

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE
AUTHORITY**



Held on Wednesday 11 April 2012

**Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House,
Town Square, Bracknell Berkshire RG12 1AQ**

Those present: Councillor Colin Dudley (*Chairman*) Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson
Councillor Phillip Bicknell Councillor Mrs Prue Bray (part)
Councillor Dr Paul Bryant Councillor David Burbage
Councillor Andrew Cumpsty Councillor Haqeeq Dar
Councillor Ricky Duveen Councillor Adrian Edwards
Councillor Paul Gittings Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons
Councillor David Holtby Councillor Peter Jones
Councillor John Lenton Councillor Iain McCracken
Councillor Edward Plenty Councillor Fred Pugh
Councillor Mohammed Rasib Councillor Angus Ross
Councillor Alan Ward Councillor Miss Emma Webster

In Attendance: Olaf Baars (Acting Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Andy Mancey (Area Manager, Response, AMR)
Samantha Shepherd (Strategic Policy & Programme Manager, SPPM)
Carolyn Rowe (Committee Manager)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)
Paul Southern (Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ADCFO)
Andrew Vallance (Director Resources, DR)

Observers: Officers, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Members of the public (2)
Representative Bodies (none)

Action

261. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chris Bowring, Councillor Andrew Bradley, Councillor Jeff Brooks and Councillor Mrs Diana Coad.

262. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) Councillor Peter Jones declared a Personal non Prejudicial Interest as Reading Borough Councillor in respect to Agenda Item 10 (Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Corporate Plan 2012/13) in advance of a discussion on the Development of new Brigade Headquarters.
- b) Councillor Angus Ross reported that he would no longer declare a Personal non Prejudicial Interest as the 2011/12 Fire Authority's representative and Board Member on the South East Fire and Rescue Service Control Centre Ltd (SEFRCCCL) as the company ceased to exist as of 13 March 2012.

There were no further Declarations of Interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

263. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2012

Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 February 2012 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

The Chairman noted that the actions from the last meeting had been discharged, and stated he had written to Department for Communications and Local Government (DCLG) regarding Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's (RBFRS) Bellwin claim after the Swinley Forest incident in April / May 2011. The Director of Resources updated members that advisers had expressed confidence the funding would be awarded to RBFRS imminently with the decision due from the minister this week.

264. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDERS 19 AND 25

There were no items received under standing orders 19 and 25, participation of the public.

265. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Councillor Mrs Prue Bray arrived at this point of the meeting)

- a) The Chairman reported he attended with the Acting Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), the Empowerment Efficiency Social Enterprise (EESSE) Awards. RBFRS was successful and received a Gold award, for project of the year for its work on the replacement Incident Command Unit.
- b) The Chairman advised he attended the recent Regional Management Board and reported on a presentation received from Kent FRS on their study of human behaviour when discovering a fire in the home. Kent FRS are seeking support from Fire and Rescue Services in the South East to circulate questionnaires to fire victims.
- c) With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Andrew Cumpsty spoke in recognition of Councillor Fred Pugh and his many years of public service as a Reading Borough Councillor and Mayor, and as a Member of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA). He reported Councillor Fred Pugh would stand down in the forthcoming elections and wished him a happy retirement.

On behalf of the RBFA the Chairman echoed Councillor Andrew Cumpsty's sentiments and wished Councillor Fred Pugh every success in the future.

Councillor Fred Pugh thanked RBFA for their kind words and stated that he found his time on RBFA both rewarding and enjoyable.

- d) The Chairman advised he had been unwell and unable to attend a recent Fire Conference, and thanked Councillor Dr Paul Bryant who attended the conference in his absence. A recent email was circulated to Members by Councillor Bryant which detailed the items discussed at the conference
- e) The Chairman reported on his and other members' attendance, at the sad occasion of the funeral of Mrs Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager), on 22 March 2012.

The chairman led the Fire Authority in a minute's silence in remembrance of

Mrs Lynda Kenyon.

266. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Resolved:

- a) That it be Noted that there had been no reports referred by the Audit and Performance Review Committee.

267. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

There were no Questions received from the Fire Authority Members under Standing Order 30.

268. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 44

No Notices of Motion had been received under the provisions of the Fire Authority's Rules of Procedure.

269. STATUTORY DUTIES FOR RESCUE FROM FLOODWATERS - PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed the Caversham Road Fire Station Commander Jessie James, who specializes in water rescue, to the meeting, and invited Andy Mancey, Area Manager (Response) [AM(R)] to give his presentation.

AM (R) provided a handout and spoke to the Fire Authority under four main areas: an overview of legislation / statutory responsibilities; the Impact of Sir Michael Pitt's Report following the summer 2007 floods; The Flood Rescue National Enhancement Project; and RBFRS capability to deal with flood rescues. (Further copies are available from the Committee Team).

The Chairman reported of his visit to Caversham Road Fire Station and commented that the drying area for wet / dry suits was not fit for purpose. He asked whether there was a solution to this problem.

The AM (R) advised that a solution was limited by the space and the current financial pressures of the Brigade.

The Chairman suggested that the Strategic Asset Management Committee (SAM C) examine the issue; Councillor Angus Ross, Chairman of SAM C encouraged Fire Authority Members to visit Water Rescue Service at Caversham Road Fire Station. Councillor Miss Emma Webster commended and thanked Green Watch and all staff at Caversham Road Fire Station for her visit, and asked that the issue of communications be examined in greater detail.

