

## PART I MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Held on Monday 9 July 2007

Strategic Command Centre, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue  
Service Headquarters, 103 Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading,  
Berkshire, RG30 4FS

**Those present:** Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson (Member, Fire Authority)  
Councillor Jeff Brooks (Member, Fire Authority)  
Councillor Paul Bryant (Member, Fire Authority (*Chairman*))  
Councillor Colin Dudley (Fire Authority Member) (*part meeting*)  
Councillor Angus Ross (Member, Fire Authority)

**In attendance:** Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)  
Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer)  
George Cross (Area Manager, Support Services)  
Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager)  
Dr Mark Llewellyn (Opinion Research Services) (*Item 04.11.07*)  
Charlotte Smith (Performance Lead, Audit Commission) (*Item 04.14.07*)  
Nicole Targett (Corporate Communications Manager)  
Richard Taylor (Clerk and Monitoring Officer)  
Des Tidbury (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)  
Andrew Vallance (Authority Treasurer)  
Mick West (District Auditor, Audit Commission) (*Item 04.14.07*)

**Observers:** Mr John Holdstock (on behalf of The West Windsor Residents' Association)  
Fire Brigades Union representatives  
Representative of the Media

### 04.01.07 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer invited nominations for the position of Chairman of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year (2007/08) until the Fire Authority's Annual meeting in June 2008. Councillor Angus Ross nominated Councillor Dr Paul Bryant, and this was seconded by Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson. There were no further nominations.

Councillor Dr Paul Bryant was duly elected Chairman of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year (2007/08) until the Fire Authority's Annual meeting in June 2008.

**Councillor Dr Paul Bryant in the Chair.**

### 04.02.07 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman nominated Councillor Jeff Brooks for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year (2007/08) until the Fire Authority's Annual meeting in June 2008, and this was seconded by Councillor Angus Ross. There were no further nominations.

**Action**

Councillor Jeff Brooks was duly elected Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee for the ensuing year (2007/08) until the Fire Authority's Annual meeting in June 2008.

#### **04.03.07 MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee was advised that Councillor Colin Dudley would be taking the place of Councillor Iain McCracken as a Member of the Executive Committee.

#### **The Executive Committee:**

- **Noted** that the Membership of the Executive Committee, as resolved by the Fire Authority at its annual meeting on 27 June 2007, subject to the above membership revision, as follows:

Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson  
Councillor Jeff Brooks  
Councillor Dr Paul Bryant  
Councillor Tom Crisp  
Councillor Colin Dudley  
Councillor Angus Ross

#### **04.04.07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received. The Chairman noted that Councillor Colin Dudley would be arriving late to the meeting.

#### **04.05.07 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Having been reminded that, in accordance with the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct, Members were required to declare interests, which were Personal or Personal and Prejudicial, where appropriate, it was **Noted** that, on this occasion, there were no such declarations to be made.

#### **04.06.07 PART I MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2007**

The following amendments were made to the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 21 May 2007:

- Under 'In attendance' - replace 'Andrew Mancey' with 'Andrew Haste'.

03.17.07 (first sentence) - amend date to read 'Monday 19 March 2007'.

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21 May 2007 were **Agreed**, subject to the above amendments, for signing as a correct record by the Chairman.

**The Chairman agreed to a request from the Authority Treasurer that Agenda Item 14 (External Audit - Annual Audit and Inspection Letter) be considered next.**

**Councillor Colin Dudley joined the meeting during this Agenda Item.**

**04.14.07 EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER**

The Authority Treasurer introduced Mick West (District Auditor) and Charlotte Smith (Performance Lead) from the Audit Commission. Mick West took the Executive Committee through the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter, and referred Members specifically to the Action needed by the Authority, how the Authority was performing, and the overall assessment for the Authority, as detailed in the report presented.

The Vice-Chairman asked what weighting was given on Performance Indicators against Service Assessment, particularly in light of the overall low assessment score received. Mick West reported that the Audit Commission measured assessments against national directives. The Brigade Manager (Service Delivery) reported that the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic and Time-based) local targets were performing well and were travelling in the right direction without exception. He urged the Audit Commission to work with Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) to ensure that the Authority was notified of any new Performance Indicators in a timely manner. He noted that the Authority had been measured on performance from March 2005-February 2006 but that the new Performance indicators were not advised until February 2006, which had had an effect on the overall assessment scores. The Chief Fire Officer also noted that the application of the national level for mass deprivation index had had an impact on the Fire Authority's reporting and subsequent scores.

The Chief Fire Officer agreed to the Vice-Chairman's recommendation that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) consider the application and reporting of Performance Indicators.

**CFO**  
(OSC)

The Chairman thanked Mick West and Charlotte Smith for presenting the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

The Executive Committee **Noted** the report presented.

**04.07.07 REVIEW OF COMPENSATION POLICY**

The Executive Committee's approval was sought for a revised Fire Authority Policy for compensating employees whose employment was terminated as a result of redundancy or "in the interests of the efficiency of the service". The Director of Human Resources took the Executive Committee through each of the Recommendations presented.

The Executive Committee had some concerns with adopting such a policy which exercised discretions. The Vice-Chairman proposed that the Party Group Leaders meet to further consider the revised Fire Authority Compensation Policy, and this was seconded by the Chairman, and **unanimously agreed**.

**DHR**

The Director of Human Resources tabled a letter, dated 6 July 2007, from Christopher Glenn (UNISON) entitled 'Review of Compensation Policy Report to Executive Committee on 9 July 2007'. The Executive Committee **Noted** the letter, and **Agreed** that the Party Group Leaders consider the letter during their future deliberations.

