

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee
held on 13 July 2016**

Present:

Members of the Committee

Councillors John Appleton, Nicola Davies, Neil Dirveiks, Peter Fowler, Brian Hawkes, Bernard Kirton, Phillip Morris-Jones (Vice Chair) Chris Saint and Matt Western (Chair)

Other County Councillors

John Horner, Portfolio Holder – Community Safety
Alan Cockburn – Portfolio Holder – Finance and Property

Officers

Rachel Barnes - Business Transformation Manager
Helen Barnsley, Democratic Services Officer
David Carter, Strategic Director, Resources Group
Josephine Millar - Project Manager (OOP Delivery/Corporate Transformation)
Tricia Morrison – Head of Service
Rob Moyney – Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Steve Smith - Head of Physical Assets

1. General

(1) Apologies

Councillor Keith Kondakor

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

(3) Minutes of the meetings held on 17 May 2016 and 18 May 2016

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 17 May 2016 be signed as a correct record.

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2016 be signed as a correct record; with the following amendments –

- Item 7 (page 5). "The fire service *will support* the development of the business case created by the PCC."
- Item 7 (page 5). It was confirmed that the consultation mentioned is a government led consultation.

Matters Arising

None

2. Public Question Time

There were no public questions received or presented at the meeting.

3. Questions to Cabinet Portfolio Holders

There were no questions presented to Cabinet Portfolio Holders at the meeting.

The Committee noted that the briefing note that had been requested regarding Pupil Premium and issues with the IT system and processes was still outstanding. It was agreed that this would be chased by Helen Barnsley, Democratic Services Officer, in order to be circulated before the next Committee meeting on 15 September 2016.

4. Work Programme 2016/17

It was noted by members that the quarterly One Organisational Plan (OOP) report had been deferred until the next meeting to be held on 15 September.

Clarification was given regarding the issue of Business Rates. No further information was likely to be available until after the government review. Members of the Committee agreed to add this matter to the agenda of the September meeting for further discussions.

Councillor John Appleton sought reassurances regarding IT issues with the new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). David Carter, Strategic Director, Resources Group, confirmed that the MASH had launched successfully. The current system was working well but would be subject to continual review and improvement. There would be a review to look at further integration with the Police IT system but there are challenges around the high level of security involved.

With regards to Section 106 monies from developments outside Warwickshire, it was confirmed that it is desirable that the County Council received monies from cross-border developments in areas likely to be affected. It is vital that relevant Portfolio Holders are aware of developments and are holding discussions with other authorities.

Steve Smith, Head of Physical Assets stated that he felt it was important that Warwickshire County Council is consulted by neighbouring authorities and that cross border working on large developments is in place.

Councillor Peter Fowler commended the "Fatal Four" road safety presentation, for all councillors. . Rob Moyney, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, agreed that a shortened version of the presentation would be made available for all Councillors to watch after the next meeting of the full Council – July 19 2016.

Resolved

The Committee:

- 1) Agrees the updated 2015-16 Work Programme and makes any additional comments or changes, as required; and

2) Notes the scheduled future meeting dates.

5. Fire & Rescue Service Peer Review and Transformation Presentation

Rachel Barnes, Business Transformation Manager at Warwickshire County Council, delivered a presentation to members regarding the Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) Transformation Plan; concentrating on the background to the plan, the current status and what happens next. It was noted that the consultation exercise had revealed a strong desire to protect front line services and had resulted in a change to the original plans.

Ten projects that have already been completed; they include a change in Response Commander roles, a new management structure and a new response point at Gaydon in the south of the County. There has also been a £100k saving in the Prevention and Protection programme.

The benefits of the transformation plan include meeting the target for financial savings, meeting response targets and an improvement in recruitment. There has also been a decrease in recorded sickness absence.

