



Minutes

Finance & Resources Committee

Date: 13 July 2018

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Birkenshaw

Present: Councillor A Tait (in the Chair), C Anderson, J Dodds, R Downes, R Grahame, P Harrand, L Holmes, J Lennox, D O'Donovan, T Peart and O Rowley (as substitute for Councillor J Fenton-Glynn)

In Attendance: None

Apologies: Councillor J Fenton-Glynn

1 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Committee at a meeting held on 20 April 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

2 Urgent items

None.

3 Admission of the public

There were no items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

4 Declarations of interest

None.

5 Environmental Working Group – annual update

Members received a report from the Chief Legal & Governance Officer providing updated information on the activities of the Environmental Working Group and detailed information on electricity, gas and water consumption during the recording period. There had been a recorded decrease in the usage of both electricity and water and a 9.37% increase in the use of gas. It was reported also that CO2 emissions had decreased by 16%. Members were further advised that there had been also been an accrual on gas charges from 2016 /17 of £84,000 which had been applied in the current year.

Members were pleased to note that the textile and book recycling scheme had raised a total of £25,749 for the Firefighters' charity and were advised that 100% of the monies raised went directly to the charity.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted; and
- b) That a detailed breakdown by station of energy usage together with information on the location and success of each textile recycling bank be circulated to Members.

6 Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme – update

The Director of Service Support submitted a report which advised of the latest position with regard to the national Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) which would replace the current Airwave radio network used by the emergency services in the United Kingdom.

Implementation of the programme had been delayed on a number of occasions and four alternative options had been submitted to the Home Office to provide reassurance that the programme remained viable – two of which had subsequently been discounted by the programme. An incremental approach to adoption of the new network had been identified as the favoured option following confirmation that the current Airwave system would be able to continue in its current form for another 6 – 10 years.

Members were advised, however, that no detailed financial information had been made available at the current time but it was anticipated that these would be available in September 2018. Reserves of £258k had been earmarked in the Authority's budget to recognise the potential cost of the system and there remained some contingency in the regional funding arrangements. To date, the project had been funded by a Government Section 31 grant.

Members sought more detailed information on the following issues;

- Network provider and infrastructure
- Compatibility of two systems during incremental implementation
- Budgetary impact
- Testing arrangements

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7 Treasury Management Annual report 2017 – 18

Members received a report from the Chief Finance & Procurement Officer presenting the Treasury Management Annual Report 2017/18 which reviewed borrowing and investment performance, prudential indicators and risk and compliance issues.

It was noted that Fire Authority was a net investor as at 31 March 2018 and revenue balances were £43.9m (including the Government pension top-up made in July 2018). Members were further advised that statutory and regulatory risk and compliance requirements had been fully complied with during the year.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

8 Quarterly financial review

Members received a report from the Chief Finance and Procurement Officer presenting the quarterly review of the financial position of the Fire Authority over the preceding 3 months of the current financial year including both revenue and capital expenditure.

Consequent upon a revision downwards of a number of budget heads following discussions with budget holders based on past and anticipated spending, the current forecast projected a reduced underspend of £239k in the current year compared with previous years.

It was reported that there had been a £2.4m slippage of capital schemes into the current financial year due to the associated protracted payment processes. There were no planned capital receipts for 2018/19. Detail of the revised capital plan 2018/19 was included at annex A to the report now submitted.

RESOLVED

- a) That the report be noted;
- b) That the revised revenue budget and capital plan 2018 / 19 be approved.

Chair