

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
GREATER MANCHESTER FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

HELD ON 11th FEBRUARY 2016

Present:

Councillor David Acton (Chairman), Councillor Tommy Judge (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Mohammed Ayub, Walter Brett, Sharon Briggs, Stephen Coen, Basil Curley, Jim Dawson, Jim Ellis, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Daniel Hawthorne, Derek Heffernan, June Hitchen, Barrie Holland, Bernard Judge, Iain Lindley, Alan Matthews, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill, Brian Rigby, Paul Wild, Steve Williams, Michael Whetton and John Wright

Also in Attendance: Peter O'Reilly (County Fire Officer and Chief Executive), Donna Hall (Clerk to the Authority, Wigan Council), Paul Argyle (Deputy County Fire Officer), Andrew Taylor (Assistant Director of Resources, Wigan Council), Geoff Harris (Director of Prevention and Protection), Andrea Heffernan (Director of Corporate Support), Dave Keelan (Director of Emergency Response), Gwynne Williams (Deputy Clerk and Authority Solicitor), Shelley Wright (Director of Corporate Communications) and Donna Parker (Democratic Services Manager)

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Bell (Deputy Chairman), Lynda Byrne, Afia Kamal, Michael Smith and Fred Walker.

69. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Authority held on 3rd December 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In consultation with the Independent Person a dispensation had been granted to all Members to participate and vote at meetings of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority (GMFRA), any Committee or Sub-Committee of GMFRA and any joint committee or joint sub-committee on which the Authority is represented in respect of matters relating to setting GMFRA's precept (and matters directly related to such decisions, including GMFRA's budget calculations). This was granted on the grounds that without the dispensation the number of Members prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business (Section 33(2)(a) of the Localism Act 2011)(Minute 77 refers).

71. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)

There were no items of urgent business submitted.

72. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Chairman advised Members that the meeting of the Fire Authority was going to be 'live streamed' and would be available to the public via YouTube to watch either live or retrospective.
2. The Chairman informed Members that this would be Andrew Taylor's last meeting as he was due to retire as Assistant Director of Resources at Wigan Council at the end of March 2016. The Chairman took the opportunity to thank Andrew for all the hard work and commitment he had given to the Service over the years and wished him all the best on his retirement.

Councillor Michael Whetton on behalf of the Conservative Party, Councillor Derek Heffernan, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Party and Donna Hall, Clerk to the Authority at Wigan Council also took the opportunity to thank Andrew for his work.

Andrew Taylor thanked Members for their kind words and took the opportunity to speak on his time working with the Service.

3. The Chairman advised that a Member Consultation Session on the 'Draft Corporate Plan Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016/2020' would be taking place at the rise of the meeting and would be hosted by the Deputy County Fire Officer and Sarah Scoales, Head of Planning and Performance. All Members were encouraged to attend.
4. The Chairman invited all Members to attend a second visit to the 'New Operational Training Site and Community Hub' at Wellington Street Bury on Friday 4th March 2016 at 10.00am. The visit had been arranged to allow Members to view the progress at the site since the last visit in November 2015 and would include a tour of the construction work on Fire Street, the multi-story building facility plus more. All Members were encouraged to attend.
5. The Chairman invited all Members to attend the next Long Service Awards Ceremony on Thursday 10th March 2016 at 7.30pm at the Imperial War Museum North, Salford Quays. The awards would be presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Mr Warren J. Smith and the Chairman of the Authority.
6. The Chairman noted the recent death of former Authority Member Councillor Jack Davis from Tameside Council. He served as an Authority Member from June 2000 to June 2010 and was Vice-Chairman of the Authority from 2004 to 2008.
7. The Chairman noted the sad death of Matthew Taylor the former Deputy Estates Manager, who was tragically killed in a traffic collision near his home.

Members observed a minute's silence in their memory.

73. QUESTIONS (IF ANY) UNDER STANDING ORDER 7

There were no questions submitted.

74. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 21 JANUARY 2016 OF SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 21st January 2016 were submitted (Appendix 1).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Service Delivery Committee held on 21st January 2016, be approved.

75. MINUTES OF MEETING THURSDAY, 28 JANUARY 2016 OF POLICY, RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 28th January 2016 were submitted (Appendix 2).

Resolved: That the proceedings of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 28th January 2016, be approved.

76. TREASURY POLICY STATEMENT, CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17 TO 2018/19, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION STATEMENT

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which sought approval of the Authority's Treasury Management Policy and set out the requirements to determine prudential indicators for the forthcoming financial year 2016/17. The detail contained within the report was consistent with the 'Budget Strategy Report 2016/17 and Medium Term Forecast 2016/17 to 2019/20.

It was noted that the report had been updated since it was considered at the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee on 28th January 2016 (Minutes 55 refers).

Councillor Daniel Hawthorne requested clarity on the current treasury position and the operational boundary. Andrew Taylor, Assistant Director of Resources responded accordingly.

Resolved: That:

1. The content of the report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2016/17, be adopted.
3. The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2016/17, be adopted.

