

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Held on Wednesday 23rd March 2016 at 6.30pm

Brigade Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot,
Reading, Berkshire RG31 7DS

Members:
(* present)

- Councillor Frank Abe
- * Councillor Anthony Chadley
- * Councillor Haqeeq Dar
- * Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge
- * Councillor John Lenton
- Councillor Iain McCracken, Chairman
- Councillor Ishrat Shah
- Councillor Jane Stanford-Beale

In Attendance:

- Conor Byrne (Head of Finance, HOF)
- Trevor Ferguson (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
- David Guest (External Auditor, Ernst & Young)
- Dan Harris (Baker Tilly)
- Becci Jefferies (Head of HR and Learning Development, HHRLD)
- Simon Jefferies (Head of Risk and Performance, HORP)
- Lloyd Palmer (Group Manager (Response East)
- Linda Pye (Clerk)
- Nikki Richards (Head of Business Information and Systems, HBIS)
- Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer, CO)

Action

62. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting had been received from Councillors Frank Abe, Iain McCracken, Ishrat Shah and Jane Stanford-Beale. Councillor John Lenton stood in as Chair for the meeting in the absence of Councillor McCracken.

63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct there were no declarations of interest received from Members.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

64. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 2015

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2015 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

65. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTERS PROPERLY REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE FOR DECISION

There were no items properly referred to the Committee for decision.

66. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance (HOF), updated the Committee of progress with the Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16.

The 2015/16 Internal Audit Plan had been approved by the Audit & Governance Committee on 30th March 2015. The latest Progress Report was attached at Appendix A. The Governance and Risk Management Audit was attached at Appendix B and the IT General Controls Audit was attached at Appendix C.

Dan Harris (Baker Tilly) referred to **Appendix A – Internal Audit Progress report**. Two final reports had been issued since the previous meeting in relation to Risk Management and Governance and IT General Controls. A summary update in relation to progress against the Audit Plan for 2015/16 was as follows:

Key Financial Systems	Audit fieldwork had been delayed at management request and work had commenced on 16 th March 2016. A report would be brought to the Audit & Governance Committee in June 2016.
Contract Management	Review postponed at management request and would now be included in the 2016/17 Audit Plan.
Finance Function Effectiveness Review	It was felt that this review would be beneficial prior to the internal restructuring which was planned over the next six months. Review and fieldwork would be undertaken in late March 2016 and a report would be brought to the Audit & Governance Committee in June 2016.
New Payroll/Pensions project/System	This would still be delivered in late March 2016 and into Quarter 1 of 2016/17.

Governance and Risk Management Internal Audit Report (Appendix B) – It had been noted that significant progress had been made in implementing the recommendations previously agreed and a number of improvements had been implemented under the stewardship of the DCFO to further embed risk management within the Service. This had been taken into account and the overall assurance opinion had increased from Amber/Red (partial assurance) for 2014/15 to Amber/Green (reasonable assurance) in this review which reflected the improvements which had been made.

Governance – Two low priority areas had been identified with respect to the recording and monitoring of actions arising from SPB and CMT meetings and management actions had been agreed to address this.

Risk Management – The Organisational Risk Management Policy Guidance Note would be reviewed and a number of enhancements would be made. The Risk Register template would also be reviewed to consider incorporating the agreed changes which could be via the introduction of separate columns for identifying and recording existing controls/mitigations, assurances on those controls/mitigations, target risk scores, actions required to further mitigate risks and the implementation status of further actions identified.

IT General Controls (Appendix C) – It was noted that some progress had been made implementing recommendations from previous IT audits but a number of issues remained outstanding. A range of key IT controls had been designed and implemented to facilitate the governance of systems, data and business operations., However, the audit did identify opportunities for further improvement to the IT control environment, principally regarding enhancements to both the data back-up and systems monitoring controls.

The following findings would be addressed by management:

- The daily process to ensure that the backup process had completed successfully and to remedy the situation when failures occurred, had not been documented.
- The Guest WI-FI internet usage was not monitored by the service increasing the risk that inappropriate use of the facility could be occurring.
- No documented patch management procedures were in place.
- A review of the Microsoft Active Directory Group Policy settings confirmed that the recommendation had not been implemented. This required that password complexity should be enabled with lockout after 3-5 bad logon attempts.
- Firewall management procedures had not been provided as recommended in the previous audit report.

