



Strategic Asset Investment Framework

10 Year Strategy

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Foreword

Councillor Rachelle Shepherd Dubey, Lead Member for Strategic Assets and Sustainability



It is my pleasure to introduce the latest refresh of our Strategic Asset Investment Framework document. Considering the broader economic situation and the changing needs of our communities and staff, it remains imperative that we continue to seek ever greater value from the public purse. To help achieve this we have included features such as extending the life of many of our buildings and fleet, introducing 'green' technologies where we can reduce energy costs and our carbon footprint, improving the equality of our facilities to support, attract and retain a more diverse team and better enable our staff to manage the contaminants they may encounter during emergency incidents.

We have made a clear financial provision for the first half of this plan that will enable an accelerated approach to achieve some of our ambitions across our whole estate so that the benefits can be realised sooner. For example, we will be completing initiatives that will significantly improve sustainability performance across the estate, including LED lighting, insulation, heat pumps and solar. This builds on last year's work on thematic equality and contaminants management improvements, which have progressed well. We will do this while continuing to target more significant improvements where they are needed such as a new Training School that will enable us to continue to ensure our staff are well trained and able to deliver services to the public safely and effectively.

The Fire Authority's foresight to focus investment on updating our fire engine fleet continues to realise benefits. In addition to the transformation of the front-line appliance fleet, the Service has invested in off-road light vehicles that have been adapted to better deal with wildfires and this capability will be invested in further. This approach creates capacity to adapt our specialist and support fleet to changing demands and benefit from advances in technology, such as electrification and improved capability to tackle incidents such as wildfires. Operational equipment continues to feature in the plan and the Service has now fully transitioned to best in class breathing apparatus equipment using a jointly procured tri-service Thames Valley team approach. This collaborative approach enabled a large and complex programme of work to be delivered efficiently within the capabilities of the Services' current technical and training resources, thereby delivering excellent value for money.

We recognise that Information and Communication Technology underpins most of our operations and areas within the organisation enabling us to deliver our statutory duties. We continue to develop and adapt our systems to benefit from the advances in the ICT, and allowing the organisation to benefit from the data it gathers.



This approach continues to directly support the principles set out in our strategy for ICT.

I would like to thank colleagues across the Service for their enormous efforts in delivering the many successes to date and I look forward to seeing this ambitious plan delivering meaningful improvements to both our communities and staff.



Introduction

The Fire Authority's key responsibility is to make sure it provides an effective fire and rescue service for communities across Berkshire.

The Authority's purpose is to create safer and more resilient communities by preventing incidents, protecting homes and businesses and responding to emergencies.

The Authority has a set of commitments that we regularly review. They explain how we intend to achieve our purpose:

1. Prevention - We will reduce the risk to our communities through our partnership duties and prevention activities, ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
2. Protection - We will support those with responsibility for premises to understand their duties in ensuring the safety of all people using buildings covered by the Building Safety Act 2022 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, whilst ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
3. Response - We will ensure that our people are trained and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.
4. Resilience - We will ensure our own resilience and work with partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.
5. Sustainability - We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.
6. People - We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.



To ensure that we have the right resources, in the right place, at the right time to deliver on these key themes, we need to maintain a significant asset base. This document sets out the Authority's 10-year strategy for the replacement and improvement of these assets.

In simple terms, the strategic assets of RBFRS can be broken down into three broad categories:

- Our buildings, which includes 16 fire stations and our headquarters site which includes Thames Valley Fire Control Service;
- Our fire appliances, equipment and support fleet; and
- Our ICT infrastructure and systems.

By working in collaboration with relevant partners – particularly those from the blue light services – RBFRS can deliver greater monetary and non-monetary benefits for the communities we serve. Therefore, at the core of this framework is the concept of collaboration.

RBFRS is rightly proud of the success to date in this area. This programme provides more opportunities to collaborate and deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness for the future of the Service.



