BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY FROM ITS MEETING ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MEETINGS

Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority (CFA) held a meeting on 7 September 2011 at Dunstable Community Fire Station. The major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below:

1. LGA FIRE COMMITTEE

Members congratulated the Chair, Councillor Sian Timoney, on her appointment as Lead Labour Member of the LGA Fire Committee.

2. AUDIT COMMITTEE AND POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUPS

The Terms of Reference for the Corporate Services, Service Delivery and Human Resources Policy and Challenge Groups were revised to include responsibility for monitoring the effective identification and management of corporate risks relating to [the Group's] functions, with the Terms of Reference of the Audit Committee being revised to include the monitoring and effective development and operation of corporate risk management including the annual review of the Authority's Strategic Risk Register.

3. AUDIT COMMITTEE: QUORUM ARRANGEMENTS

The quorum of the Audit Committee was revised to at least one third of voting Members and at least one Member from two constituent authorities.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUP

Members recommended that the Community Engagement Unit pilot be extended to mainstream its activity at Bedford and Luton fire stations and extend the project across the whole Fire Authority area.

5. STRATEGIC PROGRAMME REPORT 2011/12: QUARTER 1

Members received a summary of the Strategic Programme and Projects 2011-14 and reported progress made in the first quarter of 2011/12.

6. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2011/12 AS AT 31 JULY 2011

The Treasurer reported on the budget monitoring position as at 31 July 2011.

7. FALSE ALARMS AND UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS FROM AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS – REVISED POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

Members considered proposed changes to Service policy in response to calls from automatic fire alarms (AFAs) and agreed that the Service should review the following four key areas for improvement with regard to Automatic Fire Alarms:

- Advice at the building planning stage;
- Effective local event management (on site procedures), fire alarm testing and maintenance;
- Agreement with alarm receiving centres to reduce the number of unwanted fire signals; and,
- Follow-up actions for unsatisfactory premises (e.g. defective fire alarm systems and remedial action).

It was agreed that the appropriate response would be to mobilise to AFAs based upon the known risk and in accordance with their Integrated Risk Management Plans/risk reduction plans. Confirmed fires would attract a full or enhanced emergency response.

8. DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Councillors Atkins, Headley and Mingay declared a personal interest in this Item in their capacity as Members of Bedford Borough Council.

The following disposal of surplus operational assets was agreed in accordance with the priority agreed by the Fire Authority on 16 April 2010:

1. A Peugeot Expert diesel van be donated to Bedford Borough Council in support of the Speed Watch Initiative.
2. A Ribcraft Rescue Boat, engine, trailer and associated ancillary equipment be sold by auction.
3. A Water Carrier be donated to the Onset Trust for further operational service in Kenya.
4. A Water Carrier be sold to the Paper Trail (Heritage) Fire Brigade and South Midland District BFSA in the sum of £3,000.

9. CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION - PRESIDENCY

Members congratulated Chief Fire Officer Fuller on his election as President of the UK Chief Fire Officers' Association.

The Chair advised that the Presidency brought significant kudos and profile to the Fire Authority and Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service.

10. INFORMATION BULLETIN

Members received a Bulletin containing information on various matters relating to the Fire and Rescue Service.

COUNCILLOR DAVID McVICAR
VICE CHAIR OF THE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY