

AGENDA ITEM 3: MINUTES

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS ON TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2004 COMMENCING AT 7.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 8.55PM

Present: Terry Mills (Chairman), Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman)
Mike Adams, Christine Borgars, Barrie Patman

Apologies: James Mole

6.01/04 MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It was reported that Councillor James Mole has been appointed as a member of the executive Committee in place of Councillor David Swindells who retired from both the Fire Authority and Wokingham District Council prior to the Elections in June.

6.02/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

6.03/04 PART I MINUTES: 3 AUGUST 2004

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 3 August 2004, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6.04/04 ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

The Chairman sought and received Members approval to the inclusion of the following report in the Part I Agenda for consideration at the meeting on the grounds of urgency:

Agenda item 6A: Underground Water Repairs to Station 16 – Single Tender Action

6.05/04 DRAFT INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP) AND YEAR II ACTION PLAN

The Executive Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 5 – not reproduced) to

the draft of the IRMP and Year II Action Plan in readiness for consultation to commence on 1 October 2004.

Members were advised that Officers working on the IRMP/Year II Action Plan continue to be on schedule to meet the timetable agreed by the Fire Authority at its meeting in June 2004 for commencement of the IRMP consultation process by 1 October 2004. Following all the preparatory work, which included identification and prioritisation of risks in the community, through a robust risk assessment process completed in late July, work on the actual document had commenced on 4 August 2004. Over the past six weeks Officers and representatives from the FBU have met on numerous occasions in order to finalise the final Draft IRMP document and Year II Action Plan, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda (not reproduced).

In response to a question the ACFO confirmed that as directed a copy of the Draft IRMP document and Year II Action Plan had been circulated to the other Fire Authority Members with a request that any comments or observations they may have should be passed direct to the relevant Political Party Group Leader prior to this meeting.

In taking Members through the document the ACFO confirmed that all the amendments/additions suggested by Members of the IRMP Working Party and the FBU, to strengthen the IRMP in a number of key areas, have been included.

There had been a slight change in the format of pages 40-43 (Consultation) which had been based on the very small response received to the last document. In addition the document would be circulated with a "Freepost" envelope.

The ACFO reported that an Officer from the HMIFS Support Team had visited the Brigade in August and having looked at a copy of the first Draft IRMP/Action Plan and on receiving an overview of where this Brigade is going indicated that he did not feel it necessary to re-visit the Brigade in the foreseeable future. A copy of the revised documents had also been sent to the IRMP Support Team but no response has yet been received. Overall the ODPM will be looking for results and it is felt that the Draft IRMP/Year II Action Plan will achieve those results.

On the invitation of the Chairman the FBU representatives were invited to speak and in lending their support to the document requested that the "and RBFRS Headquarters" be removed from the second right hand column on page 17 as this was not part of the original remit. In confirming his agreement to the removal of the offending words the ACFO reported that the scheme would be monitored by a Working Group comprising of representatives from the FBU, Executive Committee Members, NHS Ambulance Trust and Brigade Officers.

In view of the comments made by the FBU, Members sought clarification on what the actual dispute was and whether it had any bearing on the proposed extension of the co-responder scheme to two other Retained Fire Stations.

The FBU whilst happy to support a review of the Mortimer co-responder were looking for proof that it was actually working and whilst they were currently in dispute they could not agree to any expansion of the scheme.

The Vice-Chairman suggested that as the Brigade are currently in dispute with the FBU then the suggested expansion of the co-responder scheme to two other Retained Fire Stations should not be removed from the text of the document. Councillor Patman also reflected on the fact that under the Modernisation Agreement the ODPM require the Brigade to extend its co-responder scheme. He therefore felt it prudent to proceed with the trials, as they would clearly identify any specific problems such as the impact on a Retained Fire Station.

The Chief Fire Officer reminded the Committee that as the Brigade were currently going through the IRMP process, the extension of the co-responder scheme would be a part of the many trials associated with this process and will provide the Brigade/Fire Authority with more meaningful data to consider in conjunction with the FBU. The Brigade therefore wish to extend the co-responder scheme, monitor its progress and once the information has been gathered consult with the FBU and other interested parties on the outcome of the Pilot schemes.

Having taken both the Officers and FBU's comments into consideration Members agreed that the wording in the second box of the right hand column on page 17 be amended to read as follows:

“Extend and effectively monitor the scheme at two further sites. Run pilot schemes at two further sites over a six month period. These will be objectively monitored and managed in partnership with Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust.”

The FBU indicated that they could not agree to the revised form of wording and would therefore be opposing it.

The Director of Human Resources took then opportunity to advise Members that due to a change in the Regulations affecting the revised Disputes Procedure and parts of the new Grey Book there is now a need to try and resolve the two ongoing disputes, namely Co-responders and Transfer Bonds. He would therefore consider these in consultation with the FBU and report back on the outcome of the consultations to a future Executive Committee meeting.

In response to a question the ACFO confirmed that based on the consultation responses a report suggesting any necessary amendments to the documents would be presented to the IRMP Working Party for endorsement and referral to the Fire Authority, at its meeting in February 2005, for consideration and approval.