Councillor John Lenton enquired what would happen after five bad login attempts. It was confirmed that the user would then have to call the IT helpdesk to access the system. There was a weakness in the process if controls were not in place. Councillor Lenton referred to the back up tapes which he hoped were stored in a secure location. He asked whether this had been tested and who knew where the secure location was. The HBIS confirmed that re-installation from back ups had been tested. Everyone in IT was aware of the secure location which was in one of the Fire Stations in a locked safe. This was not so much a security related matter but more of a disaster recovery measure if required.

RESOLVED that:

- The report be noted.

67. EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance (HOF), provided the Committee with an update from the External Auditors. Ernst & Young were currently on site to conduct their interim audit in preparation for the year-end closedown and the audit of the financial statements. Their audit plan was attached at Appendix A.

David Guest (Ernst & Young) presented the audit plan. Section 2 of the report

DRAFT

set out the current assessment of the financial statement risks facing the Fire Authority as follows:

<p>Joint Control Room</p>	<p>The Joint Control Room had become operational in April 2015. This would be the first year that this would need to be disclosed within the financial statements and there was a risk that this would not be accounted for correctly. In particular the disclosures made and ensuring that the correct split of costs was used.</p>
<p>Milne vs GAD</p>	<p>In May 2015 the Pension Ombudsman, an independent organisation that investigated complaints about pension administration, published Mr Milne’s determination for Firefighters’ Pension Scheme regarding commutation factors. The Pension Ombudsman had ruled that the Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) failed to review commutation factors within the firefighters’ pension scheme.</p> <p>The Ombudsman ordered that a new commutation factor be prepared as if a factor review had been carried out in December 2004.</p> <p>The Authority had determined the additional payments required. The sum of these payments was estimated to be £1,088k which was material to the Pension Fund.</p>
<p>Risk of management override</p>	<p>As identified in ISA (UK and Ireland) 240, management was in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appeared to be operating effectively. The auditors identified and responded to this fraud risk on every audit engagement.</p>

Section 3 of the audit plan considered whether the Authority had put in place ‘proper arrangements’ to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness on its use of resources. It was noted that the Fire Authority continued to face financial challenges with a cumulative budget gap, on the current medium term financial plan, of £2.6 million in 2019/20. The medium term financial plan set out the Authority’s strategic approach for closing the budget gap and key deliverables that were critical to the future financial sustainability of the Authority.

Continued reductions in government grants were one of the key drivers of the need for significant savings. The Authority would continue to seek alternative

solutions to ensure that local services could be maintained and supported in the future, in line with local need. The audit approach would focus on the use of PSAA's value for money profile tool to assess the Authority's spending against similar Fire Authorities and to review and assess the assumptions within the Authority's 2016/17 budget and medium term financial plan. This was not a position that was unique to RBFRS and it would be necessary to ensure that appropriate plans were in place.

The DCFO stated that this linked back to the annual budget setting and the workshop for Members which would take place in July 2016 would be key to that process.

David Guest referred to section 4.4 Materiality. He stated that overall materiality for the main financial statements of the Authority was £792k based on 2% of gross revenue expenditure and for the Firefighter pension fund £80k based on 1% of benefits payable. In September the auditors would communicate uncorrected audit mis-statements greater than £39k for the main financial statements and £4k for the Pension Fund.

It was noted that the indicative fee was a 25% reduction from the previous year and that would remain in place until the end of the current arrangement in 2017/18.

RESOLVED that:

- The External Audit update be noted.

68. ANNUAL PLAN 2016/17

Simon Jefferies, Head of Risk and Performance (HORP), provided Audit & Governance Committee with an overview of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's (RBFRS) Annual Plan 2016-17. The annual plan would provide direction for the organisation for the next year within the context of the Corporate Plan/IRMP 2015-19. It would define the scope of the organisations activities in terms of what it would and would not do. It would match the activities of the organisation to the environment in which it operated so that it maximised opportunities and minimised threats and would synchronise the organisation's activities to its resource capacity. It also detailed a change to current audit arrangements.

Previous planning models and frameworks had not effectively dealt with the various meeting structures and timelines for the completion and submission of reports by key deadlines. The Fire Authority had committed to longer term planning and this was welcomed but this would make the process of corporate planning more complex. The annual corporate planning process would align a number of interrelated planning processes to support service delivery.

This plan reflected the Fire Authority's Strategic Commitments, which were set for 2015-19, by highlighting the areas of focus for a single year and stating the measures of success and setting associated targets to achieve them. It would be available on the intranet to provide a single access point for all managers to timely, accurate information to assist with planning and decision-making. The plan had been developed as an online document to ensure that any changes to processes or meeting dates could be incorporated in a timely manner.

