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MINUTES

**RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

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DATE	Friday 12 January 2018	TIME	10.30 am
VENUE	Committee Room 2, lower ground floor, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA		

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Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Resources Committee held in the above venue on Friday 12 January 2018.

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**Present:**

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Dr Fiona Twycross AM (Chair)	Councillor Fiona Colley	David Kurten AM
Andrew Dismore AM (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Rachel Blake	Councillor Caroline Russell AM
Gareth Bacon AM	Councillor Susan Hall AM	
	Councillor Mehboob Khan	

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**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Martin Whelton for whom Councillor Fiona Colley substituted.

**2. Disclosures of Interests and Dispensations**

**Resolved** – That the details of membership of the GLA, other functional bodies and London Boroughs, as attached as an appendix to the agenda, be noted. No further disclosures were made.

**3. Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 3 November 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

**4. Summary List of Actions - FEP 2808**

Report by the Clerk to the Authority.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the ongoing and completed actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee, as set out in the report, be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## 5. **Budget Update - FEP 2809**

Report by the Director of Finance and Contractual Services.

The Director of Finance and Contractual Services introduced the report which set out the impact of the Mayor's consultation budget on the Authority's three year financial position alongside a number of minor changes officers had made to the forecast. The Mayor's intention to increase the non-policing precept meant that the budget was now largely balanced, and there would be no further savings required taking in to account the use of reserves. However, it was important to note that the position was on the basis of current budget estimates, so the report also included the budget risks which were set out in the November submission and which would be kept under review. It was likely that the pay inflation estimate included in the forecast would become unsustainable due to some of the pay deals currently being negotiated nationally.

Greg Edwards made a submission to the Committee on behalf of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) outlining the FBU's concerns related to the report, including the lack of central Government funding, solutions to increase recruitment, the security costs for closed station sites following LSP5, and the position on training centres. The Commissioner, the Director of Finance and Contractual Services, and the Head of Development and Training responded to the FBU submission on future initiatives to assist recruitment, security cost details which would be made available to the staff side, and the position on training centres.

The Director of Finance and Contractual Services and the Director of Operations answered questions from Members on the risk related to increased collaboration, and on co-responding and the performance of the Vision mobilising system.

The Director of Finance and Contractual Services and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services then answered questions from Members around the future of the Southwark training centre site, and it was agreed that officers would update the Committee in more detail as part of the exempt urgent business item in Part 2 of the meeting.

The Director of Finance and Contractual Services answered questions from Members on the Brexit risk and the inflationary impact on the replacement fleet which officers were keeping under review.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the report be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## 6. **Review of the Managing Attendance Policy - FEP 2810**

Report by the Interim Head of Human Resource Management.

The Interim Head of Human Resource Management introduced the report, explaining that officers had undertaken an earlier than planned review of the policy introduced in April 2016. The review centred on looking at feedback from both staff and managers and identifying areas for improvement. The report set out a number of proposed changes which were

currently the subject of consultation with the staff side and also recommended that final changes be approved by the Commissioner under delegated authority.

In reply to questions from Members, the Interim Head of Human Resource Management confirmed that the LFB's high level of absence was in part attributable to its large, permanent workforce in contrast to the smaller, 'retained' workforces of other Fire and Rescue Services in other parts of the country. London was simply a lot busier than other areas. However, officers agreed that absence levels needed to be managed down and were looking at how other comparable organisations, including the Metropolitan Police Service, had managed to do that. She also responded to questions from Members concerning the setting of targets for long and short term sickness, and data analysis related to due to service injury and age profile. She confirmed that a large part of the latest proposed changes to the policy were centred around enhanced training and support for managers. The Director of Operations added that the Fire Brigades Union were also being very helpful in assisting management in improving the effectiveness of the policy.

The Interim Head of Human Resource Management confirmed that officers would be reporting to the next meeting of the Committee in March and would include analysis related to several of the points raised by Members at today's meeting.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the Committee:

- (1) Notes the outcome of the review of the Managing Attendance Policy; and
- (2) Notes the proposed changes to the Policy and Handbook, and that following consultation and agreement with the AJC trade unions, final changes will be approved by the Commissioner in accordance with her delegated authority (FEP 2490).

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## **7. Human Resources Digest: 6 Months Ending September 2017 - FEP 2811**

Report by the Interim Head of Human Resource Management.

The Interim Head of Human Resource Management introduced the report, confirming that the report set out various HR related data up to September 2017. She drew the Committee's attention to two matters in particular that Members had requested, namely: the inclusion of information on the reasons for operational staff leaving, retirement being by far the largest reason; and the inclusion of benchmarking data on sickness absence for the London Ambulance Service and the Metropolitan Police Service. Officers were liaising with the Met to learn lessons about how they had successfully reduced absence figures and how initiatives could be applied to the Brigade.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the report be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## 8. Integrated Equipment & Logistics Project Update - FEP 2812

Report by the Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support.

