

EAST SUSSEX FIRE AUTHORITY

Minutes of the meeting of the East Sussex Fire Authority held at East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service Headquarters, 20 Upperton Road, Eastbourne at 10.00 hours on Thursday 5 June 2008.

Present: Councillors Carden, Freeman, Gadd, Harmer-Strange, Mrs Healy, Howson, Kemble, Kirby, Livings, Murphy, Pidgeon, Rufus, Scott, Skilton, Sparks, Thomas and Wilson.

Councillors Harmer-Strange was welcomed as a new Fire Authority Member from the City of Brighton & Hove and Councillor Kirby was welcomed as a new Fire Authority Member from East Sussex County Council.

Following the death of Councillor Dyason, Members, officers and members of the public stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect.

222. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 222.1 a. It was noted that all participating Members had undertaken to observe the Authority's Code of Conduct.
- b. It was noted that no Member wished to amend their written declarations of interests under Part 3 of the Code.
- c. It was noted that, in relation to matters on the agenda, Councillor Scott declared a personal interest as his brother-in-law worked for the Fire & Rescue Service. No other Member wished to make any declarations of personal or prejudicial interest under Part 2 of the Code.

223. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

223.1 **RESOLVED** – That

- 1) Councillor Murphy be elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year; and
- 2) the Chairman's preferred title be Chairman.

224. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

224.1 **RESOLVED** – That

- 1) Councillor Kemble be elected Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority; and
- 2) the Vice-Chairman's preferred title be Vice-Chairman.

225. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

225.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marsh.

226. **URGENT ITEMS AND CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

226.1 The Chairman informed Members that the Equality and Diversity Strategy was launched at a conference at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London on 28 May, hosted by Communities and Local Government.

The 2008 Fire and Rescue Service Equality and Diversity Awards were also presented at the conference. Mick Feather, Equal Opportunities Learning & Development Co-ordinator for East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, along with Yanick Dubois, Station Manager at Headquarters, received awards for outstanding contributions to the national Equality and Diversity agenda.

The Chairman wished to pass on the Fire Authority's congratulations for Mick Feathers' Individual Leadership national award for his contribution in producing a highly acclaimed disability poster initiative and Yannick Dubois for her Team Leadership national award for the work she has progressed within the Fire Brigade Union's, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender communities (LGBT).

226.2 East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service, West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service along with Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club support the Residential Social Landlord's project in Sussex with the Coaching For A Safer Community initiative. They have recently been awarded the League 1 Best Community Initiative Award 2008 at this year's Football League Awards Ceremony.

Dave Amiet, Coaching for a Safer Community Project Organiser and representatives from Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club, attended the Awards Ceremony on 28th February 2008, which was held at the Hilton Hotel, Park Lane, London. The Coaching for a Safer Community initiative fought off fierce competition from Leyton Orient, Southend and Northampton for the Best Community Initiative Award 2008.

The Chairman wished to pass on the Fire Authority's congratulations.

- 226.3 Networking Women in the Fire Service established the 'NWFS Award' presented to people or organisations that have contributed significant support to NWFS, women in the Fire Service, or women's issues in general.

Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive Des Prichard was granted the NWFS Silver Award for his long term support and commitment to NWFS and the NEC Committee and promoting equality and diversity in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Brian Wembridge was granted the NWFS Gold Award for sterling support to the network, including voluntary assistance at NWFS events. Brian's citation read that his work will live on, in the form of the 2006 NWFS DVD, which will inspire and influence so many people.

- 226.4 Members were informed that the meeting would be the last meeting of the Fire Authority's legal advisor John Heys.

- 226.5 The Chairman wished to pass on his and the Authority's thanks for his professionalism and all his expert corporate governance and legal services advice and guidance on Fire Authority matters over the years, and in particular his extensive expertise in Standards Panel arrangements.

- 226.6 The Chairman wished to congratulate the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive on his two year appointment as Chairman of the Association of Principal Fire Officers and then to the Chief Fire Officers' Association Board for a two year period as the HR lead.

