

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

27 JANUARY 2009

2.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr W F Gillespie, Chair presiding
Mr C Lammey, Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
Mr P Bradley
Mr J Campbell
Mr S Clarke
Mrs B Gilliland
Mr K Harper
Mr A Hatch
Mr R Pollock
Mrs P Tally

APOLOGIES: Mr J Beattie
Mr J McKeever

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr L Jones, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
Mr P Craig, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Community Development)
Mr T Wright, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Technical Development)
Miss A Conley, Director of Human Resources
Dr D Michail, Director of Planning & Corporate Affairs
Mrs C McNally, Corporate Communications Manager
Miss G Bryce, Research Officer
Mrs I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were noted.

2 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 November 2008, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, subject to a minor amendment, on the motion of Mrs Gilliland, seconded by Mr Campbell.

Arising out of the Minutes:

Chief Fire Officer's Report Management Accounts

The Chair enquired as to progress with regard to the Business Case pertaining to NIFRS donating decommissioned vehicles to developing countries. The Chief Fire Officer explained that a first draft of the Business Case had been prepared. The Director of Planning & Corporate Affairs informed Members of contact made with other Fire & Rescue Services who had donated vehicles. He gave Members a brief overview of the processes followed by those Services and highlighted other considerations which needed to be taken on board within the Business Case.

Mr Bradley expressed concern in relation to how some old appliances were being used and suggested that NIFRS may need to consider refraining from selling vehicles by public auction.

3 Service Delivery Committee Meeting

Members noted the draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Service Delivery Committee held on 13 January 2009.

At this point,
Mr Hatch entered the Meeting

Mr Harper, Chair of the Service Delivery Committee, drew Members' attention to Item 5 of the Minutes and the discussion regarding the need for consultation on decisions pertaining to operational service delivery. He explained that he felt decisions relating to the relocation of resources or the enhancement of fire cover were operational matters and, therefore, the decision of the Chief Fire Officer and his Officers with the Board kept informed of same. He further stated that he felt that the time was opportune to consider the matter hence he had asked the Chief Fire Officer to consider the consultation and decision-making process and to draft guidelines to assist the process for the consideration of the Committee.

During discussion regarding the matter, Mr Bradley concurred with Mr Harper's comments and reminded Members of the Scheme of Delegation which clearly defined the Chief Fire Officer's powers and responsibilities.

Referring to Item 4 of the Minutes relating to Fire Safety Legislation, Mr Bradley reiterated that he felt it would be useful for the Board to receive a presentation on the new Legislation which was coming into operation in the Spring.

Arising out of the Minutes:

**IRMP Action Plan 2007/08
Review of Second Pumping Appliances at 12 Fire Station Locations -
One Key Recommendation for Change in Resources at Portstewart Fire Station**

Mr Harper informed Members that, following the conclusion of the consultation exercise in relation to the proposal to remove the second appliance from Portstewart Fire Station, the Committee, at its Meeting on 13 January 2009, had considered a summary of the consultation exercise, together with suggested replies to the specific issues raised. He explained that the Committee had suggested some amendments to the Report and Members noted the updated draft which had been circulated for consideration.

Mr Harper stated that the Committee recommended endorsement of the Summary of Consultation Exercise and also recommended approval that the second appliance be removed from Portstewart Fire Station.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer outlined the background to the recommendation for change in resources at Portstewart Fire Station which emanated from the review of second pumping appliances at 12 Fire Station locations. He gave Members a synopsis of the key themes contained within the Summary of the Consultation Exercise and also an overview of the conclusion. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer answered Members' questions in relation to the information presented. In response to the concern of some Members, he assured them that the withdrawal of one appliance at Portstewart would not affect service delivery.

At this point
the Chief Fire Officer left the Meeting
to take an urgent telephone call

The Board, on the motion of Mr Harper, seconded by Mr Pollock, unanimously -

Resolved: "to approve the Summary of Consultation Exercise, subject to minor amendments and to recommend that the second appliance be removed from Portstewart Fire Station".

Mrs Tally commended the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and his Team on all their work and stated that she was satisfied that the Board had all the documentation to support its decision.

At this point,
the Chief Fire Officer rejoined the Meeting

In response to questions raised by Members, the Chief Fire Officer outlined the process for taking forward the recommendation. It was noted that the Chief Fire Officer would be briefing the Minister in respect of the issue.

