



Agenda for the Meeting of the Management Committee

Wednesday, 3rd February 2021

At

6.30 pm

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Management Committee is being held online in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus_ (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) regulations 2020.

The Authority supports the principles of openness and transparency. To enable members of the press and public to see or hear the meeting, this meeting will be livestreamed:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact:

Committee Team

0118 938 4611

E-Mail at committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD



MEETING: Management Committee Meeting
DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, 3rd February 2021, at 6.30 pm
REMOTE MEETING: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

S U M M O N S

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of Management Committee at the time, date and venue indicated above, when it is proposed to deal with the business set out in the enclosed Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Britten'.

GRAHAM BRITTEN
Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Management Committee:

Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor Angus Ross
Councillor Tricia Brown	Councillor David Cannon
Councillor Colin Dudley	Councillor Jo Lovelock
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Dexter Smith
Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd- DuBey
Councillor Graham Howe	

Copy to: Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service



MEETING: Management Committee Meeting
DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, 3rd February 2021, at 6.30 pm
REMOTE MEETING: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

AGENDA

1. Representative Bodies

Purpose:

The Chairman may, at his discretion, invite the Representative Bodies present to address the Management Committee once on any Part I item, on the prerequisite that the Representative Bodies advise the Chairman at the commencement of the meeting of those Agenda items they wish to speak to.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

Purpose:

To receive Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2020 (Pages 5 - 12)

Purpose:

To agree that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2020, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Receipt of Announcements

Recommendation:

To receive announcements from the Chairman and / or Chief Fire Officer.

6. Issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee

Recommendation:

That it be noted that no reports have been referred by the Audit and Governance Committee.

7. Safeguarding Presentation

Recommendation:

To receive a presentation on Safeguarding.

8. 2021/22 Scheme of Member Allowances Review (Pages 13 - 24)

Purpose:

To recommend to the Fire Authority for approval the 2021/22 Member Scheme of Allowance review.

9. 2020/21 Budget Monitoring- Quarter Three (Pages 25 - 36)

To receive for note the estimated revenue outturn and update on Capital Projects as at the end of Quarter Three 2020/21.

10. Appliance Availability by Crewing to Meeting Corporate Measures 16 and 17 (Pages 37 - 46)

To note the performance of Appliance Availability in Quarter Three.

11. Forward Plan (Pages 47 - 48)

Purpose:

To note the Forward Plan.

12. Date of next meeting

Extraordinary meeting on Monday, 15 March 2021, at 6.30pm. This meeting will be held remotely. The public will be able to view this meeting on Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service YouTube page.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Monday, 7th December 2020, at 6.30 pm
This was a remote meeting.

Members:
(*present)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * Councillor Jeff Brooks | * Councillor Angus Ross |
| * Councillor Tricia Brown | * Councillor David Cannon |
| * Councillor Colin Dudley | Councillor Jo Lovelock |
| * Councillor Paul Gittings | * Councillor Dexter Smith |
| * Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons | * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey |
| * Councillor Graham Howe | |

In Attendance: Mark Arkwell (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Paul Binyon (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Tom Carvell (Senior IT Technical Support Officer)
Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Steve Foye (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Sheikh Liaqat (IR35 Capital Projects Manager – Consultant)
Andrew McLenahan (Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment, HFF&E)
Katie Mills (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
James Pinchin (Business Support Officer, BSO)
Nikki Richards (Director of Support Services, DSS)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Hannah Sheehan (Democratic Support Assistant, DSA)
Tony Vincent (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

39. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

There were no questions received from Representative Bodies on any of the items on the agenda.

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jo Lovelock.

Action

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

42. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2020

RESOLVED that the Part I and Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020, be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

Remembrance Sunday

Following the Service's commitment to the Armed Forces community, and receipt of the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award, Members will know that we successfully launched the Military Veteran Hub on 7 November as part of Remembrance Sunday weekend.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this important initiative, which further builds on our commitment to the Armed Forces community.

This year's Remembrance Sunday was marked in accordance with COVID-19 control measures. Whilst we had to adapt to the restrictions, we were still able to pay our respects to those who sacrificed themselves to protect our freedom.

The Service observed the national two-minute silence to remember our fallen heroes. Station-based staff also paraded in full fire kit outside the front of fire stations and Remembrance Day flags were raised at 11am on 8 November. Large poppies were sent to all stations to display on the front of the fire engine and Crowthorne Community Fire Station, Maidenhead and Windsor Fire Stations displayed photos of poppies sent in by local children in their bay windows.

Comprehensive Spending Review

The Government had initially stated that it would undertake a three-year Comprehensive Spending Review. Given the impact of Covid-19, it was not a surprise that the Government moved from its original three-year CSR plans to a one-year announcement.

The Government has sought to ameliorate the effects of the pandemic through

various measures announced within the Spending Review. For us, this means that many of our significant revenue funding challenges for 2021-22 appear to have been addressed. However, the downside of the one-year settlement is that our medium-term challenges remain unresolved and unquantifiable.

Whilst individual fire and rescue settlements for 2021-22 have yet to be confirmed, it appears that funding will be protected in real terms for 2021-22. Our Revenue Support Grant should be protected in real terms as well as the Home Office funding for firefighter pensions which potentially could be rolled into the baseline.

Whilst the Spending Review announced that Council Tax referendum principles will again limit the increase in precept to 1.99%, it was reassuring to hear the Chancellor announce that 75% of collection fund deficits at January 2021, will be funded by the Government. The remaining deficits will be spread over three years as per recent announcements. However, the broader issues around Business Rates as a sustainable source of income will still need to be resolved.

It is disappointing that there is still no clarity about longer-term funding arrangements for the additional Grenfell/Protection activities that we need to undertake. Given the scale of the problems we are uncovering, it is important that these activities are rolled into baseline funding.

The Government announced that it intends to freeze the majority of public sector pay for 2021-22. Whilst this news will be disappointing for staff, particularly given how hard they have worked through the pandemic, a pay freeze would relieve a significant pressure from the Authority's 2021-22 Budget.

Looking further ahead, the nature of the one-year settlement does allow the Authority and the sector a further 12 months to continue to lobby for a fair funding settlement to resolve longer-term revenue and capital funding challenges.

Fire Cadets Moves Online

The current group of Fire Cadets were about half-way through the programme when it was paused in March, due to restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

In resuming the sessions online, it is hoped that these young people can continue their development as part of this important programme, whilst also contributing to their general wellbeing.

The sessions have been designed to be interactive and will cover topics such as Prevention, First Aid, Special Appliances, Water Safety and Road Safety.

I personally am delighted that as a Service, we continue to find different ways to deliver the various services we offer to our communities, including the young people that take part in our Fire Cadets programme. I am delighted the Service

has found different ways to deliver our services to the community.

Christmas Message

As we approach the end of the year, I would like to wish the team at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Members and the Royal Berkshire community a very happy and safe Christmas.

In what has been an incredibly challenging year. I would like to thank everyone who has served our communities with immense professionalism and dedication during this time.

To see the year out, the Service has put together its own Advent Calendar made up of 24 pieces of advice to help keep people safe over the festive period. Over the coming weeks, you'll see members of the team across social media sharing their safety advice.

Thank you. That concludes my announcements this evening.

44. FIT FOR THE FUTURE: NATIONAL FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL (NFCC) CONSULTATION

Before handing the item over to Trevor Ferguson, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), to present this report, the Chairman reminded Members that a urgent item was taken at the last Management Committee meeting to establish a cross party Task and Finish Group to formulate a response to Fit for the Future: National Chiefs Council (NFCC) Consultation.

He stated the Authority was required to respond by the closing date on 19 November, and that the report detailed the Authority's response.

Trevor Ferguson, CFO, informed Members that Fit for the Future Consultation had set out 11 improvement objectives and referring to Appendix A, detailed the Authority's response. He thanked Members of the Task and Finish Group for their time in formulating a response.

The Chairman also extended his personal thanks to follow Members of the Task and Finish Group and Officers.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

45. 2020/21 BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER TWO

Budget and Income Generation Lead Member, Cllr Howe, introduced the report and stated COVID-19 continue to impact the way Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFERS) deliver its services.

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P) reported that COVID-

19 had continued to dominate the budget. He advised the 2020/21 Revenue Budget was set at £35.263m, with expenditure anticipated to exceed income by £284,000, which meant the Authority was reliant on its reserves to balance the budget.

The forecast year-end outturn show a deficit of £66,000 which was an improvement of £218,000 on the budgeted position.

As previously stated in the Quarter One update, Management Committee's decision to close Wargrave Fire Station will generate an in-year saving.

The impact on the 2.75% pay settlement this financial year was a budget pressure of £55,000 of additional costs. A potential budget pressure was the proposed increase in external auditors fees, which was the main contributing factor to the projected overspend.

Additional grant funding in respect of COVID-19 and prevention activities was received in 2020/21.

The Chairman reported that Bracknell Forest Council had confirmed their Tax Base would be between 1.3 and 1.4%, and asked Conor Byrne whether any other Unitary Authority had confirmed its Tax Base. Conor Byrne reported that he was due to be hearing from West Berkshire Council and thanked Authority Member, Cllr Linden, for orchestrating this.

In answer to a question from Cllr Gittings on whether the real impact of COVID-19 and issues around Grenfell would not be seen until 2021/22, Trevor Ferguson confirmed the budgetary pressure on the built environment was a huge challenge and would require a long-term sustainable package.

In response to another question from Cllr Gittings, Conor Byrne advised that the Service had made good progress in delivering Phase One of the Capital Programme. He added that the Service did not have the funding to move into Phase Two of the Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) and referred to the importance of the continuation of lobbying Central Government in allowing Fire and Rescue Services to increase the precept beyond 1.99%.

The Chairman reported that the Government was trying to ease the load on tax payers and stated Unitary Authorities with Social Care responsibilities could raise their precept.

Cllr Shepherd-DuBey queried the Service's view on the recent statement relating to reported unofficial Government policy, requiring leaseholders take out second mortgages for remedial work on fire safety defects.

Trevor Ferguson reported that it was not definitive leaseholders were required to take out second mortgages and reported that remedial work on fire safety defects was a long term issue.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Howe and Conor Byrne for their hard work on

balancing the budget. Cllr Ross added in relating to SAIF, Officers will be looking carefully at how it is presented to Members.

The Chairman moved the recommendation and it was seconded by Cllr Howe.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

46. APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17

Steve Foye, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), presented Quarter Two report on Appliance Availability. He stated the Wholetime Appliance Availability in Quarter Two was 99% and explained the Service had been running a lean operating model. In referring to paragraphs 3.8 and 3.14 he reported 16 occasions where Critical-Standby were unitised, allowing a two-hour window for arrangements to be made to cover staff sickness in order for an appliance to be available.

He reported there were two occasions (out of 16) where Critical-Standby move fell outside Corporate Measure 16. He added there were also additional challenges due to COVID-19.

In moving on to On-Call Appliance Availability, Steve Foye reported crewing averaged 52.2% across the Service, which was a decrease from Quarter One.

Cllr Brooks commended 99% Whole-Time Appliance Availability in Quarter Two and queried whether the two On-Call Stations with low percentages would achieve the 60% target and maintain that target.

Steve Foye reported Lamborne had particular challenges in relation to skills and crewing at the beginning of this year but was beginning to demonstrate improvement in its availability. He added linked to Pangborne's future, was the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the build of Theale Community Fire Station.

In answer to a question from Cllr Brown in relation to what happens when an appliance fail to achieve Critical-Standby. Steve Foye reported Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) colleagues maintain overall sight of appliance availability and would mobilise the nearest appliance.

The Vice-Chairman echoed the achievement of 99% Appliance Availability and queried whether the career break of a Supervisory Manager at Crowthorne Fire Station was permanent.

Steve Foye reported the career break was for approximately 12 months and a temporary arrangement had been made to fill that post.

The Chairman thanked Firefighters, TVFCS and support staff for their contribution in achieving 99% Whole-Time Appliance Availability.

	Action
<p>RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
<p>47. FORWARD PLAN</p>	
<p>Officers confirmed that they would look into a query made by Cllr Ross on whether an update report on TVFCS was due to be presented to Management Committee in April 2020.</p>	HCS
<p>RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>	
<p>48. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p>	
<p>Wednesday, 3 February 2021, at 6.30pm. The public will be able to watch this meeting on Royal Berkshire Fire and Service YouTube page.</p>	
<p>The Chairman thanked those who joined the meeting via the YouTube page and wished all present a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.</p>	

(The meeting concluded at 19:15)

This page is intentionally left blank

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 FEBRUARY 2021
SUBJECT	2021/22 MEMBER SCHEME OF ALLOWANCE REVIEW
LEAD OFFICER	GRAHAM BRITTEN, MONITORING OFFICER
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	NOTE AND RECOMMEND

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To receive the 2021/22 Member Scheme of Allowance, recommend to the Fire Authority for approval; and to receive for note the recommendations of each of the six unitary authority Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs) to their respective councils.
- 1.2 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 regulations 10 and 19 (2) require the authority to make a scheme of allowances before the beginning of the financial year; and, before it makes it, to have regard to the recommendations made by Independent Remuneration Panels of its constituent councils.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **NOTE AND RECOMMEND** to the Fire Authority:
 - 2.1.1 **NOTE** the recommendations of each of the six unitary authority Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs);
 - 2.1.2 **NOTE** the increase of 2.75% to the Scheme of Allowances backdated 1 April 2020.
 - 2.1.3 **RECOMMEND** the Scheme of Allowances 2021/22 to the Fire Authority for Approval.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 On an annual basis the Authority is required to adopt a Scheme of Members' Allowance prior to the start of the financial year. MA14 of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) Scheme of Allowances states that *'The Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees' Allowances shall be adjusted annually in line with the average percentage pay increase agreed by the NJC for Local Government Services. Adjustment of the allowance shall take effect from the beginning of the financial year'*
- 3.2 In September 2020, the National Joint Council (NJC) Government Services had reached pay agreement for staff employed under 'Green Book' terms and conditions for 2020/21. This resulted in a 2.75% increase in pay backdated to 1 April 2020.
- 3.3 Appendix A reflects the 2.75% increase in the Members' Scheme of Allowances effective from 1 April 2020.
- 3.4 At the Fire Authority meeting on 16 November, the Authority requested that consideration is given to formalising the roles of the Honorary Champions for Armed Forces and EDI. As it is not proposed that these posts will attract special responsibility allowances, they have not been included in the updated Scheme of Allowances. However, a separate report will be presented in due course to ensure the appointment to these positions is reflected in our constitutional procedures.

Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs)

- 3.5 There are six Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs) in the Royal County of Berkshire, which make recommendations to Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council. Members are asked to note the recommendations of each IRP.
- 3.5.1 **Bracknell Borough Council's** Member Scheme of Allowance became effective from 1 April 2018 and subsequent years until it is reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Scheme is indexed to the annual local government pay increase.
- 3.5.2 **Slough Borough Council** at its Council meeting on 24 November 2020, it approved the IRP recommendation of recalibrated Basic Allowance be set at £8,687 effective from 1 April 2021. In accordance with its terms of reference the IRP benchmarked the allowances under consideration against i) Other Berkshire Unitaries (mean), ii) South East Employers (SEE) Survey (mean) and CIPFA 10 Nearest Neighbours (mean).
- 3.5.3 **West Berkshire Council** – On 1 April 2020 the Basic Allowances was increased by 2.75% due to Basic Allowance is index linked to staff pay increases, from

£7,696 to £7,908. The Scheme was last amended, following a meeting of the IRP on 6 November 2017, and Council on 1 March 2018.

- 3.5.4 **Reading Borough Council** – In 2019/20 the IRP undertook a full review and recommended an increase to Special Responsibility Allowances to bring the rate broadly up to Berkshire average. The Council at its meeting on 25 June 2019, approved Basic Allowances to remain the same at £8,220 a year and amended the SRA
- 3.5.5 **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead** approved on 25 September 2018 that Basic Allowance should continue to be paid during any period of maternity, adoption or paternity leave. The Basic Allowance to each Councillor be £8,143 each year, and shall have effect for the year ending 21 March 2021.
- 3.5.6 **Wokingham Borough Council** – Effective from 22 November 2018, the Basic Allowance is £7,784. The scheme is linked to staff pay increases.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The current budget for Members' Allowances (Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) is estimated to be in the region of £95k. Costs will be incurred in publishing a notice that the Authority has made a Scheme of Members' Allowances in a Berkshire newspaper. The cost is estimated to be in the region of £300.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Regulations 10 and 19 (2) which require the authority to make a scheme of allowances before the beginning of the financial year; and, before it makes it, to have regard to the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panels of its constituent councils.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Authority's Scheme of Members' Allowances does not include any element for meeting costs incurred by a Member who has to arrange care in order to carry out their function as a Member of the Fire Authority. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, exclude the Authority from including such a provision in its Scheme. All RBFA Members have been appointed by one of the six Unitary Authorities in Berkshire and are entitled to claim "dependent carers' allowances" from their appointing authority.

Agenda Item 8

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 No risk implications have been identified.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

9.1 Not applicable.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

10.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Senior Leadership Team were consulted during the preparation of this report. The Monitoring Officer is the report sponsor.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 [Bracknell Forest Council Constitution, Part 6 – Members Allowances](#)

11.2 [Slough Borough Council – Council meeting, Tuesday 24th November 2020](#)

11.3 [West Berkshire Council – Independent Review of Councillors’ Allowances](#)

11.4 [Reading Borough Council – Council Meeting 25 June 2019](#)

11.5 [Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Constitution – Part 9 – Miscellaneous Items](#)

11.6 [Wokingham Borough Council Constitution – Section 2 \(2.2.5\)](#)

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A – 2021/22 RBFA Scheme of Allowances.

13. CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Fayth Rowe, Democratic Support Lead, 0118 938 4611

SCHEME OF ALLOWANCE

February 2021



MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following scheme:

NAME AND DURATION

- MA1. This scheme may be cited as the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members' Allowances Scheme.
- MA2. **This scheme shall have effect for the financial year 2021/22.** The Scheme may be amended at any time by resolution of the Authority.

BASIC ALLOWANCE

- MA3. A **Basic Allowance** at a rate of £2,552¹ per annum shall be paid to each Member in monthly instalments.
- MA4. For the avoidance of doubt, 'Member' in this context means a person appointed to the Authority under the provisions of the Royal Berkshire Fire Service Combination Scheme.
- MA5. The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of Members including calls on their time at meetings with officers and constituents. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of Members' homes.
- MA6. Where a Member's term of office does not extend throughout a complete year, the amount payable shall be pro rata to the number of days during which his/her term of office subsists.

¹ Indexed to local government percentage salary increase so may be subject to change.

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

MA7. A **Special Responsibility Allowance** shall be paid in monthly instalments to those Members who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the Fire Authority, in recognition of the additional duties and time commitment such positions entail. These Special Responsibility Allowances are specified in Schedule 1.

Schedule 1

Position	Special Responsibility Allowance ²
Chairman of Authority	£12,762
Vice Chairman of Authority	£6,381
Chairmen of Committees	£3,828
Lead Members	£3,828
Opposition Group Leaders	£2,552
Member Champions	£1,276
RBFA Chairman of Thames Valley Joint Committee (if applicable)	£2,552
Co-optees' Allowance	£142.00 per meeting

MA8. Where a Member holds one of the above positions for part of a year, the amount payable shall be pro rata to the number of days he/she holds that position.

MA9. A Member may not receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance at any one time. Therefore, a Member holding more than one of the positions of special responsibility must notify the Monitoring Officer to the Authority in writing which Special Responsibility Allowance he/she wishes to be paid.

CO-OPTEEES' ALLOWANCE

MA10. The Co-opted Independent Person (s) shall be entitled to receive a payment of £142.00 per meeting.

MA11. Independent Persons are entitled to receive only the allowances under this scheme for the duties he/she undertakes on behalf of the Fire Authority, and

² Indexed to local government percentage salary increase so may be subject to increase.

Agenda Item 8

Appendix A

may not claim or receive allowances from another Local Authority or any other source for the same duties.

SCHEDULE 2 – APPROVED DUTIES

MA12. Members and the Independent Persons shall be entitled to claim travelling and subsistence allowances for the following duties:

- (1) Meetings of the Authority, committees and task and finish groups formally convened by the Monitoring Officer, including (a) seminars, etc. to which all Members have been invited and (b) cases where a Member is invited and officially notified to attend a meeting of a committee of which he/she is not a Member;
- (2) formal briefings by the Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive or other officer, provided Members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend;
- (3) on-site inspections or visits authorised in advance by the Authority or a committee;
- (4) official and courtesy visits undertaken by the Chairman of the Authority or, in the case of a particular visit, such other Member as he/she may ask to represent him/her.
- (5) attendance as an officially appointed representative of the Authority on any other body, including a committee, sub-committee or working party of that body, or a further body to which that body has appointed the representative provided there is a connection with the functions of the Authority;
- (6) attendance at outside conferences, courses, seminars and like meetings, subject to prior approval by the Authority or a committee, or by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive after consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman;
- (7) attendance at medal presentation ceremonies and other events of a public relations nature to which Members of the Authority have been formally invited;
- (8) subject to the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, such other duties for the purpose of or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Authority as the Authority may from time to time determine;
- (9) attendance at meetings with officers of the Service where a Member has been formally invited in his/her capacity as reference holder;
- (10) visits to Fire and Rescue Service premises undertaken as part of a planned programme;

MA13. The amounts of allowances paid by the Authority are set out in Schedule 3.