Our Estate

The annual refresh and development of the SAIF provides the Authority with a clear view of the long-term financial pressures associated with meeting planned property improvements as well as replacement and refurbishment programmes that are urgently needed to ensure the built estate continues to meet its workforce delivery requirements now and into the future.

The previous phase of the Strategic Asset Investment Programme started in 2017 with the transformation of Hungerford Fire Station into the Service's first community tri-service station. This now provides shared facilities for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service. This phase also incorporated the rebuilding of Crowthorne Community Fire Station in 2020 and the completion of the newly built Theale Community Fire Station in 2022.

The next major project to redevelop the training centre facilities at the Whitley Wood site is underway with detailed design and planning well advanced, and the modular building contractor appointed. Subject to local authority planning permission and any conditions therein, the on-site work is scheduled to be completed by March 2025. A price has been provided by the modular building contractor with the total expected re-development project cost, including phase one work, now set at £3.86 million. This figure exceeds the previous estimate of £3.65 million, but it includes an appropriate contingency which is deemed prudent given a volatile construction sector. The business case report for this work was presented for detailed consideration and approval by Members in July 2023 with a revision presented in February 2024.

The refurbishment works at Slough fire station are in progress and planned completion is April 2024, with a similar project planned at Langley for delivery during 2024-26. Major refurbishments of other wholtime stations will also be carried out over the next four years. These works are a good example of broader estate improvements, which are based on four core objectives:

- Improving equality, diversity and inclusion – creating facilities that support, encourage and promote a more diverse workforce now and into the future;
- Improving contamination control – addressing the growing risk of contaminants by providing better facilities for decontamination and contamination control;
- Sustainability – making the estate more environmentally friendly by carrying out upgrades and initiatives to reduce our carbon output and realise potential revenue savings by doing so; and



- Improving the building fabric – investing in the fabric of the buildings to ensure longevity of our current estate and to provide fit-for-purpose workplaces for our staff.

Case Study – Whitley Wood Training Centre Design and Planning

Whitley Wood Training Centre experienced a major water leak in the summer of 2022. Although already identified as a major project within the SAIF for 2023/24, the significant level of damage presented the Service with the valuable opportunity to reconfigure the existing arrangements; making more efficient use of the site, whilst optimising the layout for managing the risk of contaminants, as well as providing modern and inclusive facilities.

By demolishing the two current buildings and replacing them with one, 2-storey prefabricated training and office space, pressure on a heavily used drill and training yard will be reduced, further enhancing working relationships between all site users. The training centre has been designed in such a way as to allow clear zoning for contaminants, whilst also providing a workflow that will reduce the impact of contamination even in operational areas as far as practicable. The new building will also provide facilities that support a more diverse workforce.

The modern construction technique of a prefabricated building is not only more efficient in terms of construction time but will significantly lessen the level of impact the project has on the day-to-day operation of the training centre and fire station, in comparison with more conventional construction techniques. This method also brings reduced environmental impacts and sustainability features like solar power and electrical vehicle charging points.



The Service's commitment to training through this level of investment in our facilities, supports both the active recruitment process and robust training requirements. Recruits and staff will greatly benefit from the fit-for-purpose facility, meeting the training needs of a modern service.