Members of the Committee raised concerns regarding the purchase of equipment from outside the UK. It was confirmed that a procurement process was followed and that the best value for money was always sought. This was not always from the UK. Rob Moyney, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, stated that investigations would be carried out into whether or not UK companies are given any feedback as to why they were not successful and a greater understanding would be sought as to why the companies were not making themselves the best option. The Chair confirmed that clients and suppliers needed to work together and develop products accordingly to keep business within the UK and that Warwickshire County Council and WFRS should be providing feedback directly to companies such as Dennis Eagle in this case.

Regarding the £100k savings from the Prevention and Protection Programme, members were reassured that the majority of savings had arisen from a reduction in managers' posts and that front line services had been protected. Warwickshire has remained a top performer in the reduction of house fires.

Members also noted that the new response point in Gaydon had been made possible due to a partnership with Aston Martin who had provided the land for the facility free of charge; and that a peppercorn rent was paid. It was noted that a capital grant had been received from government. The location would provide easy access to the M40, Gaydon and Lighthorne which were areas that had struggled to meet the ten minute respond time. The new response point would also provide a better level of service for any future residential growth.

Following a question from members regarding the new Day Crewing Plus (DCP) staffing that has been put in place in several locations, it was confirmed that DCP is limited to certain sites and that peak times were taken into consideration. Following the introduction of DCP at the Leamington Spa Fire Station, there are no plans for any more.

The Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge planned for November 2016 will be a process of improvement rather than an audit. It will include a range of self-

assessments and the service as a whole will be visited by officers from outside the authority who will help to identify key areas for improvement where necessary.

It is anticipated that the final report will be presented to the Resources and Fire & Rescue Committee in February 2017. Members agreed to add this item to the Work Programme.

Resolved

The Committee:

- 1) Endorses, the closure of the 2013 Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Peer Challenge Action Plan; and
- 2) Endorses, the proposed arrangements for an Operational Assessment and Fire Peer Challenge in November 2016.

6. Project Hub Update and Member Dashboard

Josephine Millar, Project Manager (OOP Delivery/Corporate Transformation), gave a presentation to the Committee on the new Member Projects Dashboard. It was noted that this was a central source of information on projects and programmes and is built in the same software as the performance dashboard that is already in use. The Member Projects Dashboard is due to go live from the end of September 2016. Members were given clarification that data is input to the system by Project Managers, visible to the WCC project community and that the Group Leadership Team (GLT) would ensure that the information is kept up to date. It was noted that, at the moment, there is no plan for a page identifying information that has not been updated. But if any deadline is missed, it will affect the RAG status of a project.

With regard to the search function, it was confirmed that all Corporate Board Projects will be listed and Members would be able to access the information for each one. For any projects outside the Corporate Board, links would be provided for key officer contacts. Once a project is completed, the status will change to 'closed' but all the information would stay on the database for members to access.

Resolved

The Committee notes the information from the presentation.

7. Public Property Asset Register

Steve Smith presented the contents of the report to members who noted that Warwickshire has a good track record with collaboration working such as the MASH. It was noted that officers are working towards creating a forum across the public sector in Warwickshire in order to agree an approach to ensuring that all assets are listed. The three Clinical Commissioning Groups in Warwickshire are already looking into sharing estates; Borough and District Councils have been approached in order to join the discussions.

Following a question regarding the recent sale of over 100 County assets, it was confirmed that the majority had been leasehold properties and not freehold. The Council's Rationalisation Policy had been followed and there remained a

commitment to savings. It was also noted that the ongoing repair and maintenance costs for these properties had outweighed any income.

Members requested a further update regarding the creation of a Warwickshire Forum (to be set up in order to agree an approach to ensuring that all assets lists are published) and agreed the matter should be added to the agenda for the meeting in September. Steve Smith concluded by confirming that One Public Estate is a government programme that Warwickshire is hoping to join by the end of the year.

Resolved

The Committee supports the contents of this report and comments on the proposals in section 3 of the report.

8. Urgent Matters

None

9. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee was confirmed as 15 September 2016 at 2 p.m. in CR2, Shire Hall.

The meeting rose at 3.40 pm.

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Chair