



## **BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

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### **REPORT OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY FROM ITS MEETING ON 20 MARCH 2013 TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL**

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) held a meeting on 20 March 2013 at Dunstable Community Fire Station. The major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below:

#### **1. SPRINKLERS**

The Chairman and Vice Chairman advised that, at the LGA Fire Conference held on 12/13 March, the topic of sprinklers had been discussed.

Councillor Peter Williams advised that Central Bedfordshire Council had developed a Design Guide for planning applications and it had been suggested that this should include reference to the installation of sprinklers. Councillor Williams advised that he would be willing to discuss this matter further with Members to further the provision of sprinklers on Council agendas.

CFO Fuller suggested including a reference to sprinklers in the narrative report to the constituent Councils in order to raise awareness, highlight the lifesaving impact of sprinklers, and urge planners to manage the position in all new residential and commercial development.

#### **2. POLICY AND CHALLENGE GROUPS**

Members received the draft Minutes of the latest meetings of the Corporate Services, Service Delivery and Human Resources Policy and Challenge Groups.

In addition to each Group agreeing performance indicators for 2013/14, a number of policies relating to health and safety, and equality and diversity had been approved.

The Fire and Rescue Authority also approved a Treasury Management Strategy Statement; Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy; and Treasury Management Practices.

### **3. AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Members received the draft Minutes of the latest meetings of the Audit and Standards Committee noting that the Committee had agreed Audit Plans for 2013/14.

The Committee had also considered the outcome of the Fire and Rescue Authority's 2012/13 Review of Effectiveness conducted on 30 January 2013; the outcome of individual reviews undertaken by this Committee and the Fire and Rescue Authority's Policy and Challenge Groups; and a record of Members' attendance at meetings to date.

In the light of this, Members had considered performance objectives for 2013/14 and recommended an Action Plan for 2013/14, which the Fire and Rescue Authority agreed. One of the proposals was that, from 2013/14, the record of Members' attendance at meetings should include the reason for any tendered apology.

The Chairman supported this proposal advising that he was to write to each of the constituent Councils advising that attendance at meetings, etc., was expected as it had been included in the calculation of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

### **4. LOCALISM ACT: PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2013**

On 19 February 2013, Members had agreed an annual pay policy statement for the financial year 2013/14.

In a letter dated 20 February 2013 to Leaders of Local Authorities in England and Chairs of Fire and Rescue Authorities, Eric Pickles had subsequently issued supplementary guidance for 2013 /14 as follows:

- Pay policy statements to be easily accessible from a simple search of the authority's website;
- A meeting of Members to vote on salary packages of £100,000 or more;
- A meeting of Members to vote on severance packages over £100,000; and
- Where Councils have directly elected mayors, to have regard to any proposals before the statement is considered and approved.

To ensure the pay policy statement was clear on these matters, the pay policy statement had been updated and was agreed by Members.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID McVICAR  
CHAIRMAN OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**