INDEXATION OF ALLOWANCES

- MA14. The Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees' Allowances shall be adjusted annually in line with percentage salary increase (known as the 'spinal column point 49') agreed by the NJC for Local Government Services. Adjustment of the allowance shall take effect from the beginning of the financial year for the year the index is applied to staff.
- MA15. The rates of travel allowances shall be the same as those approved by the HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs) and shall be adjusted and take effect in line with alterations made from time to time by the HMRC.
- MA16. The rates of subsistence allowances shall be the same as those agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- MA17. The Chief Finance Officer shall have delegated power to approve the adjustment in accordance with paragraphs MA15 and MA16 above.

RENUNCIATION OF ALLOWANCES REPAYMENT

- MA18. A Member may, by notice in writing given to the Monitoring Officer, elect to forego, assign or transfer all or part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

CLAIMS

- MA19. Basic, special responsibility and co-optees' allowances do not need to be claimed.
- MA20. Claims for travelling and subsistence must be made on the approved form. Expenses claims should be made monthly. Claims submitted after three months from the date of expenditure occurred will not be accepted, except in exceptional circumstance and approved in writing by the Chief Finance Officer.
- MA21. Where re-imbursment of travelling and subsistence is being claimed, receipts should be attached to the claim form.
- MA22. All expenses can be claimed on one form (except Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances which are paid automatically).
- MA23. Time and place of departure may be from work, it does not have to be a home to home journey but claims must show clearly where you are travelling from and to. Completed forms should be sent to Democratic Support who will forward them to the Payments Section following approval.

Agenda Item 8

Appendix A

MA24. Allowances are paid at the end of each month. The usual payment date is the last working day of the month. To ensure payment is received by the end of the month, claims should be submitted **by the 7th of each month**.

SCHEDULE 3 - TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

MA25. Councillors are entitled to receive payments for travelling and subsistence for the purpose of performing approved duties.

MA26. The cost to the Authority of the use of public transport for medium and long distance journeys may often be less than the cost of a Member's use of a private car. There is an expectation that before making medium or long distance journeys Members will consider the cost to the Authority as well as the convenience of the mode of transport. Where public transport is available, convenient, and cheaper, a Member may choose to use his or her own private vehicle but the total amount claimed for mileage shall not exceed the ordinary standard public transport fare.

MA27. For travel by a Member in his/her own private car or one provided for his/her use, the rate shall be that [approved HMRC](#) (HM Revenue and Customs).

MA28. Claims for expenses should only be made when actually incurred, i.e. rail/bus, taxis, hotel accommodation. Receipts must be provided.

MA29. The rates of subsistence allowances shall be the same of those agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Copies of the rates agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are available from Democratic Support committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 FEBRUARY 2021
SUBJECT	2020/21 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER THREE
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR GRAHAM HOWE
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform Members of the estimated revenue outturn and to provide an update on Capital Projects as at the end of Quarter Three 2020/21.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the Quarter Three Budget Monitoring Reports.

3. REPORT

Commentary on Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 The detailed Revenue outturn for Quarter 3 2020/21 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of TVFCS for Quarter 3 are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2020/21 Revenue Budget was set at £35.263m, with expenditure anticipated to exceed income by £284,000, meaning that the Fire Authority is reliant on its reserves to balance the budget.
- 3.3 Since the budget was approved by Members at Fire Authority in February 2020, the Authority has experienced significant financial volatility due to the impact of COVID-19. Through close working with the Budget Lead Member and robust budget monitoring, RBFAS have minimised the impact of the

Agenda Item 9

emerging pressures and maximised the use of the financial resources available to meet the Authority's priorities.

- 3.4 The forecast year-end outturn shows a deficit of £42,000 which is an improvement of £242,000 on the budgeted position.
- 3.5 The decision to close Wargrave Fire Station will generate an in-year saving on the *Stations* line.
- 3.6 When setting the 2020/21 budget an estimated pay rise for non-uniformed staff (from 1 April 2020) of 2% was included. The effect on the budget of the agreed 2.75% pay award is £55,000 of additional costs.
- 3.7 Whilst the full impact of COVID-19 is still to be seen, the financial impact is becoming visible, with the following variances to budget:
 - Training courses reduced in scope/attendance or cancelled £73,000
 - Community Fire Safety supplies (safe & well) £50,000
 - Printing, photocopying & stationery £19,000
 - Catering & conferences, £43,000 (under 'Supplies Other')
 - Travel & subsistence £72,000
 - Fuel £50,000
- 3.8 The Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC) has recently gone to the market to tender for liability reinsurance. In general, the market is wary of COVID related claims, which has had an impact on liability insurance prices. As a result, the Authority's contribution to FRIC has increased, resulting in an additional cost of £20,000.
- 3.9 The annual increase in Firelink Airwave radio charges from the Home Office was less than budgeted which has led to a saving on the *Communications* line.
- 3.10 Thames Valley Fire Control Service is showing anticipated in year savings of £28,000 (detailed in Appendix B). The Authority's share of this saving is £12,000.
- 3.11 Elsewhere within Contracts, the proposed increase in external auditor fees previously outlined to Members is the main contributing factor to the projected overspend. The budget allocation made for the year reflected the scale fees set out in advance by PSAA.
- 3.12 The income contribution of £30,000 from Wokingham Borough Council has not been realised following the outcome of the feasibility study.
- 3.13 Additional grant funding has been received in 2020/21 in respect of COVID-19 and prevention activities. These allocations have now been incorporated into the budget and forecast spend, on both an income and associated expenditure basis.

- 3.14 Government grants and precept income is £78,000 higher than budget due to NNDR section 31 Grants. The budgets on these are based on estimates provided by the local authorities within Berkshire prior to the year commencing, with in-year variances reflecting the adjustments made to reflect actual data.

Capital

- 3.15 Capital expenditure in Quarter 3 2020/21 and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The forecast outturn position on the Revenue Account is expected to reduce the call on reserves to £42,000 by the end of the financial year.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Expenditure complies with the Authority's Financial Regulations.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The revenue and capital outturns together with the reserves position are consistent with the assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 8.2 Regular monitoring of expenditure against budgets helps ensure that resources are matched to need.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 The duty to collaborate is considered as part of the procurement process for both revenue and capital expenditure.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Chief Fire Officer has noted the contents of the report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Agenda and Minutes, Royal Berkshire Authority: 14 February 2020.