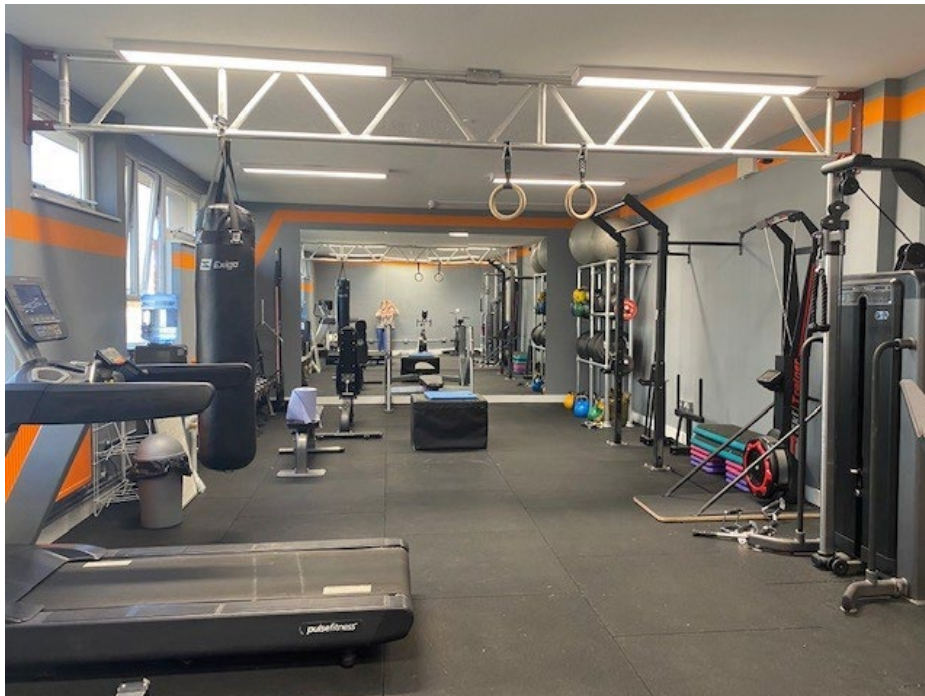


Case Study – Slough Fire Station Refurbishment

Slough fire station is the third station to undergo comprehensive refurbishment works. The specification for the works at Slough were determined by multiple key factors including an extensive staff engagement process with current station staff, the need for investment in facilities to support a more diverse and inclusive workforce, the need to reduce exposure to contaminants and the Service's commitment to becoming more sustainable. The upgrades and improvements include:

- Creating individual bedrooms, showers and changing facilities to offer greater privacy, improving the equality, diversity and inclusion characteristics of the station to promote and encourage a more diverse workforce;
- Reconfiguring the ground floor layout and upgrading operational equipment storage to improve decontamination facilities and contaminants flow, to provide a cleaner and safer working environment;
- Reconfiguring and refurbishing the first-floor communal spaces to include a large meeting room to further support closer working between operational station staff and non-operational employees;
- Upgrade and expand the gym to provide a dedicated fitness training space, providing a cleaner and safer working environment, along with supporting staff wellbeing;
- Installation of solar panels on the roof and new LED lighting throughout to reduce emissions and carbon footprint;
- Creating and refurbishing new clean-side and operational laundry arrangements to improve the control of contaminants;
- Refurbishing the breathing apparatus maintenance room; and
- Providing an effective water rescue facility to accommodate this new important operational capability and supporting operational resilience across the county.

These works form part of a wider service strategy to ensure that our built estate continues to meet the needs of our workforce and communities, now and in the future.



Recent Refurbishment at Maidenhead Fire Station



Sustainability

The Authority is committed to reducing the impact of the organisation's operations on the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. It will do so in a way that supports the United Kingdom's commitment to sustainable development and reducing the effects of climate change.

The carbon footprint of any estate is typically two-thirds of the total generated by overall business activities. Our estate was independently assessed by Planet Mark consultants, with results indicating our buildings currently contribute 65% of the Authority's carbon output (1,524 tCO₂ per year). In line with our core objectives for estate improvements, as stated above, and in keeping with central government's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, we are incorporating environmental sustainability into all our major rebuild and improvement works. In addition to targeted improvement works at our most in-need locations, the SAIF identifies thematic estate-wide improvement programmes to make our estate more environmentally friendly and deliver revenue budget savings of approximately £140,000 over the short to medium term. Our strategic planning has been augmented by the production of heat decarbonisation plans (HDP) by specialist consultants.