4. The various Prudential Indicators, as detailed within the report, be noted.

77. REVENUE BUDGET AND PRECEPTS 2016/2017

Consideration was given to a report of the Treasurer which recommended the setting of the Revenue Budget as required under Section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in the Localism Act 2011) and the precepts and relevant levels of Council Tax required under sections 40, 42B and 47 of the Act (refer to Appendices A to G of the report).

At the meeting of the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee held on 28th January 2016 (Minute 54 refers) the Authority's budget was considered in detail. A number of recommendations were made in respect of the budget strategy and based upon these recommendations being acceptable the report detailed the necessary resolutions and statements required to be approved by the Authority in order to set the budget and precept for 2016/17.

Members were advised that at the time of writing the report for the Policy, Resources and Performance Committee the position on District Council tax bases and surpluses or deficits on Collection Funds together with the position on the Authority's share of the Retained Business Rates was not available as the deadline for part of the information was 31st January 2016. The figures had now been received and were showing an improvement over that previously reported that would reduce the level of required savings.

A report on the 'GMFRA Budget 2016/17 and Medium Term Strategy' had also been considered at a Joint Meeting of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and AGMA Executive on Friday 29th January 2016.

In conclusion, the Local Government Act 2003 required the Authority's Chief Finance Officer, to make a report on the robustness of the estimates and adequacy of reserves and balances which provided the Authority with the information necessary to make the relevant decisions. The Authority had traditionally maintained its balances at a minimum of 5% of net budget. The balances were felt to be at an appropriate level taking into account external factors such as the transition of budget funding over the next four years.

Amendment to the Proposed Budget Recommendation

Councillor Michael Whetton MOVED and Councillor Paul Wild SECONDED an amendment to the proposed budget recommendation to approve a Precept Freeze (0% increase) for 2016/17.

Members had a debate on the submitted amendment on the proposed Budget recommendation.

On being put to the vote, the Amendment was LOST by 5 votes in favour and 19 votes against.

Proposed Budget Recommendation

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was CARRIED by 19 votes in favour and 5 votes against.

A named vote was requested on the recommendation: Councillors David Acton, Mohammed Ayub, Walter Brett, Sharon Briggs, Stephen Coen, Basil Curley, Jim Dawson, Jim Ellis, Grace Fletcher-Hackwood, Daniel Hawthorne, Derek Heffernan, June Hitchen, Bernard Judge, Tommy Judge, Alan Matthews, Amna Mir, John O'Brien, Shaun O'Neill and Steve Williams voted in favour of the recommendation.

Councillors Iain Lindley, Brian Rigby, Michael Whetton, Paul Wild and John Wright voted against the recommendation.

(Note: Councillor Barrie Holland had left the meeting for the vote).

Resolved: That:

1. The Authority's budget for 2016/17 as detailed in Appendix A of the report together with the calculation of the precepts and Council Tax rates as detailed in Appendix D and E of the report, be approved.
2. The Revenue Estimates in accordance with the summary submitted for 2016/17, as detailed in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
3. It be noted that the Authority had calculated the amount of 705,647 as its Council Tax base for the year 2016/17, being the aggregate of the tax bases calculated by the Districts, as detailed at Appendix C of the report, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 made under Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
4. The following amounts to be calculated in accordance with Sections 42A to 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, be approved:-
 - (a) £108,512,988 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 42A (2) (a) to (d) thereof (Appendix B)
 - (b) £67,035,057 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 42A (3) (a) to (b) thereof (Appendix B)
 - (c) £41,477,931 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 42A (4) of the Act, being its budget requirement for the year (Appendix B)

- (d) £58.78 being the amount at (c) above all divided by the amount at paragraph 17 of the report (Resolution 3), calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 42B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (Appendix D).

(a) Valuation Bands

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
<u>£39.18</u>	<u>£45.71</u>	<u>£52.24</u>	<u>£58.78</u>	<u>£71.84</u>	<u>£84.90</u>	<u>£97.96</u>	<u>£117.56</u>

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Band D, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (b) The Amounts (precepts) payable by each Billing Authority are detailed at Appendix E of the report, calculated as being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) by the tax bases calculated by Districts in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, adjusted for surpluses and deficits on District Collection Funds.

78. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN/INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2016-2020

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which presented the Draft Corporate and Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016/20 and sought approval of the contents of the Draft Plan for internal and external consultation with a range of stakeholders over the next 12 weeks. A copy of the Draft Plan was detailed at Appendix A of the report, for Members' reference.

The Deputy County Fire Officer was in attendance and introduced a presentation which highlighted the main proposals within the document to meet the budget reduction of £14.79million by 2020 under the settlement in the Comprehensive Spending Review and assuming a Precept increase of 1.99%. Members were advised on the approach to public consultation over the next 12 weeks and timescales for feedback to inform the final Corporate and Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016/2020.

The consultation would begin immediately and the Draft Plan would be made available through GMFRS's website for public consultation. In addition, four Citizen Forums would be held across Greater Manchester during which Officers and Members would aim to seek feedback on the proposals contained within the document and how response standards were affected in particular. The Chairman invited all Members to come along to support the Citizen Forums, if they so wished, further information on these dates would be available in due course.