Agenda Item 9

12. **APPENDICES**

12.1 Appendix A – Revenue Position at Quarter 3 2020/21

12.2 Appendix B - Net costs of TVFCS Quarter 3 2020/21

12.3 Appendix C – Capital Position at Quarter 3 2020/21

13. **CONTACT DETAILS**

13.1 Conor Byrne
Head of Finance and Procurement
07585 991602

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to 31/12/2020 £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES				
STATIONS	16,882	12,566	16,786	(96)
NON-STATIONS	10,885	8,068	10,926	41
TRAINING	523	262	450	(73)
OTHER	236	177	238	2
	28,526	21,073	28,400	(126)
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	727	523	746	19
RATES	904	748	921	17
CLEANING	274	190	275	1
UTILITIES	449	280	442	(7)
	2,354	1,741	2,384	30
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	335	355	355	20
EQUIPMENT	629	458	648	19
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	825	673	839	14
CLOTHING/PPE	374	213	377	3
COMMUNICATIONS	862	348	840	(22)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	187	135	187	0
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	161	113	142	(19)
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	130	37	80	(50)
SUPPLIES OTHER	193	85	154	(39)
	3,696	2,417	3,622	(74)
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	892	638	880	(12)
LEGAL	50	15	50	0
CONTRACTS (incl Professional Services)	769	369	817	48
	1,711	1,022	1,747	36
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	730	444	714	(16)
TRAVEL	322	188	250	(72)
	1,052	632	964	(88)
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	430	299	448	18
	430	299	448	18
INCOME				
GRANTS	(3,056)	(2,961)	(3,056)	0
RENTAL INCOME	(183)	(132)	(192)	(9)
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(308)	(231)	(308)	0
INCOME OTHER	(351)	(49)	(307)	44
	(3,898)	(3,373)	(3,863)	35
NET COST OF SERVICES	33,869	23,811	33,702	(167)
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	392	214	392	(0)
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(25)	(11)	(22)	3
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	600	0	600	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	255	0	255	0
FINANCING COSTS	456	0	456	0
NET EXPENDITURE	35,547	24,014	35,383	(164)
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(35,263)	(31,380)	(35,341)	(78)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	284	(7,366)	42	(242)

This page is intentionally left blank

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report 2020/21

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to Dec 20 £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	1,764	1,319	1,766	2
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	308	231	308	0
SUPPLIES/ OTHER	36	3	36	0
TECHNOLOGY	247	146	217	(30)
NET COST OF TVFCS	2,355	1,699	2,327	(28)
RBFRS Share of Costs (37.8%)	892	638	880	(12)

This page is intentionally left blank

Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1,2 & 3 20-21 £000's	TOTAL	Total	Commentary
				Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Estimated Project Spend £000's	
New tri-service community fire station - Theale	9,220	1,665	2,782	4,773	9,220	<p>Despite the restrictions imposed due to a further Covid19 lockdown, this project continues at pace to achieve its programmed delivery date with build completion by October 2021 and a fully operational tri-service community fire station by Spring 2022. Additional site restrictions, in line with Government guidelines, are incorporated into the site works and are having a slight impact on timescales, but this is currently within tolerance and being managed by constant programme reviews and alternative project programming. It is hoped that this can continue, but there are no guarantees. Advance orders, where possible, were placed for goods to also attempt to mitigate any impacts from Brexit. Monthly detailed budget reviews and careful budget managing and forecasting are predicting that this project will also be delivered on budget. This is clearly subject to any further impacts of the Global pandemic or unexpected goods supply constraints due to Brexit.</p> <p>We expect to 'top out' before the end of January, which is a significant milestone. This is the traditional celebration of completing construction of the highest point of the build. We are planning a virtual topping out ceremony to comply with current Government guidelines and this will be shared with Members.</p> <p>All non-essential site visits are currently suspended. Stakeholder site visits will recommence as soon as it is safe to do so.</p>
Major redevelopment - Crowthorne (capital and decant costs)	2,056	1,760	262	53	2,075	<p>This project is now complete. We are currently within the standard 12 month defect period which concludes in May 2021. Assuming that any and all defects have been satisfactorily resolved, then the financial aspect of this project will be concluded with the payment of any retention monies due to the main build contractor, Knights Brown</p>
Fire stations - Minor Capital Works Programme	1,250	0	0	1,250	1,250	<p>As Members are aware, the construction stage of this project has been pushed back into the new financial year. Work on design development and route to market has still continued and is making good progress. The design and procurement works fall within the feasibility stage, hence all spend is currently against Revenue budgets. This feasibility stage will be complete by the end of Q4 and this entire programme of work will commence its journey towards completion and all costs will then be attributed to the capital budget already allocated.</p> <p>It is clear that there is much to do on our fire stations and the budget is not sufficient to resolve all issues. The focus at this time is therefore on priority areas to improve the working environment of our front line firefighters. It will be essential to secure funding to continue a Minor Capital Works programme through future phases of the Strategic Asset Investment Framework until significant further capital investment can be secured to progress with the major capital works projects already identified.</p>

Active Capital Projects		Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1,2 & 3 20-21 £000's	TOTAL Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	Commentary
Fleet & equipment	New Fire Appliances	4,860	2,691	1,168	1,001	4,860	A collaborative exercise with Thames Valley partners delivered 7 new appliances by the end of 2018/19. A further 4 vehicles were then delivered (2 in July and 2 in December 2019). It was then planned for a further 4 vehicles to be delivered in Autumn 2020, however, due to the impacts of Covid-19, the first two are now expected to be delivered in January 2021 with the second two in February 2021 following successful acceptance testing in December. Once these vehicles are in service, it will mean that all whole-time pumps will have been renewed. At Fire Authority in February 2020, approval was given to purchase another four main pumping appliances. Orders have been placed, however due to the impacts of COVID-19, delivery of these vehicles is now expected in Autumn 2021. Budget allocation shown covers the expected requirements for the period April 2019 - March 2024.
	Aerial Ladder Platform	740	579	1	168	748	The Aerial Ladder Platform is currently in the final stages of build. Acceptance and delivery of the new vehicle has been subject to testing which has been significantly impacted by Covid-19. Members of the fleet and equipment team, along with end users from Whitley Wood, were due to attend the manufacturer's in January 2021 to continue and finalise the acceptance testing. The latest Covid-19 restrictions mean that confirmation of exact dates to continue acceptance testing are yet to be confirmed. Once the acceptance testing has been satisfactorily concluded, the vehicle will be brought into Service for commissioning and user training.
	4x4 Fire Appliance at Maidenhead	175	0	1	175	176	At Fire Authority in February 2020 approval was given to replace the 4x4 fire appliance at Maidenhead and renew the Water Rescue vehicle. Following engagement with end users, the fleet and equipment team have finalised specifications for the replacement 4x4 fire appliance at Maidenhead and a direct award has been concluded. Taking account of Covid-19 impacts on suppliers it is anticipated that this appliance will be in service by Summer 2021. Initial end user engagement has been undertaken regarding the replacement of the Water Rescue vehicle however progression of this work (alongside the Water Rescue IRMP review) have been impacted by staff being redirect to Covid-19 related activity. Completion of requirements and procurement is now anticipated in 2021/22.
	Water Rescue Vehicle	110	0	0	110	110	
	8x 4x4 Utility Crew-cab Vehicles	160	0	0	160	160	Other Ancillary Vehicles – Due to the impact of COVID-19 and manufacturers temporary shutdowns, there was a delay in being able to place orders for 4x4 Pick-up vehicles. Having reviewed our requirements we have now placed an order for 6 vehicles, using existing frameworks to procure these. We expect these vehicles will be delivered in February 2021 and to be operational for April 2021. Accessing additional used Volvo pumping appliances has not yet been possible with other services delaying auctioning of used appliances. This is likely due to delays in receiving new vehicles from suppliers or internal prioritisation of activity, with both these factors being a consequence of Covid-19. We continue to monitor the situation and will consider any opportunities through the remainder of the 2020/21 year.
	6x Used Volvo Pumping Appliances	120	0	0	120	120	

Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1,2 & 3 20-21 £000's	TOTAL	Total	Commentary
				Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Estimated Project Spend £000's	
ICT - helpdesk system	45	29	0	10	39	Upgrade to version 10 & Starter, leaver, movers workflows work will commence in Q1 - Q2 2021.
ICT - Sage 1000 upgrade	65	17	21	27	65	Phase 1 of the upgrade to Sage 1000 has been successfully implemented. Phase 2 of the project has commenced and will complete by the end of 2021/22.
ICT - Learning Management System	7	0	0	7	7	The Learning Management System has been live for a number of months and has been well received. There is some functionality around reporting to be finalised. The original capital budget agreed for this project was £45k, but only the initial design and user acceptance testing elements have been capitalised. Ongoing annual hosting and support costs are being met from revenue budget. Possible additional work to develop an integration between the new system and Firewatch and other system refinements linked to amendments to National Operational Guidance (NOG) is still under review, which may lead to further costs which will be funded from the initial project allocation amount
Prevention - New Ways of Working	106	0	11	95	106	C# programmer resourcing allocated to this funding source from September 2020 to support both the transition group effort and further activities planned for 2021/22.
ICT - asset replacement / licences	1,070	210	123	737	1,070	The client hardware refresh has been completed ahead of schedule and will not require additional capital investment until 2022/23 financial year. Focus therefore will shift to investment in foundation network connectivity and equipment to ensure that RBFRS' environment is fit to support increased use of cloud based services (e.g. Microsoft 365) in line with the ICT strategic action plan. A comprehensive network update is expected to be put in place by the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Subsequently, the intention is to capitalise a single position within the ICT department to provide support for migration to Microsoft 365 for the organisation.
TOTAL	19,984	6,951	4,369	8,686	20,006	

This page is intentionally left blank

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 FEBRUARY 2021
SUBJECT	APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17
LEAD OFFICER	PAUL BINYON, AREA MANAGER RESPONSE AND RESILIENCE
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	TO NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides information on Quarter Three (Q3) performance with supporting narrative on the Whole-time Duty System and the On-Call (previously referred to as the Retained Duty System) appliance availability.
- 1.2 The data within this report is consistent with the Service's quarterly performance reporting.
- 1.3 The content of this report provides an insight for the Management Committee on the Service's work and progress in managing availability for both Whole-time and On-Call appliances.
- 1.4 It is worth noting that during this quarter that the country entered into a period of tiered restrictions as it experienced a second wave of the COVID pandemic, which contained a new variant. This variant is up to 70% more transmissible and affected the south east of England to a devastating level. This ultimately led to a second national lockdown at the very end of the Quarter. During this time operational staff and managers have battled to maintain the operational response in spite of these extremely challenging circumstances such as staff testing positive, self-isolating and shielding which has had a significant impact of number for crewing of the appliances. Overall this has been very successful but with a slightly lower performance than the previous quarters.
- 1.5 Whole-time appliance availability through crewing for Q3 averaged **89.7%** across the Service as set through Corporate Measure 16.
- 1.6 On-Call appliance availability through crewing for Q3 averaged **53.2 %** across the Service against the target of 60% as set through Corporate Measure 17.

¹ Corporate Measure 16: Achieving the sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters (4 personnel) on all Whole-time appliances (fire engines) through Q2 2020-21

² Corporate Measure 17: Percentage of hours per month where there is adequate crewing on all On-Call appliances (fire engines) through Q2 2020-21

Agenda Item 10

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the Management Committee:

NOTE the 2020/21 Q3 performance of **89.7%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16¹

NOTE the 2020/21 Q3 performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of **53.2 %** against the Service target of 60% in Corporate Measure 17².

3. **REPORT**

- 3.1 This report provides the 2020/21 Q3 update of performance against Corporate Measure 16; to ensure 100% of full shifts where there is adequate crewing on all Whole-time frontline pumping appliances.
- 3.2 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 17, which sets a target of 60% of hours where there is adequate crewing on On-Call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing). This measure being applied across the individual and overall availability of the Service's six On-Call appliances.
- 3.3 Both Corporate Measures were presented to, and approved at the Fire Authority meeting of 25th June 2020 and are consistent with the measures applied in the previous year.
- 3.4 The provision of sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters, for both Whole-time and On-Call appliances, and therefore appliance availability is actively monitored and managed by Service Delivery managers. Performance is reported through the Service's Strategic Performance Board (SPB) and the Audit and Governance Committee (A&G) on a quarterly basis, in addition to this report to Management Committee.
- 3.5 A report was presented to Management Committee on the 6th February 2018 providing a more detailed background to Corporate Measure 16. To remind the Committee, this report explained that crewing was managed within a lean operating model of 328 station-based personnel delivering 14 Whole-time appliances. This was in comparison to a previous position of an operating model of 13 Whole-time appliances with a station establishment of 354 personnel.
- 3.6 In the 2019-20 Q1 Appliance Availability report, presented to Management Committee on 14 October 2019, it was highlighted that the station-based establishment levels had further reduced to 324 in line with the Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and the successful delivery of the Flexi Duty Officer/Remotely Managed Stations project.
- 3.7 The additional capacity that may have existed in previous crewing models no longer exists and, with station-based crewing levels influenced by a number of factors, (e.g. temporary promotions, secondments, annual leave, sickness absence, maternity/paternity leave, career breaks, etc.), Service Delivery Managers continually monitor and manage station-based crewing levels,

intervening where necessary to address deficiencies. This effective management combined with good support, commitment and flexibility from operational personnel contributes to successfully delivering consistently good appliance availability by ensuring the sufficient minimum qualified firefighters are available.

**Whole-time Duty System Appliance Availability – Q3 2020-21
(Corporate Measure 16)**

- 3.8 The availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances is measured by the percentage of shifts (day and night) that appliances are available with appropriately qualified firefighters. There were 92 days in Q3; the total number of day and night shifts for Q3 therefore equates to 184.
- 3.9 Performance of appliance availability across the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances for Q3 was **89.7%**, lower than that of the Q2 performance level achieved of 99%.
- 3.10 The measure allows for a two-hour period for any moves of operational personnel between stations (normally at start of shifts), utilising a buffer of two personnel which is maintained to facilitate optimum crewing. For instance, where a member of staff books sick just before a shift starts, arrangements will be made for another member of staff to attend and make up the crew. This is known as a Critical Stand-By and the intent is for this to be achieved within two hours.
- 3.11 There were 21 occasions when Critical Stand-By moves were utilised in Q3. Of these, there were three occasions where the Critical Stand-by move fell outside Corporate Measure 16:
- On the 19th October at 15:34, Wokingham Road, JY02P1 was taken 'off the run' for 26 minutes while they waited for one critical standby from Whitely Wood. This was due to a Fire fighter requiring to end their shift early due to an urgent personal issue.
 - On the 22nd of November due to a staff member self-isolating, Ascots appliance, JY14P1 was taken 'off the run' at 09:04 for 2 hours and 26 minutes while the Watch waited for a 'critical standby' Crew Manager, this involved a double standby move involving Wokingham and Wokingham Road.
 - On the 28th October, Ascots appliance, JY14P1 was taken 'off the run' at 09:01 for 5 hours 20 minutes due to sickness and light duties. Overtime could not be sourced. Three critical standbys were required, one from Maidenhead and two from Whitely Wood. They could not be sourced within the two hour shift change window as these staff were on a high rise training exercise.
- 3.12 The remaining 18 occasions were resolved within the two-hour time period set out within Corporate Measure 16. Generally, a firefighter from the previous

Agenda Item 10

shift was able to cover the crewing deficiency, thereby ensuring the appliance actually remained available for full operational response.