To support this important area of work, we have established a permanent sustainability co-ordinator post that can focus on planning and delivery. Initiatives will include:

- Heat decarbonisation by improving the thermal performance of building fabric and replacing outdated and inefficient heating plant with ground and/or air source heat pumps, coupled with new building management control systems. Using the HDPs, a bid has been made to the Salix administered Government Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for £928,000 to assist with phase 1 of these works during 2024-2026.
- The installation of LED lighting across the estate – this is the least complex initiative and should offer the quickest return on investment with the minimum resource demand. This project has been planned during 2023/24 for delivery in 2024/25.
- Where permissible and practicable, installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems also offers a good return on investment (estimated 5 years) and will be completed over a two-year period, starting in 2024. Resilience measures using batteries will also be considered if financially viable and practicable.
- The cost of upgrading our power infrastructure to support electric vehicle (EV) charging is planned into the SAIF. The costs within this project are to pay for upgrades to power supplies at stations to allow the installation of charging points to further support the longevity of our estate.



Phasing of Estates Projects

Requirement	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/2029 to 2033/34
New Build	Training Centre £3.508M				
Major Redevelopment			Whitley Wood £0.456M		
		Wokingham Rd £0.456M		Wokingham £0.35M	
	Langley £0.950M		Newbury £0.79M		
		Caversham Rd £1.22M			
Sustainability	LED lighting (P2 sites)* £0.25M	EV infrastructure £0.65M			£1.5M
	Heat decarbonisation, LED and Solar (P1 sites)* £1.77M				
		Solar PV (P2 sites)* £0.5M	Heat decarbonisation (P2 sites)* £2M		
Minor New Works	£0.2M	£0.2M	£0.2M	£0.2M	£1M
Total	£5.318M	£3.223M	£2.986M	£2.173M	£2.5M

* P1 and P2 sites are as follows:

LED Priority 1	LED Priority 2	Solar Priority 1	Solar Priority 2
Langley	HQ	Langley	HQ
Newbury	Lambourn	Newbury	Bracknell
Wokingham Road	Wokingham	Wokingham Road	Maidenhead
Caversham Road annexe building	Bracknell	Caversham Road annexe building	Slough
Whitley Wood main station	Caversham Road main station	Whitley Wood main station	Lambourn



Estates development projects have been phased based on organisational priority and service delivery requirements, alignment to the core estate development objectives and capacity to effectively undertake the necessary work. Where immediate improvements can be undertaken to expedite some of the core estates development objectives, opportunities will be explored in further detail and fed into the phasing where appropriate. The actual cost of delivering each of these projects only becomes known once a detailed design specification has been undertaken and a tender process completed. Indicative costs are shown for all the necessary works and would be subject to the relevant approvals as set out in the final section of this document.

Plans for the first four years are shown in more detail and the impacts feed into the Authority's Medium-Term Financial Plan. Whilst we can anticipate a requirement of further investment to reduce our environmental impact and utilities cost, we are not able to specify the areas of spend at this stage. However, we do feel it appropriate to make a financial provision for future investments which could include features such as ground/air source heat pumps or grey/rainwater capture, for example. We anticipate that technological developments over the coming years will offer alternative opportunities or make existing options less cost prohibitive. We also intend to be more active in accessing grant funding during this period.

Joint Ventures

Given the age and condition of many of our properties, the Authority is keen to explore the possibility of joint ventures as a means of delivering new fire stations from a reduced capital outlay. This could come from redeveloping some of our current sites or looking at some form of land swap. It is not currently expected that any joint venture would happen before year four of the SAIF.

Disposals

In addition to the monies received in relation to the disposal of the Dee Road site, a further receipt of £95,000 was received during 2023/24 in the form of an overage payment to the Authority by the developer.

Properties are disposed of in accordance with the Authority's *Guiding Principles for Property Asset Release* to ensure full transparency in relation to the management of valuable assets.



Our Fleet and Equipment

Since 2017, 19 new front line pumping appliances have been delivered into service. The Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services have worked together to design and procure a standard fire appliance that carries an aligned inventory of equipment. This is to enhance the operational response of the three services when deployed by Thames Valley Fire Control Service. Further, by aligning fleet and equipment, the Thames Valley services have improved interoperability, increased efficiencies through aligned training, policies and procedures, as well as benefiting from more resilient maintenance and logistics opportunities.

