

**Minutes of the Meeting of  
Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority  
Audit and Performance Management Committee  
held at Brigade Headquarters, Shrewsbury  
on Thursday, 18 February 2010 at 2.00 pm**

## **Present**

### **Members**

Councillors Adams, Mrs Greenaway (Vice-Chair), Dr Jones (Chair), Kiernan, Mason, Mellings and Price

### **Officers**

Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Treasurer, Head of Fire Control, District Officer South, Information Officer, Equality and Diversity Officer, Management Support Officer and Principal Auditor (Internal Audit Shropshire Council)

## **1 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

The Chair welcomed Kathy Hall from Internal Audit to the meeting.

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 Non-Exempt Minutes**

Members received the non-exempt minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, held on 26 November 2009.

It was proposed by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

**Resolved** that the non-exempt minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, held on 26 November 2009, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record

## **4 Public Questions**

No public questions, statements or petitions had been received.

## 5 **Audit and Performance Management Committee Work Plan 2010-11**

This report put forward a 2010 / 2011 Work Plan for the Audit and Performance Management Committee for consideration and approval by Members.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer explained that the report on Compliments and Complaints would go to the next Committee meeting in May, thus giving a full year of statistics.

The Treasurer advised that Treasury Management should be included in the Work Plan, as responsibility for this had previously been delegated to the Committee by the Fire Authority. He was awaiting the Treasury Management policies of Shropshire Council before reviewing those of the Fire Authority, as the Council provides Treasury Management services for the Authority. Councillor Mellings suggested that a training session on Treasury Management be held in May and the Treasurer agreed that this would be beneficial.

Following a discussion regarding reporting from the Risk Management Group, the Committee decided that a 6-monthly report was sufficient.

It was proposed by Councillor Kiernan, seconded by Councillor Mrs Greenaway and

**Resolved** that the Committee approve the Work Plan 2010 / 2011, with the addition of a report on Treasury Management, which, it is intended, will go to the Committee in May

## 6 **Audit Commission Progress Report February 2010**

This report provided the Committee with a report on the Audit Commission's progress in delivering its responsibilities as the Authority's external auditor.

The Treasurer notified the Committee that he had invited the Audit Commission to attend the meeting but no-one had been available.

The Committee felt that, in the current financial climate, an explanation was required for the dramatic increase in the Commission's fees. The Treasurer suggested he contact the Commission for further discussion, which the Committee agreed would be the most suitable course of action.

There was a discussion regarding the final accounts and the Committee requested that this subject be incorporated into the training session on Treasury Management.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the contents of the report

## 7 International Financial Accounting Standards

This report informed the Committee about the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards, and the change in financial reporting from UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Councillor Mellings asked the Treasurer if the change in financial reporting would affect the 2009/10 and 2010/11 budget. The Treasurer confirmed that it would, but the Government intended to introduce offsetting requirements to ensure that there would be no net impact on costs.

Councillor Mellings appreciated the extra work that this involved for officers, but felt that Members did need to be provided with an awareness of the new standards, particularly as they were required to approve the accounts. He hoped that this would be included in the training mentioned in the Audit Committee's Progress Report.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the implications of the introduction of International Financial Reporting Standards for Local Government

## 8 Internal Audit – 2010/11 Audit Plan and Progress Report on 2009/10

This report sought the Committee's confirmation of the 2010/11 Internal Audit Plan, and reported progress on the 2009/10 Plan.

The Treasurer explained he had compiled the report with the assistance of Internal Audit. He gave a brief overview of the report, bringing the Committee's attention to the appendix, and the days included for fraud and corruption. He also explained that the Risk Management Group would look at systems to identify any potential weaknesses, which would warrant audit.

It was proposed by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

**Resolved** that the Committee:

- a) Note progress on work in the current year; and
- b) Amend its 2010/11 Internal Audit Programme by bringing forward Banking and Insurance audits, and adding Purchase/ Procurement, Asset Management and Vehicle Fleet audits from the current year (2009/10)

## 9 Risk Management Group Internal Audit Progress Monitoring Report

The report provided Members with an update on the monitoring of recommendations made by Internal Audit, which is undertaken by the Risk Management Group. It specifically covered details about the progress made against outstanding recommendations.

The Head of Fire Control brought the Committee's attention to the appendix and explained that, once recommendations had been completed, they would be taken off the appendix.

**Resolved** that the Committee:

- a) Note the progress that has been made against the outstanding recommendations: and
- b) Note that the Risk Management Group will continue to monitor progress against all recommendations, reporting progress to the Committee on a regular basis

## **10 Annual Governance Statement**

### **10a Timetable**

This report informed Members of the process, which would be put in place to ensure that the Fire Authority's Annual Governance Statement was ready for inclusion in the Final Accounts for 2009/10.