- 3.13 During Q3 RBFRS experienced the most significant effects of the COVID-19 pandemic so far. This resulted in a number of staff, in some cases it included the whole watch, self-isolating at Slough. Further effects of COVID were experienced, resulting in the Ascot appliance being unavailable in-line with RBFRS' appliance degradation planning, the occurrences are noted below.

3.14 **Whole shifts appliances unavailable (COVID)**

Over a number of shifts various appliances were unavailable for whole shifts at a time, in the case of Station 17 (Slough) this was due to whole watches self-isolating at the same time.

Ascot / Bracknell (14P1)

- 14P1 26/10/20 OTR for whole shift COVID related
- 14P1 25/12/20 OTR for whole shift COVID related
- 14P1 26/12/20 OTR for whole shift COVID related
- 14P1 27th OTR Day and Night whole shift COVID related
- 14P1 30/12/20 OTR for whole shift COVID related
- 14P1 31/12/20 OTR for whole shift COVID related

Slough (17P1 & 17P2)

- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 5/11/20 COVID related
- 17P1 OTR for whole shift 6/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 6/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 9/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 10/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 13/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 14/11/20 COVID related
- 17P2 OTR for whole shift 18/11/20 COVID related
- 14P1 24/12/20 OTR for whole shift

- 3.15 It is worth mentioning that RBFRS On-Call appliances from Mortimer on the 5th November, and from Crowthorne on the 6th November 'stood-by' at Slough fire station for the whole shift ensuring fire cover for Slough.

- 3.16 COVID-19 has presented significant additional challenges throughout Q3 with members of operational personnel testing positive for COVID-19, required to 'self-isolate' due to symptoms and/or shielding. Service Delivery Managers, supported by the positive attitude of station-based personnel, continued to actively manage and address crewing levels. Additional measures include:

- Restrictions of movement of operational personnel across service delivery hubs.
- Social distancing and limited access to stations.
- Increased operational 'buffers'.

- Access to COVID-19 testing for all personnel with personnel taking the tests being able to return to work significantly quicker.
 - On-Call personnel, ‘furloughed’ or home working, supplementing the Whole-time establishment.
- 3.17 Throughout Q3, Service Delivery teams have continued to remain responsive to amendments to COVID-19 national guidance with the end goal of striving to maintain 100% crewing levels for appliance availability.

**On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability – Q3 2020-21
(Corporate Measure 17)**

3.18 The overall availability for On-Call appliances in Q3 was **53.2%** almost the same as the 52.2% in the previous quarter and a considerable improvement from 32.7% in the same quarter last year. The table below provides a breakdown of appliance availability based on station and month with an averaged quarterly total.

3.19 The table below provides a breakdown of appliance availability based on station and month with an averaged quarterly total:

Station	Availability target	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Q3 average
Hungerford	70%	42.2%	63.8%	52.3%	52.6%
Lambourn	40%	27.8%	18.6%	12%	19.5%
Pangbourne	40%	12.6%	22.5%	8%	14.3%
Mortimer	60%	82.3%	90.4%	85.6%	86%
Crowthorne	85%	87.4%	94.7%	71.6%	84.5%
Maidenhead	70%	63.8%	64/0%	60.6%	62.8%

The variations between stations are indicative of their differing establishment profiles (the number of individuals at each station, the qualifications and skillsets held, and the amount of operational cover each individual can provide).

3.20 RBFRS look forward to realising the benefits of the Fire Authority’s Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) decision, and significant investment in our new community fire station at Theale, with the resultant closure of Pangbourne fire station. If Theale was operational the overall average availability for Q3 would be 61%. Of course, this in no way diminishes the current contribution of the Pangbourne team in positively supporting appliance availability.

3.21 The On-Call teams at Mortimer and Crowthorne continue to perform strongly in terms of appliance availability with Maidenhead continuing its excellent

Agenda Item 10

improvement in performance and Hungerford also performing well given the current pressures.

- 3.22 At the end of Q3, the On-Call establishment numbered 74 (includes 24 individuals with dual-contracts), a decrease of one firefighter from the establishment figure of 75 recorded in the previous Quarter. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to exert a positive impact upon appliance availability; On-Call team members may continue to be furloughed due to its extension or to work from home placing them in a position where they can increase their On-Call availability and therefore enhancing appliance availability.
- 3.23 Looking to Q4, the performance may be affected by the third national COVID-19 'lock-down' beginning in early January 2021.
- 3.22 Hub-based management teams continue to provide support to all On-Call station-based teams to promote and increase the availability of On-Call fire appliances across the Service. A more detailed synopsis of progress on recruitment, training and skills uplift for each station follows:

3.23 **West HUB - On Call: Hungerford, Lambourn, Pangbourne, Mortimer.**

There has been some positive increases in appliance availability at three out of the four On-Call Stations in the West Hub, with a slight down turn in availability at Hungerford in part due to leave taken by Managers. The Service overall is on track to see an increase in On-Call availability from 32.7% in 2019/2020 to a predicted 50.5%+ for 2020/2021.

3.24 **Hungerford**

The appliance availability for this quarter has lowered from 65% down to 52.6% this has partly been due to leave taken in this quarter and a current lack of resilience in line management.

Establishment at Hungerford is strong and stands at 14. (With 1 leaver this quarter – due to a change in circumstances)

This consists of one Watch Manager, one Crew Manager and 12 Firefighters. All 14 personnel are BA qualified. Seven are also Emergency Response Drivers.

Seven of the Firefighters are currently working through their Firefighters Development Assessment Pathway (DAP's).

Focus is being placed on increasing daytime availability and the intention to increase the number of managers at Hungerford to three.

3.25 **Lambourn**

Availability in Q3 has increased again from each of the two previous quarters rising from 2.3% in Q1 to 10% in Q2 reaching 19.5% in Q3. This is encouraging, especially when taking into account leave taken over the Christmas period, one confirmed case of COVID-19 and one firefighter having to self-isolate.

Current predictions should see availability to raise again in Q4 to around 28%.

The current establishment stands at seven, this consists of two Developmental Crew Managers and five Firefighters. Six of the crew are BA qualified, with four Emergency Response Drivers. Three are currently working through their Firefighter DAP's and one is a trainee Firefighter.

2021 will see the focus on recruitment of new Firefighters at the station (COVID-19 permitting).