In addition to the transformation of the front-line appliance fleet, the Service acquired a new Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) in 2021 and a new off-road capable pumping appliance in 2022. The service has invested in off-road light vehicles that the fleet and equipment team has been adapting to carry a wildfire optimised pump and equipment package to further enhance the Service's ability to respond to wildfires such as the ones experienced in 2022. Hybrid vehicles are routinely being incorporated into the fleet to start to reduce the environmental impact of our activities and five fully electric vehicles are now in the fleet enabling the impact to be reduced even further.

The Service has now fully transitioned to 'Interspiro' breathing apparatus equipment after the completion of a competitive tender process. The training programme and introduction of the new equipment was managed by a tri-service Thames Valley team which enabled this huge programme of work to be managed within the capabilities of the Services' current technical and training resources. The new equipment has been designed with firefighter health, safety and welfare in mind and has brought innovations such as full telemetry, wireless communications, and personal issue facemasks to our staff. The equipment is identical across the Thames Valley, further aligning our operational response with the goal of reducing the number of operational resources that need to be deployed to an incident where cross border resources are used.

Case study – Breathing Apparatus replacement tri-service project

Over recent years, there has been significant work by Thames Valley fire and rescue services to align operational equipment carried on the common appliance fleet. Coupled with the alignment of operational procedures, this coordinated approach towards developing a standardised appliance inventory has improved effectiveness at cross-border incidents within the Thames Valley as well as improving efficiencies in research, procurement, and training activity.

The standardisation of Breathing Apparatus (BA) equipment was widely recognised as the next key enabler for the Thames Valley Services to further deliver increased operational alignment. Following approval of the business case, the project structure was established which allocated tasks to specialists within each Service.



In order to develop a technical specification, quality assessment and practical trial plan, a multidisciplinary approach was taken. This included a review of accident and incident data to identify any trends, a staff survey to understand the needs of current BA users and what features they would like to see incorporated in the future, an equality and diversity impact assessment, a horizon scan of emerging trends and future risks and a review of the current British and European standards for BA.

A robust procurement process ensured that suppliers were challenged to present their best solution. The proposals were reviewed for quality and technical merit and concluded with practical trials in July 2021. The trial was a key part of the tender process as it demonstrated the proposed equipment was fit for purpose, met requirements and was suitable for the diverse workforce of the Thames Valley Services.

To provide a challenging environment for the equipment, trials were carried out at the Fire Service College in Moreton-in-Marsh. Trials were supported by training instructors from each Service who devised and facilitated scenarios. The process was overseen by members of the project team, including Fire Brigades Union (FBU) representation. Once the contract had been awarded, the project team worked closely with the supplier to identify potential improvements based on feedback from the trial. Notably this engagement has led to a redesign of the cylinder offered to the Services, which has reduced its weight.

The project has resulted in all BA wearers across the Thames Valley using identical equipment which reduces complexity in managing incidents where multiple Thames Valley Services are operating as well as reducing the logistical impact these incidents have on individual Services.





Phasing of Fleet and Equipment Expenditure

The on-going fleet replacement programme is a steady state programme. We have aligned our front-line appliance replacement profile to a 12-year cycle as recommended by the National Fire Chiefs Council. The fleet replacement programme will be reviewed regularly as we continue to look for opportunities to build a more environmentally sustainable fleet where operationally and financially viable.

Capability	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/2029 to 2033/34
Appliances	£0.9M	£0.644M	£0.3M		£5.25M
Specials	£0.164M	£0.44M*	£0.5M	£0.25M	£0.575M
White Fleet	£0.275M	£0.287M*	£0.245M	£0.2M	£0.82M
Operational Equipment	£0.12M	£0.13M	£0.145M		£0.5M
Total	£1.459M	£1.501M	£1.19M	£0.45M	£7.145M

* Subject to fleet review in 2024/25



Our ICT

The Strategic Asset Investment Framework for ICT should be considered in close alignment to RBFRS' ICT strategy, which currently runs from 2022-2025. Strategically, the funding model for ICT is shifting away from perpetual licensing of software into subscription-based services. This impacts the SAIF going forward as RBFRS will no longer need to capitalise periodic and routine large software update purchases and expect them to last several years before renewing. Instead, flexible subscriptions to software delivery as a service will require revenue funding on an ongoing basis. With the removal of the software component, core capital funding requirements going forward will be largely associated with refresh and/or expansion of existing hardware, notably laptops/desktops, mobile phones, tablets, networks, and operational communications devices such as MDTs, Airwave/ESN devices, station end and fireground radios.