The format included the audit plan and had links to a number of other planning

DRAFT

tools and processes which would bring the focus of managers to a single location and would create a more joined up approach to planning.

Audit was an important part of providing the Fire Authority and the public with the assurance that the service was run properly and in ways that had been agreed by our Officers and Members. It demonstrated that business was conducted in accordance with relevant legislation, government expectations, good practice and organisational policy. The audits would contribute to the annual Statement of Assurance, which demonstrated compliance with the standards set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2012). To support this, the plan for 2016-17 was to broaden the scope and improve the quality of audits.

The contract with RSM to provide internal audit services ended on 31st March 2017. The Authority was currently in the process of a substantial restructure, both in terms of staff and business processes to ensure the delivery of 'Vision 2019'. In order to provide assurance that progress was being made in the delivery of its vision, it was proposed that RSM would undertake additional audits under the direction of CMT and the Audit and Governance Committee during 2016-17. The contract would be re-tendered during the coming financial year, but a waiver of standing orders was required for 2016-17 as the additional expenditure would be more than 10 per cent of the current contract value.

The HORP demonstrated to Members how the Annual Plan could be accessed via the website. This created a single access point and was therefore more transparent. Councillor Anthony Chadley asked how it would be determined who would have access and how that would be achieved. The HORP confirmed that anyone would be able to access it from the website as there was nothing confidential contained within it.

An additional six audits would take place based on need and therefore additional expenditure up to £25k was being requested. The exact amount of money required would be dependent on what happened throughout the year. An update would be provided at all meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor John Lenton referred to page 5 of the Annual Plan which set out the Strategic Objectives for 2016/17. He asked whether consideration had been given to using retired firefighters as reserves. The DCFO responded that there could be issues in relation to pensions. The HHRLD confirmed that the Fire Authority had at times used emergency firefighters during industrial action and therefore that arrangement was already in place.

Councillor John Lenton mentioned the table on page 10 of the Annual Plan. He would like to see a further column showing the 2014/15 actual figures. The HORP confirmed that he could include a further column as requested.

In respect of response standards the DCFO explained that this was currently out to consultation in order to try and simplify standards and to make them more transparent.

The HORP confirmed that the definition for Measure 16 had changed and he would let Members know what that change was.

Councillor John Lenton asked for an explanation of Project 5: Self-Service Module on page 16 of the Annual Plan. The HBIS explained that the Firewatch self service module would give options for crew to manage rosters and rotas on-

**HORP to
action**

line with actual availability visible.

RESOLVED that:

- The Annual Plan 2016-17 be noted;
- It be agreed to recommend the Annual Plan 2016-17 to the Fire Authority for approval;
- A waiver to contract standing orders be agreed to allow RSM, the Fire Authority's current internal auditors, to conduct additional audits during 2016/17, up to a maximum of £25,000.

69. ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY – PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2016/17

Becci Jefferies, Head of HR and Learning and Development (HHRLD), sought approval for an amendment to the Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17 made following the Fire Authority meeting on 17th February 2016.

At its meeting on 17th February 2016 the Fire Authority approved the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17, subject to the amendments in the areas highlighted in the report accompanying the draft statement being approved by the Audit and Governance Committee, prior to the Statement's publication.

Following a local agreement made with the FBU subsequent to the Fire Authority meeting, the process for applying for Continual Professional Development (CPD) payments had been changed and the Statement updated accordingly. Applications could now be submitted when an individual became competent and held the requisite length of service. In addition CPD payments would no longer be removed during periods of temporary promotion while an individual was in development. The amount of CPD paid per annum remained the same.

Two other minor amendments in relation to the paragraph on equal pay had been made following consideration of the detail at the Fire Authority meeting. In accordance with the request of the Authority, a report on the outcomes of the Local Government Association's pay audit referenced in the Statement would be brought to this Committee for consideration on 28th July 2016.

Appendix A provided a tracked change version of the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 indicating the amendments made and was provided for consideration by the Committee and final approval of the changes in accordance with the Fire Authority's direction.

RESOLVED that:

- The amendment to the Pay Policy Statement for 2016/17 in respect of Continuous Professional Development payments be approved.

70. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT ON GOVERNANCE - INCLUDING MEMBER ATTENDANCE AND ALLOWANCES

Trevor Ferguson, Monitoring Officer (MO), presented the annual report on Governance for submission to the Annual Fire Authority meeting on 29th June

2016.

