

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Held on Wednesday 28 September 2016 at 6.50pm

RBFRS Headquarters, Lynda Kenyon Suite, Newsham Court, Pincents
Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD

Members: (* present)	*	Councillor Malcolm Alexander	*	Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons
	*	Councillor Alistair Auty	*	Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge
	*	Councillor Christine Bateson		Councillor Chris Maskell
		Councillor Phillip Bicknell	*	Councillor Iain McCracken
		Councillor Paul Bryant	*	Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle
	*	Councillor Avtar Cheema		Councillor Phillip Mirfin
	*	Councillor Colin Dudley	*	Councillor Mohammed Rasib
	*	Councillor Adrian Edwards		Councillor Angus Ross
	*	Councillor John Ennis	*	Councillor Ishrat Shah
	*	Councillor Paul Gittings	*	Councillor Emma Webster

In Attendance: Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HOFP)
Maira Fraser (Committee Officer)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources, Learning and Development)
Katie Mills (Head of Corporate Services)
Nikki Richards (Head of Business Information and Systems)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)
Anne-Marie Scott (Director of People and Organisational Development, DPOD)
Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)

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

Action

36. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting had been received from Councillors Philip Mirfin, Paul Bryant, Chris Maskell and Angus Ross.

The Chairman announced that although this meeting was originally scheduled to be a confidential meeting, as per the minutes of the 17 August 2016, it had been agreed that in the interest of transparency and openness the appointment of the new Chief Fire Officer should be undertaken in a public meeting. Elements of the appointment were however confidential and if necessary parts of the meeting could be conducted in private.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received from Members.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

38. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2016

RESOLVED that:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2016 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following being considered:

Councillor Emma Webster commented that in relation to the Resolutions for Item 32 Summary Report of Responses to the Response Standards on page 9 of the paperwork she was not confident that the stated resolutions accurately reflected what was agreed at the meeting. She therefore requested that Officers review the webcast of the meeting and ensure that the resolutions were accurately reflected. Any changes could be brought back to the October 2016 meeting.

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39. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDERS 19 AND 25

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

40. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

He congratulated all those employees that had taken part in 'The Big Pull' which saw the 3.5 tonne Water Rescue Unit pulled from Lambourn to Langley. There was great support from across the Service with the team being led by Green Watch, Caversham Road. To date over £3000 had been raised for three fantastic causes namely: The Fire Fighters Charity, Cystic Fibrosis and Brookfields Special Educational Needs School in Tilehurst.

On Saturday the 8th October, Bracknell Fire Station would be celebrating 50 years in the same fire station. All Members had been invited to attend alongside staff and their families, past and present. The event would start at 6.30pm and those attending were asked to respond to Charlotte Cartwright.

On 21st September, the Passing out Parade for the latest group of new recruits took place at Whitley Wood Fire Station. The eight new recruits had taken part in an intensive 14 week course which would give them the skills they needed to become operational. New recruits would be posted to fire stations in the first week of October. The next wholetime recruitment process would start on 30th September 2016. The Chairman welcomed this news and commented that the training course for new recruits was 'gold standard'. He congratulated the instructors on the training they provided and welcomed the new recruits to the Authority.

41. ISSUES ARISING FROM AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Councillor Iain McCracken confirmed that no reports had been referred to the Fire Authority by the Audit and Governance Committee.

42. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

There were no questions from Members under Standing Order 30.

43. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 43

There were no Notices of Motion under Standing Order 43.

44. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

Anne-Marie Scott (Director of People and Organisational Development, DPOD) introduced the report which sought approval of the salary package for the new Chief Fire Officer (CFO) in accordance with the Fire Authority's Standing Orders. The Management Committee had appointed an Appointments Panel to appoint the new Chief Fire Officer following the retirement of the current CFO. They had met on the 13 September 2016 to make the appointment.

The Panel had offered the role to Trevor Ferguson the current Deputy Chief Fire Officer and he had accepted the offer. He would be in post with effect from the retirement of the current CFO i.e. on the 23 April 2017. The Fire Authority was required to ratify the package for the new CFO. The DPOD noted that in April 2016 Members had agreed packages for the whole Corporate Management Team and that was reflected in the offer being made to the new CFO.

The Chairman proposed that Members agree the recommendation of the Appointments Panel. He commented that the appointment of a CFO was one of the most important activities undertaken by the Fire Authority. He was very conscious that any appointment should not be on a political basis or be seen as a foregone conclusion. The recruitment process had therefore been open to all qualified individuals who were taken through the agreed processes. The Appointments Panel was a cross party panel to ensure that there was no political bias. He thanked Councillor Paul Gittings for his input.

Councillor Gittings stated that he was confident that the right decision had been made. He congratulated Trevor Ferguson on his appointment and wished him well in his future endeavours to provide the best Fire Service for the residents of West Berkshire.

Councillor Emma Webster stated that she had found the two presentations given during the process very enlightening and asked that the articles be disseminated to all Members.

Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons also congratulated Trevor Ferguson on his appointment. She commented that the process had been closely contested. She noted that the CFOs salary was reviewed annually following a formal appraisal process and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman met regularly with the CFO on an informal basis to review progress being made.

Councillor Malcolm Alexander congratulated Trevor Ferguson on his appointment. He also congratulated the Chairman and Vice Chairman and their team for the speedy resolution of the situation following the resignation of the CFO and felt that they had arrived at a great outcome.

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RESOLVED that:

The recommendations from the Appointments Panel set out below be agreed:

1. appoint the Chief Fire Officer (Trevor Ferguson) with effect from 23 April 2017;
2. on the agreed salary range of £123,702 to £141,162 (the exact point to be agreed by the Chairman and Vice Chairman and to be reviewed annually);
3. postholder to receive an operational allowance of £9,949 and a car allowance of £8,849.

45. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that:

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Forward Plan for the period October 2016 to December 2016 be noted.

46. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 19 October 2016, 6.30pm in the Lynda Kenyon Suite, RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD.

47. 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, 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.

48. PART II MINUTES OF THE APPOINTMENT PANEL MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

RESOLVED that:

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2016 were confirmed as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(The meeting concluded at 17.47 pm)