New or wholesale software or system replacement projects are far more difficult to forecast and will need to use the technology roadmap and service planning process to maintain a five-year scanning horizon to anticipate system requirements that will impact the SAIF. Although the majority of such projects are likely to rely on subscription-based software or platform delivery, in some cases there may still be a requirement to capitalise the procurement and implementation costs of such activities, either for the software or system itself, or for associated hardware requirements driven by the change.

Investment aligned to the ICT strategic principles of simplification, automation and optimisation will support the overall organisational goals of minimising costs over the short to medium term, and more importantly releasing staff capacity for value-added activities. The 'work smarter' approach will have positive downstream impacts in staff resilience, and the overall sustainability of the Service.

For this to be realised, it is imperative that ongoing refresh of technical resources is maintained, so that opportunities in more advanced software and systems can be fully leveraged to the benefit of the organisation. It is recommended therefore that all periodic hardware and network refresh schedules are maintained as at present, as shown in the table overleaf.



Device	Refresh Cycle
Laptops/Desktop computers	Rolling 3 years
Tablets	Rolling 2 years
Smartphones	Rolling 2 years
MDTs	Every 5 years
Airwave / ESN Devices	Over 7 years currently
Fireground Radios	Every 7 years
Network Devices	Every 10 years

Various factors over the medium term dictate that the ICT investment focus should shift towards the facilitation of the greatest possible consolidation, integration, and exploitations of systems and hardware leading to improvements in efficiency and productivity across all parts of the organisation. This will be accomplished by:

- Leveraging existing services (primarily Microsoft 365) and end user hardware available to improve business processes;
- Greater integration of supporting applications and services with core Microsoft 365;
- Application suites (e.g. SDS, H&S, Finance, etc.); and
- Improved digital solutions for core operational activities (notably Protection, Enforcement, and Prevention).

Phasing of the Work

The phasing of works is purely indicative and based on business needs, keeping in step with appropriate technological advances, national initiatives and security standards; any of which may alter the phasing of works.



Projects underway include a large-scale migration of core systems to the cloud, improvements in systems responsible for deployment and management of end user hardware as well as significant ICT Hardware refresh. In addition, RBFRS Airwave devices are due a refresh and expected to be completed later in 2025/2026.

Taking all of this into account, the capital requirement over the next 10 years for ICT is likely to be approximately £5.5m, with an average annual requirement of approximately £550k. It is important to note that this nominal figure is likely to vary from year to year, as various refresh cycles unwind. 2025/26 will require approximately £750k as this is expected to be the year new ESN devices are likely to start being introduced and replace our existing Airwave equipment. To mitigate single year costs, these refreshes may be brought forward/put back by one year to even out the cost profile, dependant on current equipment performance at that time.

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29 to 2033/34
ICT Hardware	£0.361m	£0.181m	£0.175m	£0.139m	£1.249m
ICT Core Infrastructure		£0.015m	£0.042m		£0.054m
Network solutions		£0.020m			£0.593m
Ops end user ICT hardware					£0.330m
ESN*		£0.340m			£0.340m
AV and tele conferencing			£0.002m	£0.002m	£0.116m
Services/Delivery/Projects	£0.192m	£0.185m	£0.344m	£0.109m	£0.689m
Total	£0.553m	£0.741m	£0.563m	£0.250m	£3.371m

* Subject to ESN go live and ESN lot 2 becoming available



Station-end mobilising equipment case study

The system used to mobilise crews to incidents at each station had become outdated and was becoming less dependable. Its function is critical to enable crews to mobilise by analysing signals coming from Thames Valley Control, displaying incident related information and sounding the alarm, printing incident information, as well as performing a number of other automated actions including opening doors on the path to the appliance bay, triggering the opening of bay doors, etc..