The Audit and Governance Committee had been responsible for Governance which included complaints against Members and the monitoring of Member Allowance and Attendance since 28 June 2012. The Audit and Governance Committee reviewed bi-monthly reports on Member attendance and allowances and presented annual reports to the Fire Authority at its meeting in June.

Complaints received against Members

As was the case in the previous year, there had been no formal complaints received against Members this year. One informal complaint had been received and it was being considered by the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person.

The Committee would be aware that the Fire Authority was required to appoint an Independent Person in order to fulfil the requirements under section 28 of the Localism Act 2011. Appointed on 23rd February 2015, this was the second year of the three year appointment of the Independent Person, David Comben and Deputy Independent Person, Roger Penfold. On behalf of the Fire Authority, the Audit and Governance Committee thanked them for their availability and advice.

Members Allowances

On 22nd April 2015 the Fire Authority appointed a Task and Finish Group to look at the size and structure of the Fire Authority. Due to the proposed changes of the structure, the Task and Finish Group commissioned South–East Employers to review the Members' Scheme of Allowances. Recommendations would be made to the Management Committee on 11th April 2016 and Fire Authority on 25th April 2016 for approval.

The current scheme had been adopted on 25th September 2013 and subject to changes to the size and structure of the Fire Authority the current scheme would not be reviewed until 2017. Member Allowances for the period of June 2015 – February 2016 were shown in Appendix A.

Member Attendance

The attendance of Fire Authority Members for the Municipal Year 2015-16 was shown in Appendix B of the report. The appendix included all meetings up to the 29th February 2016. These attendance figures would be updated and reported to the Fire Authority at the Annual meeting in June.

The appendix also highlighted any date changes for meetings, or additional meetings arranged, as it was recognised, that such changes could be difficult to accommodate, due to the various diary pressures Members faced.

Following the last bi-annual report to this Committee in November 2015, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Colin Dudley requested that the attendance of Members at workshops/briefings be removed. Appendix B reflected this change and only illustrated the attendance of Members at Committee meetings.

Attendance this year has generally been good, no meetings were inquorate, and all business was able to be conducted. Most absences had been due either to a meeting clash or a holiday, and apologies, when received had generally been in good time. However, on some occasions Members had not given their apologies for absence and this had been noted in Appendix B as 'Did not Attend' (DNA).

Where Members had given their apologies, some had arranged for substitutes,

DRAFT

however the arrangement of substitutes could be utilised more. On behalf of this Committee, the Chairman of the Fire Authority, at the 14th January 2015 meeting, asked Members to take all reasonable steps to ensure that substitutes were nominated and attended Committee meetings, to assist in making all meetings quorate.

There had been one meeting cancellation of the Budget Working Party this year and one extraordinary meeting of the Strategic Asset Management Committee. The Budget Working Party met more frequently in 2015/16 as reported in the last annual update to allow Members and officers additional time to make recommendations on the savings required in 2016/17.

On three occasions the Fire Authority and Management Committee meeting dates in October 2015, February and April 2016 were moved from the original published dates. The Management Committee meeting in October 2015 was moved to accommodate the Peer Review and the presentation of their findings. The Fire Authority meetings in February and April 2016 were moved due to severe Unitary Authority diary clashes with a number of Members.

RBFRS have been liaising with Unitary Authorities in arranging future Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and its Committees meeting dates; however future clashes would be unavoidable due to the number of Unitary Authority commitments Members had.

Councillor John Lenton queried the number of IRMP meetings listed as he could not recall having attended six meetings. The DCFO stated that some additional meetings had been required and the total also included the workshops which had taken place in the previous year.

Member Dispensations

Members would be aware that dispensations were granted to all Fire Authority Members at the beginning of the municipal year to allow Member debate and decision making on the budget and precept. In addition to the above, the Monitoring Officer granted named Members who were also Members of their Unitary Authority Planning Committee a dispensation at the Fire Authority held on 17th February 2016, due to the possible planning applications for masts in relation to the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme.

RESOLVED that:

- That the report be noted; and
- The Fire Authority Meeting on 29 June 2016 be recommended to:
 - (a) Note the report; and
 - (b) Note the Members allowances received for the period of June 2015 – February 2016 (these allowance figures would be updated);
 - (c) Note the 2015-16 attendance record of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members (these attendance figures would be updated).

71. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - DRAFT AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Councillor Iain McCracken, Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee, had prepared an annual report of the Audit and Governance Committee for

submission to the Fire Authority meeting on 25th April 2016. Councillor Lenton presented the report in Councillor McCracken's absence.

As Chairman of this Committee for 2015/16, Councillor McCracken was able to report that the Committee had met on all four of the scheduled meetings dates for the year. All meetings had been quorate, for which he formally thanked Members of the Committee.

Members would be aware of the work that the Committee had undertaken during the last year through the Committee's published Minutes within the Fire Authority's Agendas. The Committee's Agendas and Minutes were also available on the website (www.rbfrs.co.uk).

In summary the Committee had considered not only the regular standing items on its agenda, but had also received annual reports and reports on single items.

Significant process had been achieved in the revised Members' Handbook/ Scheme of Delegation which had become a working document to be updated as and when required. The Committee was pleased to note that the Authority's external auditors had issued an unqualified opinion on the annual accounts and concluded that the Authority had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Councillor McCracken had met with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Heads of Service prior to each Audit and Governance Committee meeting which had worked well, as he had received regular updates outside of the meeting on the work programme and business of related areas.

Councillor McCracken thanked officers and Members of this Committee for their continued hard work and efforts in the delivery of Audit and Governance on behalf of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

RESOLVED that:

- That the format and content of the draft annual Audit and Governance report for submission to the Fire Authority be agreed.

72. UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS LOG ACTIONS

Simon Jeffries, Head of Risk and Performance (HORP), provided Audit & Governance Committee with an update on progress of actions captured on the Recommendations Log, as requested by the Chairman of Audit & Governance at the December 2015 meeting.

The DCFO had commissioned a piece of work to create a recommendations log to pull together extant recommendations from reports generated within and on behalf of the organisation. The log had been setup as a straightforward spreadsheet requiring minimum expertise to update and access. It was limited in that it did not produce reports and human effort was required to search information and update. The log contained recommendations from 16 reports, the oldest of which was from 2010. In total 374 recommendations were listed and just under half of these were over three years old.

The recommendation log came as an item to note to the December 2015 meeting of Audit & Governance Committee and the Chairman had asked for an update on the dip sample presented and a further sample from the

recommendations log to examine progress made. A work package had been commissioned by CMT to look at how this type of information was captured, logged and promulgated to the accountable person for action. The wider issue of knowledge management would be considered to ensure RBFRS did not find itself in this position again in the future.

Appendix 1 provided a summary of progress to date of the 14 recommendations presented to Audit & Governance in December 2015 and a further dip sample of two recommendations. Since December 2015, all of the 134 outstanding recommendations had been closed as they were now either complete, were written into Service Plans, the Organisational Development programme, part of IRMP Programme or a project group had been set up. Each of the recommendations had been allocated a responsible owner as part of the Performance Monitoring framework.

The DCFO referred to some work which had been undertaken by another Fire Authority and which might provide some learning for the RBFRS.

RESOLVED that:

- The progress made with a sample of actions from the Recommendations Log was noted.

73. TRANSITION FUND UPDATE

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance, informed the Committee of bids which had been approved from the Transition fund and expenditure to the end of Quarter 3 of 2015/16.

As part of the 2015/16 Budget, the Fire Authority approved the setting up of a £2 million Transition Fund in order to redesign the service to achieve the new strategic direction and balance the budget in the medium term. Categories of expenditure included:

- Additional temporary staff to manage and deliver projects
- Redundancies
- Leadership programme
- Investment in collaborative initiatives, such as co-responding
- Investment to generate income, including the new trading company
- Investment in areas related to the new policy direction, such as purchasing equipment, training etc
- Pump-priming new initiatives that will be funded by commissioning bodies in the longer-term

Each bid for transition funding had been considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). Bid submissions and CMT's approval decisions were set out in Appendix A. It should be noted that some bids had been rejected by CMT as not suitable for financing from the transition fund, as they did not meet the required criteria. Where the proposed project was nevertheless felt to be of value, funding from existing budgets had been approved instead.

An outcomes column had been added as requested by Members at the last meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.

The total value of Transition Fund bids was £1,015,179 with £741,624 having been allocated. Transition Fund expenditure to date totalled £132,981.73.

Expenditure could be spread over a number of years in some cases. An updated position would be provided to Members after the year end (March 2016).

RESOLVED that:

- That the report be noted.

**74. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT (2015/16) – QUARTER 3
(OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2015)**

Trevor Ferguson, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), provided Audit & Governance Committee with an overview of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) third quarter (October - December) performance for the 2015-16 financial year.