SAM C

The ACFO reported that funding had been earmarked for water communications issues, and further commented that the ability to control resources was often not within RBFRS command (e.g. Italy sent rescue boats to Gloucestershire), and that any statutory duty identified must have associated funding.

Responding to a question, the AM(R) advised that a range of regional / national support by specialist organisations for flood rescue such as air ambulance, was also available.

On behalf of the RBFA, the Chairman thanked Area Manager (Response) for his presentation and Caversham Road Fire Station Commander Jessie James for his attendance at the meeting.

270. ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13

The ACFO introduced the Strategic Policy Programme Manager (SPPM) and advised there would be slight changes to the final figures in the Annual Report

2011/12, as some were extrapolations where final information was still being gathered. Not all targets have been achieved, demonstrating they were challenging, but those missed are largely marginally, and there is an improvement on the previous year's figures.

The SPPM tabled a paper which outlined changes to the Corporate Plan and Annual Report 2012/13. She introduced the Corporate Plan and Annual Report as the document which brought together both where RBFRS had come from and what had been achieved to date, with what is planned.

The SPPM advised members that the outline Corporate Plan 2012/13 and Annual Report 2011/12 had been approved by the Fire Authority's Management Committee in January 2012. In future wider engagement and consultation would be sought, synchronizing with the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) timescales.

Subject to Fire Authority approval, the final document, to save resources, would be published online on 1st June 2012. Members attention was drawn to the overall reduction in the number of calls and fires. This illustrated the success of the Prevention Department in RBFRS, but created a training challenge.

The SPPM took Members through the amended tabled paper, and Councillors Mrs Prue Bray, Mrs Christine Bateson and Peter Jones provided some detailed comments and amendments.

In response to questions from Councillor Ward, the SPPM advised that awareness of the Corporate Plan at a strategic level was good, it cascades to individuals in departments, but an understanding of a wider role needs further work. Regarding the role Investors In People programme (IIP) could play in this, the ACFO stated that the scorecard system is in place, and the plans to embed the work into Interviews on Personal Development (IPDs) from Directorate level were to achieve this. The ACFO encouraged Members to visit Fire Stations to judge the success of the Corporate Plan as a working document.

The Chairman commented Performance Development Interviews (PDI's) were an important tool for RBFRS Managers to communicate objectives and that he considered 90% was a more acceptable target to achieve across the organisation. Councillor Iain McCracken requested officers bring this as a future item of the Audit Performance and Review Committee.

Councillor Miss Emma Webster reminded Fire Authority Members of their role on setting targets and offered to assist the SPPM on the communication of the delivery of information.

Resolved:

- a) That the Corporate Plan and Annual Report for 2012-13 be AGREED by the Fire Authority as further amended, and subject to updating with year end data before publishing online.

271. THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE PROGRAMME UPDATE

The ACFO reported that the Programme Sponsoring Group held its second meeting on 5 April 2012. A 3 month public and staff consultation had commenced from 6 April until 6 July 2012. Responses to the public and staff consultation would be brought to the additional Fire Authority meeting on 17 July 2012.

**APRC
30.05.12**

Councillor Dr Paul Bryant, Chairman of the Programme Sponsoring Group, advised that the Group consisted of two Members from the FRS in Oxfordshire and from the RBFA. He reported that a business plan would be presented at a future RBFA meeting by Oxfordshire County Councillor Judith Heathcote and a Member from RBFA would present the plan to the Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Members.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

272. AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE'S 2011/12 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE FIRE AUTHORITY

Councillor Iain McCracken, Chairman of the Audit and Performance Committee briefly took the Fire Authority through the Committee's 2011/12 Annual report.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

273. ANNUAL REPORT – STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SAMC)

Councillor Angus Ross, Chairman of Strategic Asset Management Committee took the opportunity to thank the Acting Deputy Chief Fire Officer (ADCFO), Paul Southern for his support and assistance as Lead Officer, stating that following the RBFRS restructure the lead officer is now the Director of Resources Andrew Vallance.

The Chairman echoed Councillor Ross's thanks to the ADCFO on behalf of RBFA.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

274. FORWARD PLAN

Resolved:

- a) That the Forward Plan be Noted.

275. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Thursday 28 June 2012 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1AQ.
- Note: An additional meeting of the Fire Authority is required, to be held on Tuesday 17 July 2012, at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Wokingham Borough Council, Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1BN.

276. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

- a) 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 Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 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.

277. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2012

Resolved:

- a) That the Part II Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 February 2012 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

278. RESILIENCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Acting Chief Fire Officer informed the Fire Authority of proposals outlined in the report.

On being put to the vote, with 19 votes in favour and 1 against, this item was adjourned to a further meeting on Wednesday 25 April 2012.

Resolve:

- a) **That the Fire Authority meeting be adjourned until Wednesday 25 April 2012, to discuss the above Part II item. Venue to be confirmed.**
- b) **That the Fire Authority submit further questions to the Committee Manager within 7 days for a response in an updated paper for the meeting on 25 April 2012.**

The meeting adjourned at 9.07 pm