It was proposed by Councillor Kiernan, seconded by Councillor Mason and

**Resolved** that the Committee agree the proposed Annual Governance Statement timetable, as detailed in the report

Kathy Hall, Internal Audit, left the meeting at this point (2.30 pm).

### **10b Improvement Plan 2009/10**

This report summarised the progress made to date against the improvements, contained in the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2009/10.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the progress made against each of the improvements, contained in the Annual Governance Statement Improvement Plan 2009/10

## **11a Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy**

This report requested Members to recommend that the Fire Authority adopt the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy, following the annual review conducted by officers.

A discussion took place regarding the wording of the Strategy. Members felt that an additional paragraph was required to make it clear that officers at any level in the Authority could be involved in fraud and corruption.

**Resolved** that the Committee agree to recommend to the Fire Authority that it adopt the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy with an additional paragraph for clarification as detailed above

## **11b Reporting of Illegality and Malpractice For decision**

The Committee received the Brigade Order on Illegality and Malpractice for their reaffirmation.

It was proposed by Councillor Greenaway, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

**Resolved** that the Committee reaffirm the Brigade Order on Illegality and Malpractice

The meeting adjourned at 2.40 pm for the Equality and Diversity Officer to be called and reconvened at 2.55 pm.

## **12 Equality and Diversity Steering Group Summary Report**

This report provided the Committee with a summary of the work of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

The Equality and Diversity Officer gave Members a brief overview of the report. In response to a question from the Chair the Equality and Diversity Officer confirmed that Members would receive Equality and Diversity training during the current year.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the contents of the report

## **13 Progress on the Corporate Equality Action Plan**

The purpose of this report was to update Members on the progress of actions identified within the Single Equality Action Plan, which is monitored through the Directorate Business Plans. The Single Equality Action Plan replaces the earlier Corporate Equality Action Plan.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the progress on the actions in the Single Equality Action Plan

## **14 Performance Assessment – Key Performance Indicators 2009/10**

This report informed Members of the score, which would be attributed to the Authority for the Key Performance Indicators element of the performance assessment 2009/10, based on current performance, if assessed.

**Resolved** that the Committee:

- a) Note the report content; and
- b) Monitor action plans necessary on failing or high risk indicators

## **15 Performance against Best Value Performance Indicators April to December 2009**

This report informed Members of the Brigade's performance against nationally prescribed Best Value Performance Indicators for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 December 2009.

The Statistical Research Officer gave a brief overview of the appendices to the report, which were then discussed in detail, and the following significant issues were highlighted:

### **Appendix A**

#### **BVPI 8**

There is a continual improvement. 1 invoice can greatly impact on the statistics.

#### **BVPI 11**

The figure will not change due to there not being a change in staff.

#### **BVPI 12**

November and December was impacted on by wholetime staff being off long term.

#### **BVPI 16**

There is still an issue over staff not declaring a disability. Other services also have the same problem. The BVPI is set on national targets.

#### **BV142**

There has been an increase of female firefighters in the last intake of recruits.

#### **BV206**

The figure is improving due to certain areas of the community being targeted

Councillor Price left the meeting at this point (3.15 pm).

### **Appendix B**

Councillor Adams asked how it was possible to have appliance availability of 100% when vehicles require maintenance. The Statistical Research Officer confirmed that the target could be achieved by using the reserve fleet and that maintenance was scheduled in.

### **Appendix C**

More work would be done with regards to these targets in the future.

### **Appendix D**

The Appendix shows noticeable improvement from previous years.

## **Appendix E**

All targets are showing achievement, other than secondary arson, although the failing number of incidents is reducing month by month. Councillor Adams asked how the Service could improve further on the target. The Statistical Research Officer replied that improvement could be achieved by reducing anything, which impacts on the carbon footprint.

## **Appendix F**

The Resources Manager has confirmed that the Service is on target to achieve 830 in quarter 4.

## **Appendix H**

All financial indicator dates have been achieved.

**Resolved** that the Committee noted the reporting style and content in respect of performance

## **16 Retained Duty System Performance Monitoring**

This report provided information regarding the ongoing performance of the Retained Duty System in Shropshire.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the contents of the report

## **17 Summary of Progress within the Improvement Priorities for 2009/10**

This report demonstrated to Members progress on the Fire Authority's Improvement Priorities for 2009/10.

**Resolved** that the Committee note the contents of the report

## **18 Local Government Act 1972**

It was proposed by Councillor Mellings, seconded by Councillor Kiernan and

**Resolved** that, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item, on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, by direction of a Government Minister.

## **19 Exempt Minutes (Confidential)**

Members received the confidential minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, held on 26 November 2009.

It was proposed by Councillor Mellings, seconded by Councillor Greenaway and

**Resolved** that the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Performance Management Committee, held on 26 November 2009, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record

The meeting closed at 3.55 pm.

**Chair**.....

**Date**.....