3.26 Pangbourne

Availability continued to raise in Q3, the availability has risen from just under 9% in Q2 to 14.3% in Q3.

The establishment remains stable at five.

This consists of a Watch Manager, a Developmental Crew Manager and three Firefighters, all are BA qualified.

The remaining personnel remain positive on station even with the pending closure, they have assisted on occasion in crewing whole-time appliances.

3.27 Mortimer

This station continues to impress with a high level of availability, Q3 saw availability increase from 80.9% in Q2 to 86%.

This is the third quarter in a row where Mortimer has had the highest availability of all On-Call Stations.

The station establishment stands at 14, comprising of one Watch Manager and one Crew Manager and 12 Firefighters. 13 of these are BA qualified and four are also Emergency Response Drivers. One Firefighter is making good progress towards being a fully qualified (ERD)

Two new Firefighters were recruited this quarter; one as dual contract, and the other as a Firefighter trainee. Unfortunately one Crew Manager left at the end of this quarter due to moving out of the area. Work is being done to identify and develop a suitable candidate to fill this Crew Manager vacancy.

3.28 Central Hub - On Call - Crowthorne

The Q3 availability is up 5.80% on Q2, although this a relatively small gain, to understand this better the narrative needs to explore the breakdown of each month in Q3.

October & November saw availability at 87.37% & 94.72% respectively, both months exceeding the Corporate Measure of 85%, which is excellent performance and has been celebrated with the team. Unfortunately the overall Q3 availability is 0.53% under the Corporate Measure, but still at an excellent 84.47%.

The availability drop off in December (71.64%) is attributed a number of staff taking outstanding 2020 leave entitlement before the year end, and individuals on periods of self-isolation.

The station establishment is 15, comprising of one Watch Manager, two Crew Managers, 12 Fire Fighters, all 15 are BA qualified and eight are Emergency Response Drivers. One Crew Manager left the On-Call part of their dual contract, which had been anticipated. One long term sick fir fighter returned to

Agenda Item 10

the workplace in November, one firefighter achieved competency and one firefighter moved from trainee to development. There is a potential for a new Firefighter to join the team with their hours of availability currently being reviewed.

3.29 Easy Hub - On Call - Maidenhead

Q3 performance was 62.8%. Whilst this was slightly lower than Q2 at 69%. In Q1 85% was achieved (primarily down to the first National Lockdown). When considering Q3 performance in 2019 at 31% performance is excellent.

Firstly in comparison to last year, this is double (2019/20 Q3 = 31%) that figure which shows a huge improvement and demonstrates the hard work and effort that has gone into bringing 3 more Trainees into development status and making a big impact on the crewing figures. Looking at this as the final month of a six month streak from July to December 2020, availability has slowly lowered from 72% to 60% which represents a settling out of more normal availability after the highs during lockdown and as staff returned to their primary employment along with taking of some leave.

It will always be difficult to compare this year against others in every aspect of what we do due to the unprecedented and difficult circumstances we find ourselves in during the pandemic. What we can deduce is that the commitment of all involved to gain qualifications and continue with their development along with dedicating their time to improving availability has been excellent.

- A new Trainee Firefighter has been employed to start in Q4, primarily giving day cover which is where we are short.
- Return of Firefighter on long-term sickness in Q4 will support more availability.

Due to a large number of staff on dual contracts there is some uncertainty as to what will happen in the current promotion process. Individuals that have applied for Crew Manager positions may end up changing colours of Watches. This could either improve availability or reduce it, depending on how it all balances out. The On-Call Watch Manager will work with the Hub Management team to take into account the needs of On-Call.

We believe that the current levels of availability as seen in Q3 (between 60 and 65%) will be our target and settled availability in Q4, which will see another big improvement on last year.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 2 – We will ensure a swift and appropriate response when called to emergencies.
- 4.2 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to be an effective way of maintaining the sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters and therefore appliance availability whilst also maintaining flexibility in other areas, eg: annual leave, thereby demonstrating efficient and effective use of the Fire Authority's financial resources.
- 5.2 The use of PAOT through Q3 continues to enable the Service to maintain full operational availability, capability and operational effectiveness throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None identified

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None identified

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The provision of sufficient minimum qualified firefighters and therefore appliance availability is listed as a corporate risk under risk number 681. It is monitored by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and, as necessary, treatments are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 None identified.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 21 June 2020 – Fire Authority Paper, Annual Plan 20/21.
- 10.2 14 October 2019 – Management Committee Paper, 2019-20 Q1 Appliance Availability Report
- 10.3 06 February 2018 – Management Committee Paper, Review of Underpinning Assumptions of 2015 Crewing Strategy and Quarter 3 Appliance Availability Update.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None

12. CONTACT DETAILS

- 12.1 Steve Foye – Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Service Delivery
- 12.2 Paul Binyon – Area Manager, Response and Resilience: 07884 425419

This page is intentionally left blank

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Built Environment Presentation	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Ad-hoc	Note	Deputy CFO	N/A	Part I
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue COVID-19 Inspection	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Ad-hoc	Note	DCS	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Allowances Annual Review 21/22	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England) Presentation	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Ad-hoc	Note	Deputy Ch Ex	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 21/22, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Appointment Panel's recommendation on the appointment of New Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive	Management Committee	15.03.21	ad hoc	Recommend to the Fire Authority	CFO	N/A	Part I
Appointment of New Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive	Fire Authority	24.03.21	ad hoc	Agree	CFO	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	31.03.21	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	31.03.21	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance	A&GC	31.03.21	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	DCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Gender Pay Gap	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	DCS	Organisational Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	DCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme	A&GC	31.03.21	Bi-annual	Note	HBIS	N/A	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	31.03.21	Quarterly	Note	DCS	N/A	Part I
Capital Project Update	Management Committee	19.04.21	Ad-hoc	Note	HCP&E	Strategic Assets Lead	Part II
Corporate Calendar 2021/22	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Agree	DCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Members Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Member Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Member Champions	Part I
Annual Plan 2021/22	Fire Authority	30.06.21	Annual	Agree	DCS	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Joint Committee Annual Report 2020/21	Fire Authority	30.06.21	Annual	Note	AM (C&P)	Collaboration Lead	Part I
Appointment of Committees, Lead Members and Member Champions and Outside Bodies 2021/22	Fire Authority	30.06.21	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Appointment of Chairman / Vice-Chairman 2021/22	Fire Authority	30.06.21	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Governance - to include Member attendance, allowances and expenses	Fire Authority	30.06.21	Annual	Note	DCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Annual Outturn	Management Committee	19.07.21	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q4 Appliance Availability	Management Committee	19.07.21	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Member/Officer Protocol Review	A&GC	29.07.21	every four years	Agree	DCS	N/A	Part I
Annual Governance Statement	A&GC	29.07.21	Annual	Agree	DCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Pension Board Annual update	A&GC	29.07.21	bi annual	Note	Pension Board Chair	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	29.07.21	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	29.07.21	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q4 Performance Report	A&GC	29.07.21	Quarterly	Note	DCS	N/A	Part I
RBFRS Annual Report 20/21	A&GC	29.07.21	Annual	Note	DCS	N/A	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme	A&GC	29.07.21	Bi-annual	Note	HBIS	N/A	Part I