The attached report provided an overview of performance for the third quarter (October - December) of the 2015-16 financial year. This was the third quarterly performance report to present information against measures and targets agreed by the Fire Authority for 2015/16. It reported performance in four key areas against the:

- Service provision targets
- Corporate health targets
- Organisational Development and IRMP Priority programmes
- Corporate risk

The data integrity and assurance issues that had been previously highlighted by managers at Strategic Performance Board meetings over the last 12 months and reported to this Committee had been addressed. This was due to the hard work of the Performance and Information Officers and members of the Information Technology Team who had worked with key managers to ensure a level of assurance that was previously missing. All managers at the most recent Strategic Performance Board meeting on 8th February 2016 reported that the data and figures presented in the report were accurate.

In the wider context of performance data there remained a small number of automated data inputs to Scorecard, which were unreliable and thus required analysis and correction. The system was still reliant on some manual processes to feed data into reporting systems, particularly around time to answer 999 calls and the number of emergency calls received. Work was continuing to resolve all remaining data issues. Previous data accuracy issues had meant that some targets set against historically inaccurate data (specifically Fire Safety/Protection related targets) had been reviewed and would need revisiting and realignment for 2016/17.

Recent improvements to a number of TVFCS Service Delivery measures were to be welcomed. This was due to increased confidence and competence in the use of the 'Vision' system by staff in TVFCS, alongside improvements made to systems through ongoing work with Capita.

Whilst there was an upward trend in some performance, attendance figures continued to show Road Traffic Collision (RTC) and Dwelling Fire performance issues primarily due to the inclusion of previously removed 'checked failure' statistics.

Retained Duty System (RDS) establishments had benefitted from recent

streamlined recruitment processes, however, the measures for RDS establishment and that for RDS appliance availability were still falling short of targets.

Corporate Health measures highlighted an increase in the number of active volunteers, a continued low rate of staff turnover and there had been a slight improvement in the levels of sickness within the organisation.

Overall, the number of accidents had fallen and was within target but the Health and Safety team recognised the need to continue to monitor the number and causes of RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents. Contracted spend had also improved and was close to the target set.

Plans were in place to simplify data flow systems and the aim was to ensure all reporting took place through SQL (Structured Query Language - a special-purpose programming language designed for managing data) rather than from an Access Database. Work on the SQL feeds had taken time to start and update. Work would continue on migrating these reports into SQL at which point the Performance team were developing new reporting systems which would use the analysis of trends to assist managers in making timely decisions to meet their objectives.

Appendix B – Corporate Risk Register. This was an updated version of the Corporate Risk Register, as of 15th March 2016, and not the same as that presented at SPB. This was to provide Audit and Governance with the most up to date risk information. The highest risk related to the bedding in of the Fire Control facility and there was also an emerging risk around the ESMCP.

The report had been reviewed by the Strategic Performance Board chaired by DCFO Trevor Ferguson to ensure issues and corrective actions were discussed and owned by Heads of Service. A summary of the corrective actions and update on the progress was listed at the front of the report. This report had also been reviewed and discussed at Corporate Management Team (CMT) to ensure any strategic issues were addressed. The commentary for each measure and project had been supplied by the responsible Officer.

Councillor Anthony Chadley referred to two specific measures where he felt that the coding was incorrect. He also noted that a number of measures were 'amber' i.e. they might not be achievable and he queried whether that was intentional. The DCFO confirmed that the Fire Authority always set itself challenging and stretched targets. For example, it was an aspiration to achieve 0% fire deaths but that might not always be achievable.

In response to a query the DCFO confirmed that targets for 2016/17 would be set in the Annual Plan going forward.

Councillor John Lenton referred to measures 19 and 20 and he asked for some explanation around 'informal activity' as opposed to 'formal activity'. The DCFO confirmed that formal activities such as prohibition, enforcement and alteration notices would only be used where necessary.

RESOLVED that:

- The performance against Service Provision and Corporate Health measures for the targets agreed by the Fire Authority for 2015/16 be noted.

DRAFT

- The progress made on the two priority programmes be noted.
- The position of corporate risk be noted.
- Any further actions, if appropriate, be discussed and agreed.

75. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 28th July 2016 at 6.30pm, Room 301, Brigade Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD

76. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

77. BRIEFING NOTE - PSN COMPLIANCE

The Committee considered an exempt report.

RESOLVED that:

- That the recommendations as set out in the exempt report be agreed.

(The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm)