

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Held on Thursday 28 June 2018 at 5.30pm

Brigade Headquarters, Lynda Kenyon Suite, Newsham Court, Pincents Lane, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD

Members:	Councillor Malcolm Alexander	* Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons
(* present)	Councillor Alistair Auty	* Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge
	Councillor Christine Bateson	* Councillor Iain McCracken
*	Councillor Phillip Bicknell	* Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle
*	Councillor Jason Brock	* Councillor Satpal Parmar
*	Councillor Paul Bryant	* Councillor Ted Plenty
*	Councillor Colin Dudley	* Councillor Dexter Smith
	Councillor Adrian Edwards	* Councillor Angus Ross
	Councillor Jan Gavin	* Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
*	Councillor Paul Gittings	* Councillor Emma Webster

In Attendance: Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HOFPP)
Becca Chapman (Data and Performance Analysis Manager)
Stephen Chard (Committee Officer)
Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Steve Foye (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Chris Holland (Station Manager, Risk and Performance)
Paul Jacques (Area Manager (Protection and Prevention))
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources, Learning and Development)
Simon Jefferies (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Katie Mills (Head of Corporate Services)
Jim Powell (Area Manager (Service Delivery))
Linda Pye (Committee Officer)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)

Observers: Officers, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Members of Representative Bodies
Members of the Public

(Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer) in the Chair)

Action

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2018/19 MUNICIPAL YEAR

RESOLVED that Councillor Colin Dudley be elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

2. CHAIRMAN TO MAKE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Chairman read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. He declared that he would take that office upon himself, and would duly and faithfully

fulfil the duties of it according to the best of his judgement and ability. He thanked Members of the Fire Authority for electing him and he looked forward to working with both Members and Officers in the forthcoming year. There was a lot of work to be done around inspection and also in protecting the people of Berkshire.

(Colin Dudley (Chairman) in the Chair)

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2018/19 MUNICIPAL YEAR

RESOLVED that Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons be elected Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.

4. VICE-CHAIRMAN TO MAKE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

The Vice-Chairman read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. She declared that she would take that office upon herself, and would duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of her judgement and ability. Councillor Helliar-Symons thanked Members of the Fire Authority for electing her as Vice-Chairman. She considered it an honour and expressed her gratitude to her fellow Members for placing their confidence in her for another year. The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service was an extremely creditable organisation, one of the very best Fire and Rescue Services in the entire country, and she was extraordinarily proud to be associated with it.

5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Malcolm Alexander, Alistair Auty, Christine Bateson, Adrian Edwards and Jan Gavin.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct, Councillors Emma Webster and Iain McCracken stated that should the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel be discussed at the meeting they declared a personal interest by virtue of the fact that they were Members of this Panel. They would therefore not participate in any debate on the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel should it materialise.

In accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct, Councillor Angus Ross stated that should the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) be discussed at the meeting he declared a personal interest as he was a Member of the TVFCS Joint Committee. He would therefore not participate in any debate on the TVFCS should it materialise.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 APRIL 2018

RESOLVED that:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2018 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDERS 19 AND 25

There were no petitions or questions from members of the public under Standing Orders 19 and 25.

9. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The Chairman asked if Members had not done so already, could they please forward the signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office to either the Monitoring Officer, Graham Britten or Fayth Rowe before the end of the announcements.
- The Chairman had the pleasure of welcoming five new Fire Authority Members from Reading Borough Council, Slough Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council; Councillors Jan Gavin, Satpal Parmar, Ted Plenty, Dexter Smith and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey. The Chairman took the opportunity to welcome them to Royal Berkshire Fire Authority. He was certain that they would find their time on the Authority both interesting and rewarding. He welcomed back Councillor Plenty, on behalf of the Fire Authority, whom he looked forward to working with again. The Chairman was sure that the new Members would find the work rewarding and interesting. The work undertaken by the Fire Authority was important to the wider residents of Berkshire and Members should bear that thought in mind when making decisions.
- Councillors Chris Maskell, Avtar Cheema, Mohammad Rasib, Atiq Sandhu and Philip Mirfin from Reading Borough Council, Slough Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council had stepped down as Members of the Fire Authority. The Chairman thanked them for their contributions to the Fire Authority over the years and wished them all the best in their future endeavours in their personal and political life.

Minute's silence to remember Maureen

- The Chairman commenced his announcements with some very sad news that one of the Service Chaplain, Maureen Devine, had passed away.
- Reverend Maureen Devine was Chaplain to Whitley Wood and Wokingham Road Fire Stations and she would be missed by all in the Service and especially the crews in those particular stations. Maureen was a lovely lady and it had been a pleasure to know her.
- Maureen's funeral service had been held on Friday, 15 June in Earley and her family had asked that any donations in Maureen's memory be made to either The Fire Fighters Charity or Sue Ryder through the A B Walker Just Giving page that had been set up and which could be shared with members after the meeting.
- The Chairman asked all Members of the Fire Authority and Officers to join him in standing to observe a one minute silence to pay respects to Maureen.

Anniversary of fire at Grenfell Tower

- On Thursday, 14 June the Fire Service held a minute's silence as a mark of

respect to all those affected by the fire at Grenfell Tower on 14 June 2017.

- The Fire Authority joined with government departments and other fire and rescue services across the country in commemorating the anniversary of that terrible tragedy.
- A minute's silence was observed at Service Headquarters and at all fire stations, with watches parading at the front of stations.
- He felt that all Members would agree that this was a very important occasion to commemorate and to remember all those affected.

Spirit of Fire Awards

- Staff across the Service were recognised for their fantastic fundraising efforts for the Fire Fighters Charity after they received nominations for two awards for the Spirit of Fire Awards, which took place on Thursday, 21 June.
- The Service was shortlisted as finalists for the Fire Service Supporter of the Year category, after it had raised over £100,000 in the last year alone. Unfortunately the Service was not successful in winning the award, which went to Mid and West Wales Fire Service, but it was still an incredible achievement to be shortlisted in the final five nominees.
- Separately, Firefighter Scott Butler was nominated in the Firefighter Supporter of the Year category after a series of extremely challenging and unbelievable fundraising efforts, including rowing the Black Sea as part of an epic journey to reach the summit of Mount Elbrus, the highest peak in Europe. Scott did not win the award but the Chairman was sure it was an honour to be nominated. The Chairman stated that he had been proud to represent Members of the Fire Authority at the awards and some of the stories he had heard had been truly mind blowing.
- So many staff had contributed towards fundraising efforts for the Fire Fighters Charity, whether individually or as part of a team. Although they had not done it for recognition, it was fantastic to see that their efforts had not gone unnoticed. The Chairman personally thanked every member of staff and volunteers for their efforts as the difference this money would make was unbelievable.

Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle fundraising

- The Chairman highlighted the charitable work of one of the Fire Authority Members, Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle, who through her work as The Mayor of Bracknell Forest had raised an impressive £52,915.80 for The Fire Fighters Charity as her mayoral charity.
- A number of events were organised throughout her Mayoral year, engaging people throughout the local community, as well as a number of staff. Many would remember the skydive in April, which 12 members of staff took part in.
- The year of activities ended with The Mayor of Bracknell's End of Year Celebration, held at the Coppid Beech Hotel in Bracknell on Friday, 11 May. The event included a range of performances throughout the evening and an auction to raise more money for the charity.
- A big thank you and well done to Councillor McKenzie-Boyle who worked tirelessly as Mayor and to all those who supported the fundraising.

Update on Ascot Fire Station collecting at Royal Ascot

- Last week firefighters from Bracknell and Maidenhead retained fire stations were at Royal Ascot week.
- They were there to ensure that proceedings went smoothly and at the same time they were collecting money for The Fire Fighters Charity.
- The final amount was being calculated but the figure was said to be well over £10,000 raised in that week alone. The Chairman said well done to all involved as they had done a fantastic job.

Armed Forces Day

- Saturday, 30 June was Armed Forces Day. Armed Forces Day was a chance to show support for the men and women who made up the Armed Forces community: from currently serving troops to Service families, veterans and cadets.
- Ahead of the day, flags had been sent to all stations, to be put on display. The HM Armed Forces Liaison Officer, Che Scott and a crew from Caversham Road Fire Station would be attending an Armed Forces event at The Forbury, Reading to show their support and engage with the local community.
- In February this year the Fire Authority signed the Armed Forces Covenant, to formally pledge its support to members of the Armed Forces community. Supporting Armed Forces Day reflected the ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces Community.

Awards Ceremony

- The next staff annual awards ceremony would take place on Friday, 28 September. The Chairman urged all Members to seriously consider submitting a nomination for an individual or a team that it was felt had gone the extra mile to serve the people of Berkshire. It was very straightforward to do, and all Members should have been given nomination forms that they could fill in and put into the boxes at the back of the room. Alternatively, please email the events team at events@rbfrs.co.uk
- It only took less than five minutes to complete a nomination, but doing so could really mean a lot to the recipient, helping them to feel valued for the work they did. So please give it some thought and make sure you submit your nomination before the deadline of Friday, 27 July at 5pm. He urged all Members to make a nomination.

10. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

It was noted that no reports had been referred by the Audit and Governance Committee.

11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

There were no questions from Members under Standing Order 30.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 43

There were no Notices of Motion under Standing Order 43.

13. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, LEAD MEMBERS AND MEMBER CHAMPIONS

Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer, presented a report which set out the Member nominations on the appointment of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Committees in accordance with the Constitution and the rules relating to political balance.

Attached as Appendix A to the report was an updated Fire Authority Member role description. It was proposed that the role of Income Generation Member Champion should be combined with the role of Budget Lead Member to form a new role of Budget and Income Generation Lead as there was natural alignment between these two areas of responsibility.

The Fire Authority would have 20 members in 2018/19 which would comprise 14 Conservative Members, 5 Labour Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member.

Councillor Angus Ross referred to media enquiries which stated in the role description that they should be referred to the Chairman. He thought that it had been agreed that Lead Members should also be entitled to answer press enquiries and he therefore asked if this could be amended to reflect that position. The role description was also silent on this issue in terms of Member Champions.

RESOLVED that:

- Nominations received for the appointment of Audit and Governance and Management Committee as set out in table 4 be approved;
- Nominations received for the appointments for Lead Member roles, Member Champion roles and Outside Bodies listed in table 4 be approved;
- The change to the Role Descriptions for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members and the merging of responsibility for Budget and Income Generation be approved.

14. APPOINTMENT TO PENSION BOARD

Becci Jefferies, Head of HR and Learning and Development, presented a report on the appointment to the Pension Board. The Pension Board was set up under the auspices of The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and consisted of two employer representatives and two scheme member representatives. The Fire Authority was required to approve the appointment of the employer representatives on the Pension Board at its annual meeting in June each year.

The Head of HR and Learning and Development explained that the Pension Board existed to assist the Fire Authority in its role as Scheme Manager for the various Firefighter pension schemes.

It was proposed that both the existing employer representatives (Doug Buchanan and Lucy Greenway) should continue on the Board.

In terms of the two scheme member representatives, these were currently Lincoln Ball and Tregear Thomas. However, the Head of HR and Learning and Development explained that Tregear Thomas would be standing down from this

role and the Fire Brigades Union had been asked to appoint a replacement. These positions were not subject to Fire Authority approval.

RESOLVED that:

- The appointment of Doug Buchanan and Lucy Greenway to the Pension Board as employer representatives be approved.

15. THAMES VALLEY EMERGENCY SERVICES COLLABORATION REPORT

Simon Jefferies, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, reported that the document *Emergency Services Collaboration in the Thames Valley* had been commissioned by the Thames Valley Collaboration Executive Board. It was intended to give the public and other stakeholders information on how the emergency services of the Thames Valley planned to meet the statutory duty to collaborate as detailed in the Policing and Crime Act 2017. Whilst there was a long history of collaboration between services, the document set out the formal governance arrangements that were now in place and detailed the programme of work that had already been commissioned by the Executive Board. It was presented in draft format to the Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group on 19th March 2018 with a recommendation that the constituent members take the document for formal sign off through their relevant governance channels.

Councillor Paul Bryant stated that collaboration between emergency services was developing rapidly and he therefore asked if the document would be updated regularly. Simon Jefferies confirmed that it was currently a snapshot in time. There were no definitive dates set to update the document but it would probably be revised on an annual basis.

Councillor Colin Dudley stated that a Member/Officer Working Group had agreed the policy which highlighted the need to take collaboration and move it forward. He feels that this document did move it forward. The table on page 47 of the agenda set out areas where collaboration work had been ongoing and it was good to see that the Fire and Rescue Services had the most ticks against them.

Councillor Angus Ross advised that Councillor Malcolm Alexander had been the Lead Member on collaboration and this was an area that had become more important and focused over the last year or so. A lot of work had been completed and a lot more was in the pipeline and he was therefore happy to see the report published.

RESOLVED that:

- The publication of the Thames Valley Emergency Services Collaboration report be agreed.

16. FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND

Katie Mills, Head of Corporate Services, presented the report which made the Fire Authority aware of its duties as set out in the new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England that was published in May 2018 and effective from 1 June 2018. A presentation followed which provided further explanation on the detail of the National Framework and, in particular, the independent inspection of

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Fire and Rescue Services as detailed within the National Framework.

Chris Holland (Station Manager Risk and Performance) commenced the presentation and highlighted the following points:

- The recently reviewed Fire and Rescue National Framework for England was a document produced by the Home Office. It provided strategic direction on how fire and rescue services in England should operate and there was a statutory duty to give it due regard.
- The Fire Authority responded to the consultation on the review and the Government had in turn responded to the points that had been raised.
- The revised National Framework Priorities for Fire Authorities included:
 - a duty to make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and to respond to fire and rescue related incidents;
 - identification and assessment of the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks;
 - the need to collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services;
 - a duty to be accountable to communities for the services they provided; and
 - the need to develop and maintain a workforce that was professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.
- The revised National Framework also incorporated:
 - new guidance on how fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS);
 - new guidance to allow mayors and police and crime commissioners to take over the duties of a FRA;
 - direct support for the development of professional standards for FRAs;
 - a new workforce section aimed at supporting and developing staff; and
 - encouragement of commercial transformation to further promote collaboration.
- The Station Manager Risk and Performance then referred to the number of points made by the Fire Authority in its consultation submission, most notably:
 - Giving agreement that while FRAs could make a positive contribution to the delivery of public services, this should not be at the expense of the delivery of core functions. The Government agreed that this should not be at the expense of statutory core functions and the wording of the Framework had been amended as a result.
 - Highlighting concerns in relation to the requirement in the event of a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA) to ensure availability of appropriate resources at all times including when business continuity arrangements were in place. The concern was raised at the difficulty of doing so at a time of industrial action. In response, the Government had softened the wording and the requirement amended for FRAs to make

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every endeavour to make appropriate resources available.

- A full copy of the National Framework had been provided to Members as had the Government's response to the consultation.

The Fire Authority then viewed a brief video outlining the requirements of HMICFRS, which would also be used to brief staff. This was being rolled out by the NFCC. Becca Chapman (Data and Performance Analysis Manager) highlighted the following points in relation to the requirements of HMICFRS:

- Three pilots had been conducted in Suffolk, Staffordshire and West Yorkshire. These completed in the spring of 2018. The RBFRS would form part of the second tranche and this inspection would take place in either autumn or winter of 2018. A date was expected to be confirmed shortly for this inspection week.
- The inspection framework and judgement criteria were published at the end of May 2018. This included specific questions that HMICFRS would want answered and, for example, what a 'Good' FRA would look like.
- The inspection was not just about the inspection week itself. HMICFRS would require a comprehensive range of evidence gathering in the eight (and potentially more) weeks leading up to the inspection week. This evidence would include data and documentation; as well as conducting desk reviews, interviews, focus groups, a staff survey and a nationally set public perception survey. The inspectors would also meet with a range of members of staff and with Fire Authority Members. The Fire Authority would also need to submit a self-assessment.
- A grading (Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate) would be received for each pillar of the inspection and for each of the 11 core questions. An individual report would then be provided, as would a national thematic report.
- Extensive preparations had been and would continue to be led by Corporate Services and the internal project team which was represented from key areas of the RBFRS. Self-assessment preparations involved all departments.
- The first data return was submitted in May and a second was expected in July 2018.
- Active engagement was ongoing with the Service Liaison Lead (SLL) and the Inspector for the RBFRS. The SLL attended the Audit and Governance Committee in March 2018 and a second visit was planned for September 2018.
- Communication with staff was ongoing and all Fire Authority Members would be briefed and involved via the Chairman and Lead Members in the coming months.

The Head of Corporate Services then concluded the presentation by referring Members to a slide which demonstrated the improvement journey sought from the 2015-19 Corporate Plan. This document would continue to be a very useful reference point for Members, particularly throughout this process, and great strides had been made towards achieving the commitments of the Fire Authority outlined in this document and efforts to further improve continued.

She also noted that the inspection process would continue to evolve over the

coming years and greater clarity and understanding was still required on the process and judgement criteria. However, the RBFRS would continue to evaluate its progress against what was known to date and early analysis showed that while the RBFRS might not yet be meeting the 'Outstanding' criteria, it was equally not 'Inadequate'. There was awareness of areas of both good practice and areas where further improvement was required.

Councillor Colin Dudley informed Members that the data return in May 2018 was extensive with over 100 documents provided to the inspectorate. It was important to respond quickly and accurately to requests for documentation and he offered congratulations to the Head of Corporate Services and her team for the work undertaken to date. Councillor Dudley added that they should be proud of what they had achieved.

Councillor Paul Bryant queried if there was an understanding at this stage of whether the Framework would change service provision. In response, Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, CFO), reiterated the point that the RBFRS was already making good progress with achieving the strategic objectives of the 2015-19 Corporate Plan and the preparations being made for the inspection aligned with that. He added that a working draft of the 2019-2023 Corporate Plan was in production and Members had usefully contributed to this at the recent Member Workshop. The CFO gave his view that the RBFRS was in a good place to meet the requirements of the Framework.

It was agreed that the presentation slides would be circulated to all Members.

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RESOLVED that:

- The publication of a new Fire and Rescue National Framework for England and the duties it placed on the Fire Authority be noted.

17. ANNUAL REPORT ON GOVERNANCE

Katie Mills, Head of Corporate Services, presented the Annual Report on Member Attendance and Allowances in 2017/18.

At the start of 2017/18 Trevor Ferguson had been appointed as Chief Fire Officer and Graham Britten as Monitoring Officer together with a number of other new appointments within the Senior Leadership Team.

This was the second year of the streamlined governance arrangements with each of the 20 Fire Authority Members being appointed to either the Management Committee or Audit and Governance Committee, both of which continued to operate well. The proven success of the governance arrangements had been noted in the Peer Challenge report which had been published in September 2017.

Work undertaken by the Management Committee and Audit and Governance Committee over 2017/18 was noted.

It was noted that there had been no formal complaints received against Members in 2017/18.

This year the Fire Authority had approved and extended the appointments of the Independent Persons, David Comben and Roger Penfold, for a period of four years.

Member Allowances for the period June 2017 to May 2018 were set out in Appendix A and the attendance of RBFA Members for the Municipal Year 2017/18 were shown in Appendix B. Attendance this year had generally been good with no meetings being inquorate and all business was able to be conducted. Appendix B was not necessarily a true reflection of the number of occasions Member meetings had been held. Lead Members continued to meet with Officers on a regular basis and a number of Task and Finish Groups had been established together with two Policy Direction Workshops, a staff award ceremony and passing out parades.

Councillor Colin Dudley thanked Councillor Iain McCracken for all the work undertaken by the Audit and Governance Committee over the past year.

RESOLVED that:

- The Members' Allowances received for the period of June 2017 to May 2018 be noted;
- The 2017/18 attendance record of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members be noted.

18. FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Angus Ross commented that a commitment had been given to the provision of periodic Lead Member reports as well as the receipt of reports from the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS). He therefore asked that these be added to the Forward Plan. It was agreed that these additions would be made.

RESOLVED that:

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Forward Plan for the period 16 July 2018 to 10 December 2018 be noted, subject to the inclusion of Lead Member reports and reports from the TVFCS.

19. MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that:

It was noted that the minutes of the meetings accessed from the link on the agenda had been published on the RBFRS website.

20. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 31 July 2018, 6.30pm in the Lynda Kenyon Suite, RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD.

21. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

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disclosing the information.

22. RESPONSE CAPABILITY TO MARAUDING TERRORIST FIREARMS ATTACK (MTFA)

James Powell, Area Manager Service Delivery and Paul Jones, Group Manager Service Delivery, presented an exempt report on the response capability to a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA).

RESOLVED that:

- The exempt report be noted.

(The meeting concluded at 6.53pm)