At this point,
Miss Bryce left the Meeting

Mr Bradley referred to the Meeting of the Service Support Committee held on 3 December 2008 and asked why the draft Minutes had not been circulated to Members.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that this had been an oversight and it was agreed that these Minutes be circulated later in the Meeting.

4 National Joint Council Matters

Report on Meetings

The Chair informed Members that he had attended meetings of the National Joint Council on 16 December 2008. He highlighted the key items of discussion which had included confirmation of the membership of the Advisory Forum, the annual wage increase and a list of items which the Fire Brigades' Union wished to progress. He also gave Members an update on the current position in respect of the matters discussed.

5 Chair's Business

The Chair gave the Meeting a brief overview of his activities since the last Meeting of the Board. He referred in particular to the closing event of the '999' Charity which had raised £264,000 for the NI Cancer Fund for Children, an excellent achievement. He congratulated all in the Fire & Rescue Service on a magnificent result.

The Chief Fire Officer explained that the purpose of the '999' charity had been to raise funds while encouraging links between the Emergency Services at a local level. He stated that it had been a very successful year.

The Chair informed Members that he had visited the new Armagh Fire Station, an impressive project, and would welcome the opportunity for all Members to visit the Station.

Survey – Central Appointments Unit

The Chair informed Members of a letter received from the Central Appointments Unit regarding a survey which would be conducted by OFMDFM in relation to the Disability Act. He stated that the Central Appointments Unit was seeking support for the survey.

NIFRS Board Meetings

A list of proposed dates of Board Meetings up to June 2009 was circulated for the information of Members. The Chair explained that the date of the June Meeting would be dependant on the presentation of Final Accounts.

Visit to Fire Service College

The Chair sought Members' views on the possibility of a visit to the Fire Service College. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Chief Fire Officer progress a visit in September.

6 Chief Fire Officer's Report

A Monthly News Brief for the month of January 2009 was circulated for the information of Members.

Operational Activities

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer gave Members an overview of the Operational Activities and incidents of note during the months of November and December 2008. Referring to some of the Special Service Calls involving fatalities, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer acknowledged the courage and dedication of staff at such incidents.

The Chief Fire Officer answered Members' questions regarding aspects of the Report.

Management Accounts

The Chief Fire Officer gave Members a synopsis of the financial position for the period ending 31 December 2008. He also advised Members of the activity in relation to acquisition, etc, of sites in respect of the 26 Stations which had been identified for replacement or refurbishment over the next 10 years.

At this point,
Mr Harper and Mr Clarke left the Meeting

At this point, the draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Service Support Committee, held on 3 December 2008, were circulated for the information of Members. After an interval to allow Members to consider the Minutes, it was agreed that the matter be referred for discussion at the next Board Meeting.

7 Relevant Correspondence

There was no other relevant correspondence.

8 Sealing of Documents

Members approved the undernoted documents for Sealing:

Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service with –

Central Source - Community Development Standard Support Materials;

Charis Consultancy Services - ILM Level 5 Diploma for the period 1.12.2008 to 31.5.2010;

Coyle Decor - Redecorations at Westland Fire Station & Training Centre and Springfield Fire Station;

Island Cleaning Services - Cleaning and Window Cleaning Services for the period 1.11.2008 to 31.10.2011;

Podium 4 Sport - Provision of Sports Equipment;

Western Education & Library Board - Purchase of Land at Dungiven for new Fire Station;

Fois Limited - Network Cabling Services for the period 2.7.2008 to 30.6.2010;

Resource - Cleaning and Window Cleaning Services for the period 1.11.2008 to 31.10.2011;

Graham Facilities Management - Provision of a Legionella Monitoring Programme and Risk Assessments to Water Systems in various NIFRS Buildings for the period 1.12.2008 to 30.11.2010;

Mount Charles Catering Limited - Cleaning Services for the period 1.11.2008 to 31.10.2011; and

Clifton Cleaning Services - Cleaning and Window Cleaning Services for the period 1.11.2008 to 31.10.2011.

9 **Meetings of the Board and its Committees**

Members noted that the next Meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on 24 February 2009.

The Chair, on behalf of the NIFRS Board, extended congratulations to Area Commander E Doyle on his award of the Queen's Fire Service Medal.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
AND THE MEETING TERMINATED
AT 4.00 PM