Following a rigorous procurement process Multitone were identified as the successful supplier. The replacement equipment chosen will assure the reliability of technology underpinning mobilising and enable continual alignment of equipment with our partner services.

The equipment receives primary mobilising information digitally, relying on a wide area computer network connectivity, delivering a wealth of incident-related information to stations.

In case of a primary connectivity failure, the system is equipped with a secondary route, provided by PSTN telephony.

The specification chosen prepares the Service for migration away from PSTN telephony, currently used as a backup route for mobilising signals and which has been announced End Of Life and is currently planned for switch off by Openreach at the end of 2025.

Paired with access control equipment, our newly refreshed station-end system will continue to support the crews behind the scenes by providing appropriate information on the way to the incident or guarding against contamination of “clean” areas following a return.



Thames Valley Fire Control Service



Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS), based at RBFRS' headquarters, was established in 2015 to answer 999 calls and mobilise fire engines to incidents across the Thames Valley. TVFCS operates on behalf of the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services, serving a combined population of over two million people.

This collaborative arrangement delivers a single joint emergency call handling, mobilising and resource management function, which has delivered significant cost efficiencies to all three Fire and Rescue Services. As well as providing increased resilience, TVFCS continues to deliver efficiencies and improved performance. Since its establishment, TVFCS has brought about collective savings of over £1 million a year for the three Services.

There is one area of identified capital expenditure for 2024/25 which is a technical refresh of the Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS). The cost of the refresh, including contingency, is anticipated to be £665,000 which will be shared equally across the three Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services.

Funding will be required for a full system replacement by April 2030. It is likely that the three Services will need to consider whether future systems are 'cloud' based, reducing the demand on capital spending but increasing the impact on revenue spending. However the solution is configured, the prudent approach is to continue to build up the Renewals Fund in the coming years. Further clarity is required to fully understand the likely funding profile and, over the next 24 months, Officers will work with colleagues from across the sector who are procuring system replacements to refine the TVFCS forecast expenditure for a new system.

The TVFCS Renewals Fund balance is expected to be £1.83 million by 31 March 2024.



Financial Implications

As evidenced by the most recent HMICFRS inspection, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has been judged 'good' in terms of delivering an effective and efficient service that meets the needs and expectations of residents and taxpayers within the County.

When considering the renewal or enhancement of our capital assets, we consider the extent to which capital expenditure increases the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation, thus, balancing the needs of the users of our services against the needs of those who are required to fund those services.

Based on the Authority's current financial planning assumptions, projected capital expenditure over the next four years is affordable, though much will depend on future rates of inflation, pay award settlements and funding settlements.

In terms of fleet and equipment and ICT capital expenditure the Authority will fund the majority of this expenditure from its revenue budget. This is a prudent way to finance this type of expenditure given that such assets have shorter lives and therefore need replacing on a regular basis.