- 226.7 The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive presented to the Chairman a plaque which had been presented to East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service by Lt. Col. Ali Mohammed Saad Al Hooti, Director of Fire Service Operations, Ministry of Interior, Kingdom of Bahrain, in recognition of the help and assistance given to them with regard the issue of Compressed Air Foam.

227. **TO CONSIDER PUBLIC QUESTIONS, IF ANY**

- 227.1 There were none.

228. **MINUTES**

- 228.1 Councillor Kemble wished it noted that within the minutes of the last meeting it stated he would be undertaking a sponsored walk in aid of the British Heart Foundation and Fire Service Benevolent Fund. This was incorrect as all proceeds collected would go to the newly named Firefighters' Charity.

- 228.2 **RESOLVED** – That the non-confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

229. **CALLOVER**

- 229.1 Members reserved the following items for debate:
223. Election of Chairman.

- 224. Election of Vice-Chairman.
- 230. Political Representation on the Panels of the Fire Authority and nominations for membership.
- 231. Note of the Principal Officer Appointments, Grievance, Policy & Resources, Scrutiny & Audit and Standards meeting held since the last meeting of the Fire Authority.
- 232. Regional Management Board Issues.
- 233. South East Fire & Rescue Control Centre Limited.
- 234. Appointment of a Third Independent Person to the Standards Panel
- 236. Members' Seminar 20 March 2008 – Summary of Issues
- 238. Amendment to the Fire Authority Treasury Management Strategy and Policy Statement for 2008/09
- 239. Budget Monitoring and Projected Outturn 2007/08.
- 243. Fire Authority Quarterly Report (January to March 2008).
- 244. Fire Authority and Panel meetings
- 249. Member Training Programme for 2008/09 (which was brought forward from the confidential agenda).

229.2 **RESOLVED** – That all other reports be resolved in accordance with the recommendations as detailed below.

230. **POLITICAL REPRESENTATION ON THE PANELS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY AND NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

230.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Monitoring Officer which, under the provisions of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, invited the Fire Authority to review the allocation of seats on Committees and other bodies to ensure that, so far as practicable, they reflect the political groups on the Authority. (Copy in Minute Book).

230.2 Members favoured an option which ensured that all political groups were represented on all Panels and also that the Conservative group had a clear majority without needing to rely on the Chairman's casting vote in some Panels. This option increased the places on all Panels (except Standards) by one, making the allocation:

Policy & Resources	7 = 4 Cons, 2 Lib-Dems, 1 Lab
Scrutiny & Audit	7 = 4 Cons, 2 Lib-Dems, 1 Lab
Urgency	5 = 3 Cons, 1 Lib-Dem, 1 Lab
Principal Officer Appointments	5 = 3 Cons, 1 Lib-Dem, 1 Lab
Discipline and Dismissals	5 = 3 Cons, 1 Lib-Dem, 1 Lab
Grievance	5 = 3 Cons, 1 Lib-Dem, 1 Lab

The total number of places would now be 34, divided as follows:
20 Conservative, 8 Liberal-Democrat and 6 Labour.

Members also agreed that the Green Party Member be co-opted as a non-voting Member on both the Policy & Resources and Scrutiny & Audit Panels, and that places on the Standards Panel (to which proportionality rules did not apply) remain the same.

230.3 **RESOLVED** – That

- 1) the revised Panel arrangements and political representation as set out in paragraph 230.2 above be confirmed;
- 2) the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Panels be appointed by the Panels under Standing Order 40.14; and
- 3) the Leader of each Political Party notify the Clerk of the Panels' membership.

231. **NOTE OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICER APPOINTMENTS, GRIEVANCE, POLICY & RESOURCES, SCRUTINY & AUDIT AND STANDARDS PANEL MEETINGS HELD SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

231.1 The Fire Authority considered a report of the Clerk that set out the reports of the Chairmen and Chair of the Panels that had met since the last meeting of the Fire Authority. (Copy in Minute Book).