**04.08.07 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FORWARD ACTION PLAN**

The Chief Fire Officer informed the Executive Committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation that the Executive Committee should have a formal Forward Action Plan which could then be the subject of scrutiny. The Chief Fire Officer advised that such a Forward Plan would not be subject to the same parameters as Unitary Authorities' Plans, but would be a tool for use by Members and Officers.

**The Executive Committee:**

- **Agreed** that the Chief Fire Officer should further consider the introduction of a Forward Plan, and that it be considered at the next meeting.

**CFO**  
Agenda  
17.09.07

**04.09.07 NJC LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY CLAIM 2007-08 (ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND)**

The Chief Fire Officer, on behalf of Christopher Glenn, referred the Executive Committee to the UNISON's request, as detailed on Page 2 of the presented letter, dated 28 June 2007 from Christopher Glenn to the Chairman and the Executive Committee regarding the NJC Local Government Pay Claim 2007-08 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The Chairman stated that it was not appropriate for the Executive Committee to resolve that the employers' organisation be advised that the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority calls for an improved pay offer to be made.

The Vice-Chairman proposed that the Executive Committee support the representative on the employers' organisation in seeking an improved offer, and this was seconded by the Chairman.

**The Executive Committee:**

- **Did not support** UNISON's request that the employers' organisation be advised that the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority calls for an improved pay offer to be made.
- **Unanimously supported** the appropriate representative on the employers' organisation in seeking an improved offer.

**04.10.07 REVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT 5-YEAR PLAN CONSULTATION IN THE AREAS MANAGED BY THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

The Executive Committee was advised of the areas of the Consultation process managed solely by Officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS), the main areas of interest and the comments and views received from stakeholders.

The Brigade Manager (Support Services) advised the Executive Committee that a further presentation had been given to the West Windsor Residents Association to an audience of approximately 120 people. He reported that George Cross would also be giving a presentation to the Holybrook Parish Council.

The Brigade Manager (Support Services) noted that 2 Petitions had been received, one relating to saving Windsor's 24-hour fire service staffed by full-time firefighters, and the other one registering concern and objections to the possible closure of Crowthorne fire station, and objections to the proposals to cover Crowthorne and Sandhurst with crews and appliances from Camberley. He also reminded Members that 2 petitions had been received at the Fire Authority's annual meeting in June 2006 which related to the closure of Windsor fire station. The Vice-Chairman felt that, as 7 respondents to the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) proposals had been under the impression that there were still plans to close Windsor fire station, a media statement should be circulated to negate this. The Brigade Manager (Support Services) noted that there had been extensive press coverage relating to the proposals for Windsor, and that some coverage had been misinterpreted. The Chairman did not feel that a further media statement would be useful.

#### **The Executive Committee:**

- **Noted** the report and the comments and views received during the Consultation process.

#### **04.11.07 REPORT FROM OPINION RESEARCH SERVICES ON THE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT 5-YEAR PLAN CONSULTATION FOCUS GROUPS, FORUMS AND QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Executive Committee was advised of the areas of the Consultation process managed by Opinion Research Services (ORS), namely the Elected Member and Stakeholder Forums, Focus Groups and the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Questionnaire.

The Brigade Manager (Support Services) introduced Dr Mark Llewellyn (Opinion Research Services) (ORS).

In response to a request by the IRMP Working Party for a further breakdown of Questionnaire responses by postcodes, Dr Mark Llewellyn tabled a map which identified the locations of respondents (for those wishing to take part in further consultation) across Royal Berkshire, and a map identifying the types of responses to the Windsor question (for those who wish to take part in further consultation) across the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (*copies available from the Committee Manager*).

In response to Members' questions, Dr Mark Llewellyn confirmed that 453 responses received to the Questionnaire did not hold significant statistical value for Berkshire as a whole and that the number of responses received should be considered in context. He also confirmed how the Forums had been conducted, as detailed at 3.1 of the report presented, and that a balanced and objective interpretation of the views of the participants was captured and included within the report. He also reassured the Executive Committee that ORS had been given clear criterion regarding the recruitment of the Focus Groups' participants.

Mr John Holdstock (on behalf of The West Windsor Residents' Association) addressed the Committee with the Chairman's agreement.

**The Executive Committee:**

- **Noted** the report and the comments and views received during the Consultation process.

**Dr Mark Llewellyn left the meeting.**

**04.12.07 OVERVIEW OF MEDIA COVERAGE RELATING TO THE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT 5-YEAR PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Executive committee was provided with a profile of media activity during the Consultation period of 12 February to 11 May 2007, and Nicole Targett took the Executive Committee through the report presented.

**The Executive Committee:**

- **Noted** the report.

**04.13.07 PRESENTATION OF FOOTAGE OF FIRE APPLIANCE RESPONDING FROM SLOUGH FIRE STATION TO WINDSOR**

The Fire Authority was shown some video footage, taken at 1800 hours on 25 June 2007 of a fire appliance responding from Slough Fire Station to the end roundabout on the Ring Road at Windsor. George Cross confirmed that this footage was conducted on a race meeting night at a time advised by the Thames Valley Police as being a particular busy period.

**04.15.07 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Executive Committee **Noted** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 17 September 2007 at 6.30pm (Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service).

**04.16.07 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

The Executive Committee **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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the paragraphs 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:

- Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2007 (*Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3*).

**Note - the following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda.**

**04.17.07 PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2007**

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 21 May 2007 were **Agreed** as a correct record for signing by the Chairman.