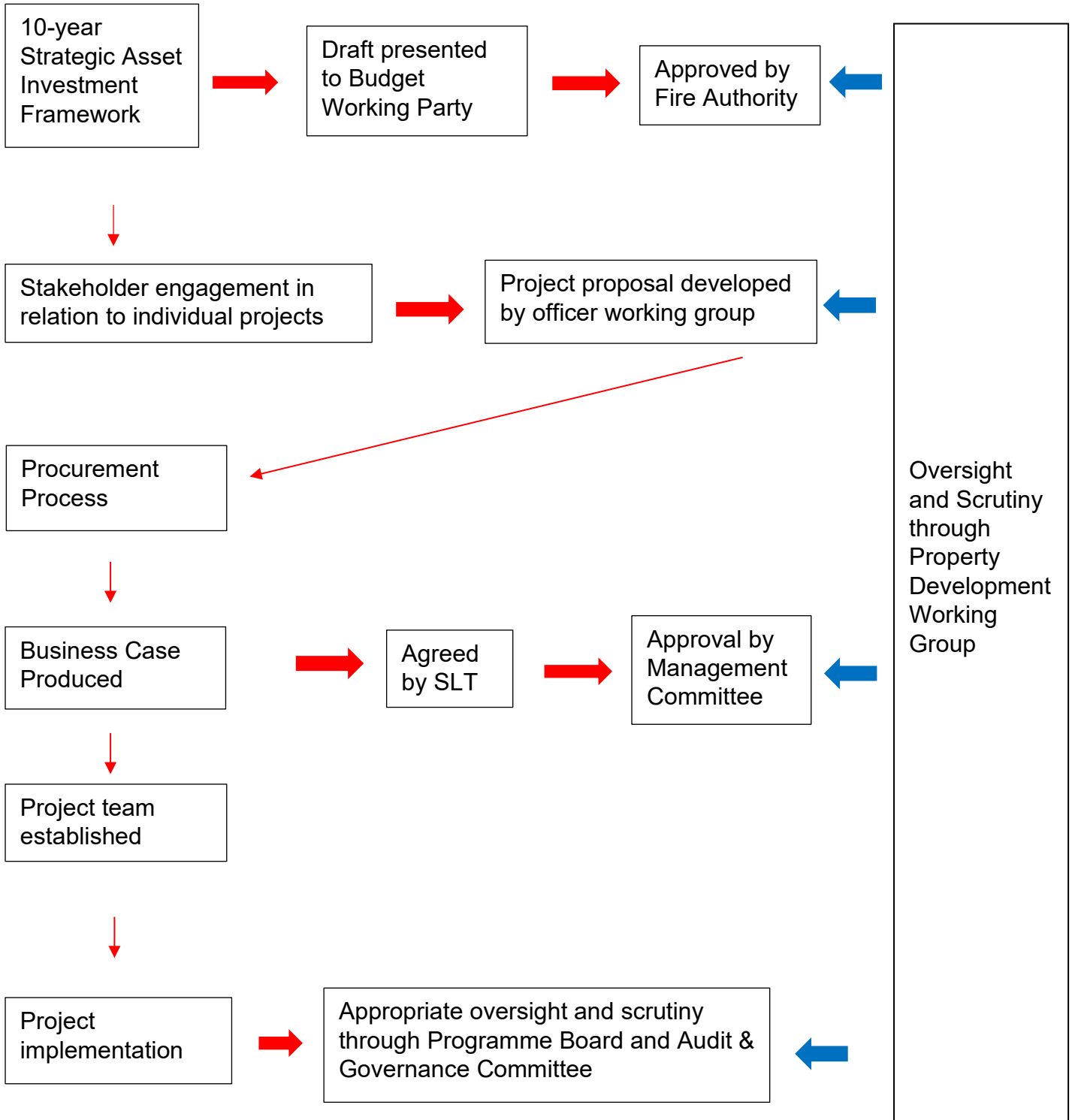
The capital receipt from the sale of the Dee Road site in 2022 will fund a large proportion of our capital expenditure in 2024/25. A limited amount of borrowing will be incurred in the following three years to ensure deliver of the capital programme. Beyond this period and, where appropriate, we will seek to work with partners and other stakeholders to explore joint-venture options which could lead to the building of a new fire station at a reduced cost to the Authority.

Whilst recognising that novel approaches to enhancing our properties may be possible in some instances, it remains the case that such options will be limited. Therefore, it is critical that we move swiftly over the next four years to deliver capital programmes of work that will generate future savings in the revenue budget.

Finally, given the capital-intensive nature of fire and rescue services, we are keen to see the establishment of a national Transformation Fund against which we could bid to secure funding for capital projects that are both environmentally sustainable and deliver savings in running costs.



Governance Arrangements





-  RoyalBerksFRS
-  @RBFRSOfficial
-  RoyalBerkshireFire
-  Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
-  rbfrs.co.uk