC

OFFICERS

Mr D Webb	Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Mr T Peel	Treasurer and Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Mr M Andrew	Head of HR, Planning and Performance
Mr G Goodman	Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Mrs J Green	Member Services Co-ordinator

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Byrne, Mr O O'Shea CC, Mr B Liquorish CC, Mr R Chandler, Deputy Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and Mr S Lunn, Director of Community Services.

2. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this Agenda

None.

3. Urgent Business

None.

4. Public Participation

None.

5. Chair's announcements

The Chair made reference to a circulated list of his various diary commitments undertaken since the last meeting of the Combined Fire Authority (CFA).

The Chair invited Cllr Susan Barton to update the CFA following the Stonewall Equality Index Feedback meeting which took place on the morning of 12th February 2014. The CFA were informed that thanks to excellent team work and committed public engagement this year's score was much improved and congratulations were conveyed to the entire team involved in this.

6. To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Combined Fire Authority held on 11th December 2013 as a correct record.

RESOLVED:

The CFA confirmed the minutes of the CFA on 11th December 2013 as a correct record.

7. CFA Rules of Procedure Rule 9 – Member Questions

None.

8. To consider the draft minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 8th January 2014.

RESOLVED:

The CFA noted the minutes.

9. To consider the draft minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 29th January 2014.

RESOLVED:

The CFA noted the minutes.

10. Review of the Constitution

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented his outcomes to the CFA following the annual review of the Constitution.

RESOLVED:

The CFA:

- a) Approved the removal of the references in the Constitution Part 2 Articles 6.3 and 7.3 to the number of meetings of the Policy Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2012/13.

- b) Approved a change to the meeting schedule for the CFA by reducing the number of meetings of the Policy Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from 5 to 4, holding the Annual Meeting of the CFA in May and holding an extra Ordinary Meeting of the CFA in July.
- c) Authorised the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to make the necessary amendments to the Constitution.

11. Acquisition of a site for the new Fire and Rescue Station at Castle Donington

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented this report to seek the approval of the CFA to acquire a site for the new Fire and Rescue Station at Castle Donington. During discussions the CFA were assured this was a good sound financial option. It is envisaged that completion could be achieved by early Spring.

RESOLVED:

The CFA:

- a) Approved the acquisition of Building 97 for a premium of £550,000 subject to obtaining the landlord's consent and change of use approval.
- b) Authorised the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to acquire the site on the best possible terms.

12. Our Plan 2014 – 2016

The Head of HR, Planning and Performance presented Our Plan 2014-16 to the CFA for its approval prior to publication on 31st March 2014. The CFA were informed that this information will be available on the Service website for easy access but hard copies will be made available as required and any issues will be addressed as they arise.

RESOLVED:

The CFA:

- a) Approved Our Plan 2014-16 for publication on 31st March 2014.
- b) Delegated to the Chief Fire and Rescue Officer (CFO) the responsibility for the agreement of minor amendments to the document during formatting, and to produce the final targets and action plan.

13. Pay Policy Statement 2014/15

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented the Pay Policy Statement for 2014/15 as required under the Localism Act 2011 to the CFA for its approval.

RESOLVED:

The CFA approved the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15.

14. Public Service Pensions Consultations

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented this report to update the CFA on current consultations on Public Service Pensions and to seek agreement to the proposed CFA response.

RESOLVED:

The CFA:

- a) Agreed the draft consultation response for submission to the Pensions Regulator.
- b) Agreed the draft consultation response for submission to the Department for Work and Pensions.
- c) Noted the publication of the consultation on the regulations to introduce a new Firefighters' Pension Scheme from April 2015.

15. Medium Term Financial Plan 2014 – 2017

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report to the CFA for its approval of the Annual Budget, Council Tax and Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15 and the Capital Programme for 2014/17. It also asked for the CFA to note the issues affecting the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2015-17. The CFA discussed the options in depth.

The recommendations in the report were formally moved by the Chair.

Mrs C Radford CC and seconded by Ms B Newton CC proposed the following amendment:

“That recommendation (d) in the report be amended to read that the Band D Council Tax for 2014/15 be set at £59.2520 being an increase of 1.5%.”