The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support introduced the report which updated the Committee on progress with the amalgamation of the Protective Equipment Group (PEG) and the Brigade Distribution Centre (BDC). Officers had investigated several sites and had now agreed a lease for a site in Croydon as set out in the report. Some substantial fit-outs were required for the site and detailed costs were set out in the Part 2 report at item 14 on the agenda. The current programme estimated a move into the premises in December 2018. Staff at both PEG and BDC had suggested a new name for the combination of the services and their new home, namely the OSG (Operations Support Group) and the OSC (Operations Support Centre) respectively.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the report be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## 9. Vehicle and Equipment Contract Update - FEP 2813

Report by the Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support.

The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support introduced the report which updated the Committee on the performance of the vehicles and equipment contract between June and November 2017 and recommended the procurement of a combination of standard and extended range aerial appliances.

The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support drew Members' attention to a reduction in performance which was largely due to a national shortage of engineering technicians. Officers were working with the contractor to remedy the situation, with Babcock reviewing the salary band for technicians in order to increase recruitment into those positions.

The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support along with the Director of Finance and Contractual Services, the Director of Safety and Assurance, the Commissioner, and the Director of Operations answered questions from Members relating to: the ongoing discussions with City Hall about the time period for adaptation of the Brigade fleet to conform with the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ); ownership and risks around the national resilience vehicles; planned maintenance and the technician shortage; costs relating to batch 2 of the new pumping appliances; and the options around the type, housing and placement of the new aerial appliances. It was agreed that officers should report on aerial appliances to the next meeting of the Committee in March and keep Members informed by way of briefings if any progress was made prior to March.

The motion was made by the Chair – That:

- (1) The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, be authorised to place orders under the contract with Babcock Critical Services to procure a combination of standard range and

extended range aerial appliances giving a total of fifteen (15) aerial appliances at an estimated total capital cost including the donation from the Metropolitan Grand Lodge of London, not exceeding £14,800k (see paragraphs 16 - 20 below for details); and

- (2) Officers report to the next meeting of the Committee in March 2018 with an update on timescales and any decisions taken on the type and placement of the aerial appliances, and keep Members informed by way of briefings if any progress is made prior to March.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

#### **10. Training Contract: Babcock's Performance - First Half of 2017/18 - FEP 2814**

Report by the Head of Training and Development.

The Head of Training and Development introduced the report which covered Babcock's performance during the first half of the 2017-18 training year, and updated the Committee on the training centre at Croydon. Booking rates were in line with targets for the training plan and core skills, though 3 areas – breathing apparatus, water rescue, and incident command training – were below target, but work was in hand to rectify that position as set out in the report.

Stage 2 of the project design for the Croydon Training Centre was now complete and work on Stage 3 (construction) was now in the early stages. The pre-planning application was progressing well and favourable feedback had been received from the local MP, Croydon Council, and local residents. The Chair thanked staff for the work they had done on the exhibition.

The Head of Training and Development, along with the Commissioner, replied to questions and agreed to investigate various matters raised with Members by operational staff including the duration of recruit training, the proximity of training to base stations, the allocation of training venues, cancellation of courses and tolerance levels, and difficulties in contacting training venues and in using the training website.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the report be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

#### **11. Wellbeing Update - FEP 2815**

Report by the Head of Training and Development.

The Head of Training and Development introduced the report which gave the Committee the latest six monthly update on the wellbeing initiatives being progressed, and outlined the work being done by the Counselling and Wellbeing Team in supporting staff involved in the Grenfell fire. Other initiatives included: training for managers in recognising and dealing with

stress; the development of a nutrition programme to address the importance of fitness. The Head of Training and Development also confirmed that the mental health charity, Mind, had completed their visits to various fire stations to advise on mental health wellbeing.

The Chair asked officers to feedback Members' thanks to Mind for their work with the Brigade.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the report be noted.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

## 12. Urgent Business

There was no urgent Part 1 business.

## 13. Exclusion of Press and Public

**Resolved** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 7a of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) in order to consider the following items of business.

## 14. Integrated Equipment & Logistics Project (ILEP) Update - FEP 2812X

Report by the Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support.

The Head of Procurement and Technical and Service Support introduced the report.

The Chair thanked staff for their work on this project.

The motion was made by the Chair – That the Committee:

- (1) Notes the increase to the existing budget from 2018/19, the additional one-off increase in 2018/19 only, and the interim overspend in 2017/18 as set out in the report, whilst there is a period of dual running of the existing BDC and TLC premises and services in accordance with the benchmark financial estimates approved in July 2017 (FEP 2757X);
- (2) Agrees the one off spend of up to the sum set out in the report in 2019/20 for dilapidation costs of exiting the BDC; and
- (3) Agrees the uplift in Capital funding from the sum previously reported to the sum set out in this report in order that the extra mechanical, electrical and external works required on the new site can be completed.

The motion was seconded by Andrew Dismore AM, put and agreed.

**Resolved** – accordingly.

**15. Urgent Business**

There was no urgent Part 2 business, though the Chair took the opportunity to ask the Director of Finance and Contractual Services to update the Committee on the current position with the Southwark Training Centre site.

The meeting ended at 11.45am.

Signed By: .....  
Chair

John Johnson  
Ground Floor, 169 Union Street  
London, SE1 OLL  
telephone: 0208 555 1200 (x30084)  
e-mail: JOHN.JOHNSON@london-fire.gov.uk  
Clerk to RESOURCES COMMITTEE