



COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

27 SEPTEMBER 2017

NOTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Members Present: Cllr A Batey (Chair)
Cllrs C Potts, G Richardson, J Shuttleworth, K Hawley and
S Richmond. Cllr D Stoker (observer)

Apologies: Apologies were received from AM S Nattrass

Role of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

- Members were given a brief description of the role of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The procedure to consider and make recommendations to the authority for the proposed Revenue and Capital budget, medium term financial plan and level of council tax were discussed. Cllr Richmond was identified as the CFA Equality and Diversity Champion.

Revenue and Capital Outturn for the year ended March 2017

- The committee were provided with the information on the 2016/17 revenue and capital outturn compared to the original budget.

The treasurer informed the Committee that the borrowing requirement is now £1.8m against the £4.5m originally forecast. General reserves remain at £2.82m which equates to 10% of revenue budget. Transfers of £3.056m from the capital modernization reserve were made to finance capital expenditure. This reserve has now been fully utilised however, all building works are now complete and any future, planned developments will be financed from alternative sources.

The underspends and overspends and the reasons for significant variations from the budget were provided and discussed. The overspend on the capital budget was mainly due to the accounting adjustments relating to the Estate Improvement Programme in 2016/17 as a result of delays to the completion of the Barnard Castle Quad station.

The committee **noted** the report.

Short Term Investments Quarter 4 2016/17

- Members were provided with an update on the performance of the Authority's Short Term Investments for the period ended 31 March 2017. Members noted the transactions made and that interest of £25,958 had been earned which had exceeded the budgeted amount of £20,000 for the year.

The committee **noted** the position regarding the Authority's Short Term Investments.

Short Term Investments Quarter 1 2017/18

4. Members were provided with an update on the performance of the Authority's Short Term Investments for the period ended 30 June 2017. Members noted the transactions made and that interest of £3,662 had been earned with an average return of 0.21% (just below base rate).

The committee **noted** the current position regarding the Authority's Short Term Investments.

Sickness Absence Performance 01 April 2016 – 31 March 2017

5. Members were given an update on sickness absence performance for the year ending 31 March 2017. Overall, sickness rates had improved on the previous year with the exception of non-uniformed staff which was largely due to the long term sickness absence of a single member of staff. There had been promising improvements in quarter 4 to all absence levels but the figures presented are reflective of a high level of long term sickness absence in the first two quarters of the year.

When comparison was made against National Fire Service data, the service is below national average for wholetime staff (inclusive of riders, FDO and day duty staff) and RDS categories however, sickness in the Control and non-uniformed categories are above the national average.

The committee discussed the sickness absence statistics and the reasons behind the increases and decreases.

Cllrs Potts and Richardson congratulated the service on a positive report.

The committee **noted** and **commented** on the report.