RESOLVED: That the Draft version of the IRMP and Year II Action Plan (as amended) be approved in readiness for the commencement of the consultation process on 1 October 2004.

6.06/04 CELLULAR SITES: INCOME AND PROPOSED TOWER FOR CAVERSHAM ROAD FIRE STATION AND WORKS AT WOKINGHAM ROAD FIRE STATION

The Executive Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 6 – not reproduced) to

realign budget income targets with actual income received and the signing of Agreements with Vodafone for the provision of a new drill tower at Caversham Road in lieu of rent for a ten year period and Orange for proposed improvements at Wokingham Road in lieu of a disturbance allowance.

In drawing Members attention to the spreadsheet set out on page sixteen of the report which detailed the income growth the ACFO reported that whilst there had been an initial burst of activity in 1999 the Brigade's Agents, Vail Williams, have now indicated that the boom in these sites is past its peak and only one or two new sites per year is as much as can be expected in the next three years. Working on these figures therefore it is predicted that the forecast income over the next three years will be:

2005/2006	£110.5k
2006/2007	£123.5k
2007/2008	£136.5k

The income takes the form of annual rental and a disturbance payment, usually in the region of £5,000, to compensate the Brigade for any inconvenience caused by the installation works. In the past the income generated has remained within the IS Department where it has been used to fund upgrades in Network communications and contributing to the growth costs associated with mobile phone use in the Brigade.

The Brigade is currently in a position where the earning target of approximately £130,000 is £40,000 more than the actual income. This has resulted in a shortfall in the Budget Line and having to find funds to continue the use of mobile phone services from other Budget streams. In addition the Information Systems Officer post is also funded from the mast income stream.

In an attempt to offset the anticipated income shortfall the proposals have been worked up with both Vodafone and Orange and the following is a brief summary of the anticipated works and funding arrangements:

Caversham Road Drill Tower

Vodafone will provide a replacement Drill Tower at Caversham Road, the previous tower having been demolished due to its unsafe state. As Planning Permission has already been granted Vodafone will build a new tower to our specification and at no cost to the Brigade. Once completed, ownership of the tower will pass in full to the Fire Authority.

The value at an estimated £85,000 will be offset against future rental payments, giving Vodafone a ten year rent free period. The ACFO drew Members attention to a possible alternative where the Fire Authority may wish to include this benefit and add it to the income target, resulting in the £85,000 being added to the income generation line at £8,500 per year over the next ten years. In practice this would require the sum of £8,500 being transferred from the Premises Budget into the IS Budget which would add £8,500 per year onto the figures quoted earlier, namely £119k, £132k and £145k for 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 respectively. There would also be the opportunity

to allow other providers to use the tower for which the Brigade would retain the income.

Wokingham Road Improvements to Accommodation

Orange have agreed in principle to fund improvements to the appliance bays at Wokingham Road in lieu of the £5,000 disturbance fee. At present the ground floor accommodation is very restricted with insufficient space for the proper storage of Fire-Fighters PPE. The proposals will result in a small extension to the appliance bays, at an estimated cost of £9,000, thereby allowing more space for the proper stowage of Fire-Fighters PPE.

In supporting the proposal to include this benefit and add it to the income target, Members also sought clarification regarding any income shortfall. The ACFO confirmed that current shortfalls in income affecting the IS Budget are being funded from within the Support Services Directorate Budget.

RESOLVED: That:

1. **The Budget-earning targets be adjusted in line with those contained within this report to reflect more accurately the current and expected income from cellular mast rental. Therefore the targets set for the next three years are:**

£119k for 2005/2006

£132k for 2006/2007

£145k for 2007/2008

2. **The proposal from Vodafone for a new Drill Tower at Caversham Road Fire Station in lieu of ten years rental and an Agreement with Orange to finance improvements at Wokingham Road in lieu of a disturbance allowance be approved and accepted.**
3. **The proposed alternative of including this benefit and adding it to the income target, resulting in the £85,000 being added to the income generation be approved and that the sum of £8,500 per annum be transferred from the Premises Budget into the IS Budget for a period of ten years.**
4. **The delegated authority be given to the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to sign the contracts with Vodafone for the new tower and associated works.**

6.07/04 ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM: UNDERGROUND WATER REPAIRS TO STATION 16 – SINGLE TENDER ACTION

The Executive Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 6A – not reproduced) to the award of a contract under single tender action to undertake urgent works to repair an underground water leak at Station 16, Bracknell. An urgent decision is required to enable the repair work to commence as soon as possible.

As the leak is situated in the drill yard and car parking area, causing the concrete to break, it therefore constitutes a health and safety hazard to both pedestrians and those driving fire service vehicles.

As the quotation received from the other term contractor, in the sum of £21, 301.00 was felt to be expensive for this type of work, the Procurement and Facilities Manager through West London Estates, sort another quote from Morris and Blunt which at £14,600 is considered to be reasonable for this work and can be funded from within the approved Facilities Budget.

RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, and in accordance with Standing Orders Relating to Contracts Number 10, (d) and (f), the Contract, in the sum of £14,600, be awarded to Morris and Blunt under single tender action.

6.08/04 TRADEMARKING AND BRANDING OF THE NAME “STAYWISE” AS THE NAME OF THE AUTHORITY’S INTERACTIVE SCHOOLS EDUCATION PACKAGE

The Executive Committee’s approval was sought (Agenda item 7 – not reproduced) to seek trademark status for “Staywise” the name to be used in the development of the web based Schools Interactive Education package and also to the specific branding of the package.

Members were reminded that the Authority is developing an innovative web based Schools education package in partnership with Kidde PLC which necessitates the provision of website name and address. The Project Team have therefore proposed and utilised the name “Staywise” and in addition to it not yet being registered by another user, it has also found favour with partners.

In order to protect the name it is recommended that the Fire Authority seek trademark status thereby ensuring that it cannot be used elsewhere. In response to expressions of interest in the project a business plan has been produced for the purpose of attracting wider support from public/private partners and to attract further funding. A project logo has therefore been developed and approval is sought to “brand” the project so that the logo can be used on the web-site, associated documents and business cards, used in conjunction with the project.

With approval of the Chairman copies of the proposed logo and name for the education package together with a list of the current partners involved in the project was tabled at the meeting as Appendices 1 and 2 respectively (not reproduced).

The Committee acknowledged the significant amount of work done by the Community Safety Team on this project and wished to place on record there thanks to all those officers involved.

RESOLVED: That authorisation to seek trademark status for “Staywise” as the name to be used in the development of the web based Schools Interactive Education package and also to the specific branding of the package be approved.

6.09/04 APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBERS COMMUNITY SAFETY WORKING GROUP

The Executive Committee was requested (Agenda item 8 – not reproduced) to consider a proposal to increase Elected Member involvement in the development of community safety strategies and partnerships through the appointment of a new Community Safety Working Group.

In noting the background to this proposal as set out in paragraphs 1-3 of the report (not reproduced), Members were reminded that previously the Authority's community safety strategy and activities had been reported to the former Community Safety Panel but this had been abolished in the recent committee restructuring with its work now being monitored by the Executive Committee.

A new Working Group comprising of six Members and up to six Officers, depending on the subjects to be discussed, would allow Members to gain an ongoing awareness of the community safety strategies being developed. In addition it would also actively involve Members in community safety strategies and strategy development and provide the opportunity to discuss and determine effective approaches to partnership development within local authorities. The Working Group would report back to the Executive Committee with details of its proposed work flow.

In considering the suggested Terms of Reference presented as Appendix 4 (not reproduced) Members were of the opinion that it should be named the Community Safety Forum and, if possible, consist of one Member from each Authority with a specific interest in community safety.

In supporting a suggestion that the Forum's Chairman should also become a member of the IRMP Working Party, Members also agreed to a request from the FBU that they be permitted to send observers to meetings of the Forum.

It was agreed that the Fire Authority Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Leader of the Labour Group would seek and submit names of volunteers from within their Political Party to the Committee Administrator who in the event of receiving more than six nominations would refer the matter back to the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer to determine.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. A Community Safety Forum be established in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference (as amended) as set out in Appendix 1 attached to the Minutes.**
- 2. The Fire Authority Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Leader of the Labour Group be authorised to seek names of volunteers from within their Political Party and submit these to the Committee Administrator who in the event of receiving more than six nominations will refer the matter back to the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer to determine.**

6.10/04 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED: That the date of the next meeting be changed from Wednesday 24 November to Monday 29 November 2004 in the Strategic Command Centre, Brigade Headquarters, commencing at 6.30pm.

6.11/04 EXCLUSION OF THE 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 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:

Agenda Item	Paragraph
15 Part II Minutes: Tuesday 3 August 2004	1, 7 & 8

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Fire Authority's Executive Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3 August 2004)

6.12/04 PART II MINUTES: 3 AUGUST 2004

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on Tuesday 1 June 2004, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

APPENDIX 1**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM****TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1 The Working Group shall have a membership of 6 Elected Members together with up to six appropriate key officers as determined by the Chief Fire Officer. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be elected at the Working Party's inaugural meeting.**
- 2 The Working Group shall meet at least twice a year on dates to be determined.**
- 3 The Working Group will:**
 - (a) Consider the future direction and implications of the Authority's community safety strategy**
 - (b) Consider partnership opportunities within each unitary authority area**

- (c) Determine strategies for increasing the Service’s influence within local authority community safety partnerships**
 - (d) Discuss community safety activities and performance**
 - (e) Make recommendations to the Fire Authority’s Executive Committee, as appropriate, in respect of (a) to (d) above**
- 4. The Berkshire Fire Brigades’ Union be permitted to send observers to meetings of the Forum.**
 - 5. The Chairman of the Forum will be appointed as a Member of the Fire Authority’s IRMP Working Party**

Approved – Fire Authority’s Executive Committee – Tuesday 21 September 2004

Signed:.....
Councillor Terry Mills
Chairman

Date: 29 November 2004