The motion was put to the vote and passed with 6 in favour, 3 against and 4 abstentions.

RESOLVED:

The CFA:

- a) Set the gross Volume Standstill budget for 2014/15 at £39,264,610 as shown in Appendix 2.
- b) Agreed the total gross budget requirement of £38,349,670 as shown in Appendix 2 based on the Volume Standstill budget adjusted for the growth and savings items listed in Appendix 3 and a decrease in the General Reserve of £46,195.
- c) Agreed that it does not want to undertake a referendum on Council Tax.
- d) Set the Band D Council Tax for 2014/15 at £59.2520, but authorised the

Treasurer to reduce this to any referendum limit (when and if this has been determined by the Secretary of State) if required with the balance of funding to be met from unallocated General Reserve.

- e) Authorised the Treasurer to issue the necessary precepts to Billing Authorities in accordance with the budget requirement above and the tax base notified by the Billing Authorities, and to take any other action, which may be necessary to give effect to the precept.
- f) Approved the Capital Programme for 2014/17 as set out in Appendix 4.
- g) Noted the Medium Term Financial position, shown in Appendix 5.
- h) Approved the Prudential and Treasury Indicators and the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 6 to the report, including the policy on approved organisations for lending (Annex 3) and the approved Countries for investment (Annex 4)
- i) Noted the Prudential and Treasury indicators required under the Prudential Code set out in Paragraph 3.2 of **Appendix 6** and approved the following limits:

	<u>2013/14</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>2014/15</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>2015/16</u> <u>£000</u>	<u>2016/17</u> <u>£000</u>
Authorised Limit for external debt:				
i) Borrowing	22,224	21,853	23,173	23,589
ii) Other long term liabilities	7,756	7,234	7,905	7,669
Operational Boundary for external debt:				
i) Borrowing	19,724	19,353	20,673	21,089
ii) Other long term liabilities	7,256	6,734	7,405	7,169

- j) Delegated authority for the Treasurer to effect movement within the Authorised Limit for external debt between borrowing and other long term liabilities.
- k) Approved the following borrowing limits for the period 2014/15 to 2016/17:

£m	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Interest rate Exposures	Upper	Upper	Upper
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	100%	100%	100%
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	50%	50%	50%
Maturity Structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2014/15		Lower	Upper
Under 12 months		0%	30%
12 months to 2 years		0%	30%
2 years to 5 years		0%	50%
5 years to 10 years		0%	70%
10 years and above		0%	100%

- l) Authorised the Treasurer to enter into such loans or undertake such arrangements as necessary to finance capital payments in 2014/15,

subject to agreed prudential limits.

- m) Approved the Revised Establishment detailed in Paragraph 3.60.
- n) Approved the changes to the Specified Amounts contained in Appendix 7.
- o) Approved the revised rates for Special Service Charges contained in Appendix 8 effective from 1st April 2014.

16. Proposed Dates for Future Meetings

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented the CFA with a schedule of future meeting dates for the CFA and its Committees for approval. Following the decision taken on Item 10 above a revised list will be circulated reflecting the revised arrangements.

RESOLVED:

The CFA approved the proposed schedule of dates for the 2014/15 Municipal Year.

17. Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED:

This was confirmed as 25th June 2014 (Annual Meeting)

18. Resolution to exclude the public

RESOLVED:

The CFA excluded the public for consideration of the following item which is exempt under Part 1, paragraph 4 and Part 2, paragraph 10 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it concerns a labour relations matter arising between the CFA and its employees.

In accordance with Part 2, paragraph 10 of the Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 the public interest in the report remaining confidential outweighs the public interest in disclosure as the CFA is entitled to discuss its decision on a confidential basis.

19. Exempt Item: Employers Contributions Payments during Strike Action

The CFO presented this report. The CFA discussed the contents of the report in depth.

RESOLVED:

The CFA agreed to defer making any decision at this meeting and asked that a further report be presented to the meeting in June 2014.

12th February 2014
14:00 – 15:45

CHAIRMAN