

COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

At a **MEETING** of the **FINANCE COMMITTEE** held at Service Headquarters, on **Tuesday, 23 October at 10.00am**

PRESENT:	Cllr Alison Batey in the Chair
DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL:	Cllrs P Howell, J Shuttleworth, W Stelling and R Manchester (sub for C Potts)
DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL:	Cllr S Richmond
OFFICERS:	T Hope; K Metcalfe

PART A

The Chair opened the meeting noting congratulations on behalf of the committee to Tony Hope on receiving his 40 year long service award.

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr C Potts.

2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2018 were agreed as a true record.

3 **Sickness Absence Performance Quarter 4**

KM introduced the report which provided the committee with an update on sickness absence performance at the end of the reporting year 2017-18. Overall sickness across all categories had improved with a 11% reduction in shifts lost in comparison with last year.

TH informed members that moving forward sickness absence would be monitored by the Performance Committee.

ACTION: Members **noted** and **commented** on the report.

4 **Revenue and Capital Out-turn for the year ended 31 March 2018**

TH introduced the report which provided information on the 2017/18 revenue and capital outturn compared with the original budget. The comparison with the original budget is a requirement for the published statement of accounts and differs from the information provided during the year which compared actual expenditure and income with the revised budget.

Cllr Batey requested clarification regarding funding for emergency situations. TH confirmed that this was planned into reserves.

Cllr Shuttleworth queried the miscellaneous sales noted under the other income section. TH

confirmed that this was services provided to 3rd parties.

Cllr Howell queried the total net revenue expenditure figure. TH confirmed that the figure was income generated from council tax, government grants and business rates.

Cllr Howell requested background on the decision around not proceeding with alterations to the Training Centre. TH confirmed that options were explored for additional showers and a canteen, however estimates were too expensive.

Cllr Richmond commented that it was pleasing to note contributions from VFS.

ACTION: Members **noted** the outturn position for the financial year ended 31 March 2018.

5 Short Term Investments Quarter 4 2017/18

TH introduced the report which provided an update on the performance of the Authority's short term investments for the period ended 31 March 2018.

P Howell queried the average investment amount. TH confirmed that amounts varied throughout the year and the Service were obliged to invest with minimum risk.

ACTION: Members **noted** the position regarding the Authority's short term investments at 31 March 2018.

6 Short Term Investments Quarter 2 2018/19

TH introduced the report which provided an update on the performance of the Authority's short term investments for the period ended 30 September 2018.

Cllr Shuttleworth queried whether there were any alternative borrowers to consider. TH noted that the service were following the investment strategy approved by the Authority as part of the budget report.

Members discussed commercial investment and Cllr Howell questioned the approach of other fire and rescue services. TH replied that to his knowledge no other fire and rescue Authority's were investing commercially.

ACTION: Members **noted** the current position regarding the Authority's short term investments.

7 Forecast of Out-turn Quarter 2 2018/19

TH introduced the report which provided an indication of the Service's revenue and capital financial outturn position based upon expenditure and income to the 30 September 2018. The forecast revenue underspend for the year is £0.469M. An underspend of £3.0M is currently forecast on the capital budget at the year end due to slippage in the Darlington fire station scheme.

P Howell commented that the saving was commendable and queried the low figure for planned vehicle expenditure. TH informed members that the Service has a 15 year vehicle

replacement plan and there were no appliances scheduled for replacement this year.

ACTION: Members **noted** the forecast revenue and capital outturn position and **approved** the revisions to the capital budget as set out in Appendix 2.

8 2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan

TH introduced the report which advised members of the proposed timetable for the consideration and approval of the 2019/20 budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Cllr Batey requested that members discuss the IRMP at community meetings with copies of the questionnaire. If officer attendance was required, members should notify the Service of dates as soon as possible.

ACTION: Members **agreed** that the 2019/20 revenue budget is prepared at a standstill position highlighting requirements for any inflationary contingencies and inescapable commitments.

ACTION: Members **agreed** that the Finance Committee give detailed consideration to budget matters as outlined in the report and makes appropriate recommendations to the Fire Authority.

9 2019/20 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation

TH introduced the report which set out details of the Authority's response to a recent technical consultation on the Governments proposals for distributing government funding in 2019/20.

ACTION: Members **noted** the Authority's response to the consultation.

Time and Date of Next Meeting: TBC