A summary of the document to be used for consultation was detailed at Appendix B and a copy of the Consultation and Engagement Plan was detailed at Appendix C of the report.

Members raised a number of questions and comments on the content of the report and the presentation provided with specific regard to the consultation process on the Draft Plan, Integrated Risk Modelling, current resource levels, future crewing proposals and station designations that were answered by Officers accordingly.

In conclusion, the final version of the Draft Corporate and Integrated Risk Plan 2016/20 was due to be submitted to the meeting of Authority on 23rd June 2016 for approval following consideration and incorporation of any changes following the consultation process.

Resolved: That:

1. The report and comments raised, be noted.
2. The Draft Corporate and Integrated Risk Management Plan 2016/20, as detailed at Appendix A of the report, and the summary document as detailed at Appendix B of the report, be approved for consultation.
3. The Director of Corporate Communications work with the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive and Chairman of the Authority to immediately create a more engaging and user friendly version through graphic design.
4. The Consultation and Engagement Plan, as detailed at Appendix C of the report, be approved.
5. All Members of the Authority be invited to attend and support the Citizen Forum Meetings.

79. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016/17

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which detailed the Authority's proposed Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17, in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011. The Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17 detailed the Authority's policies in relation to the pay of its workforce. Members were advised that the Pay Policy Statement did not supersede the responsibilities and duties placed on the Authority in its role as an employer under employment law. A copy of the Statement for 2016/17 was attached at Appendix A of the report, for reference.

Members were advised that each year the financial viability of respective elements of the pay policy were reviewed and this year there were a series of proposed updates to elements of the pay policy.

Resolved: That:

1. The approach to review the multiplier year on year, subject to organisational need and policy and legislative updates, be approved.
2. The adoption of the use of a multiplier of 1.5 to be applied for voluntary redundancy, be approved, subject to being published for one month in line with statutory requirements prior to coming into effect.
3. GMFRS to have regard to the Exit Payments Cap, in line with the proposals detailed in the Enterprise Bill, when considering affordability.
4. The Authority's Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17, as detailed at Appendix A of the report, including the updates be approved and published accordingly.

80. CHIEF'S ACTIVITY REPORT QUARTER 3 (1ST OCTOBER-31ST DECEMBER 2015)

The County Fire Officer and Chief Executive presented the 'Chief's Activity Report' for Quarter 3 2015/16 – 1st October to 31st December 2015, for Members' information and comments. The report provided Members with information on the wide ranging activities which had taken place across the Boroughs during this period and also provided an update on the following subject matters:-

- General News;
- Operational Incidents;
- Service Delivery;
- Prevention and Protection;
- Corporate Communications.

Members had a detailed discussion on the content of the report and the activity which had taken place across the Service in Quarter 3. Councillor Michael Whetton took the opportunity to thank Trafford's Community Safety Team for lending school children in Ashton on Mersey the Community Events Vehicle to use as a stage to perform a carol service to the local community.

In addition, Councillor June Hitchen welcomed the Safe Drive Stay Alive initiative that had taken place in November 2015 and suggested expanding the initiative to cover high schools within Greater Manchester. In response, the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive advised that this suggestion was currently being explored.

Resolved: That the 'Chief's Activity Report' for Quarter 3 2015/16 – 1st October to 31st December 2015 and comments raised, be noted.

81. FLOODING IN GREATER MANCHESTER UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the County Fire Officer and Chief Executive which provided information of the outcome of the flooding that affected Greater Manchester on Boxing Day 2015 and detailed the impact on GMFRS resources on both Boxing Day and the potential impact for the future.

It was reported that on Boxing Day 2015, two thirds of GMFRS's available resources were deployed responding to floods that resulted in firefighters rescuing nearly 1,000 people in less than 24 hours. GMFRS received 513 calls within the peak 19 hour period, with 341 of these being flood-related. At one point over 60% of available fire engines (35) were attending operational incidents at the same time with firefighters working in flood water for up to eight hours at a time.

GMFRS currently had no statutory duty to respond to flooding additional. Funding to support a statutory duty would provide new equipment such as an extra boat and flood bags at fire stations providing firefighters with dry suits/waders and additional equipment helping to respond immediately and safely. The Deputy County Fire Officer advised that all appliances had now been provided with a dry suit to assist Operational Personnel in future flooding occurrences.

Members were advised of some of the key incidents attended across the Boroughs during this period, also how Off-Duty Operational Personnel went to Cumbria on Christmas Day to assist with the floods resulting from Storm Eva.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank all Crews, Officers, support staff and partners for their hard work on 26th December 2015 when the bad weather hit Greater Manchester.

Resolved: That the content of the report and comments raised, be noted.

82. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2016/2017

Consideration was given to a report of the Clerk to the Authority which sought approval to the proposed Timetable of Authority and Committee meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year.

It was noted that the implementation of the Devolution Deals of Greater Manchester may impact on the meeting dates post the Mayoral election in May 2017.

Resolved: That the proposed Timetable of Meetings for the 2016/17 municipal year, be approved.

CHAIRMAN