



**Agenda
for the Meeting
of the
Management Committee**

Thursday, 3rd February 2022

At

6.30 pm

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

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: Thursday, 3rd February 2022, at 6.30 pm

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

S U M M O N S

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority 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 Dennis Benneyworth	Councillor Angus Ross
Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor David Cannon
Councillor Tricia Brown	Councillor Jo Lovelock
Councillor Colin Dudley	Councillor Dexter Smith
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd- DuBey
Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons	

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

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: Thursday, 3rd February 2022, at 6.30 pm

VENUE: Lynda Kenyon Suite
RBFRS Headquarters
Newsham Court
Pincent's Kiln
Calcot
Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD

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 2021 (Pages 7 - 18)

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 7 December 2021, 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. Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review (Pages 19 - 32)

Purpose:

To recommend to the Fire Authority for approval the 2022/23 Member Scheme of Allowance review.

8. Budget Monitoring Q3 (Pages 33 - 42)

Purpose:

To receive for note the estimated revenue outturn and update on Capital Projects as at the end of Quarter Three 2021/22.

9. Appliance Availability by Crewing to meet Corporate Measures 15 and 16 (Pages 43 - 48)

Purpose:

To note the performance of Appliance Availability for Quarter Three.

10. Forward Plan (Pages 49 - 50)

Purpose:

To note the Forward Plan.

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 5 April 2022, at 6.30pm, at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

12. Exclusion of the Public (Pages 51 - 52)

Recommendation:

To Resolve 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 Paragraph 3 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.

Categories of 'Exempt Information' under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

13. Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2021 *(Pages 53 - 54)*

Purpose:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 7 December 2021, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. Asset Release Update- Presentation

Purpose:

To receive a presentation on the Asset Release Update.

This page is intentionally left blank

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Tuesday, 7th December 2021, at 6.30 pm
Lynda Kenyon Suite, RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court,
Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD

Members:
(*present)

* Councillor Jeff Brooks	* Councillor Angus Ross
* Councillor Tricia Brown	* Councillor David Cannon
Councillor Dennis Benneyworth	* Councillor Jo Lovelock
* Councillor Colin Dudley	* Councillor Dexter Smith
* Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
* Councillor Pauline Helliars-Symons	

In Attendance: Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Alex Brown (Head of Capital Projects and Estates, HCP&E)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Doug Buchanan (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Andrew Mclenahan (Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment, HFF&E)
Katie Mills (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
Jim Powell (Area Manager Collaboration and Policy, AM C&P)
Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Tregear Thomas (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection)
Tony Vincent (Head of Business Information Systems, HBIS)

Observers: Julian Gaynor, Head of Development to Strategic Land Agency

33. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Benneyworth, Brooks and Shepherd-DuBey.

Action

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct, Councillors Ross and Cannon declared a personal interest as 2021/22 Members of the TVFCS Joint Committee on Item 7, Capita Contract Novation.

Councillor Jo Lovelock declared a personal interest as Chairman of Planning Committee and Ward Councillor for Reading Borough Council on Late Urgent Part II Item Capital Projects – Asset Release Strategy for the Dee Road Fire Station site, sent as separate item to the agenda pack.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer declared a personal interest on behalf of Grey Book employees present at the meeting to item 8, Immediate Detriment Framework.

36. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2021

There were no recorded actions in Part I and II Minutes.

RESOLVED that the Part I and II Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2021, be approved as a true and correct record to be signed by the Chairman.

37. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements.

Urgent Late Item

By virtue of section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Chairman accepted an Urgent Late Item in Part II on Capital Projects – Asset Release Strategy for the Dee Road Fire Station site, which was sent electronically as a separate report to the main agenda pack. He stated the item will be taken following Item 14.

Supplementary Item 8

The Chairman confirmed that Members has received a supplementary report to agenda Item 8 on the agenda. This was sent electronically as a separate report to the main agenda pack and asked that this was referred to when considering the item and recommendations.

Condolences to Kieran Amos, former Chief Fire Officer of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Chairman announced the passing of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service's former Chief Fire Officer, Kieran Amos.

Kieran was a veteran of the service with almost 30 years of experience working across the country, and his expertise and understanding of the Fire and Rescue Service would be sorely missed.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, offered his deepest condolences to Kieran's family, friends and former colleagues.

Senior Leadership Team Structure

The new Senior Leadership Team structure took effect on Wednesday, 1 December.

The Chairman confirmed that Members have been emailed details of these changes last week, alongside the outcome of the recent Group Manager recruitment process.

It was confirmed that the recruitment of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer was currently underway, and that the Chairman hoped to be in a position to update the Committee further on the outcome of the process after it concludes on 20 December.

The Chairman placed on record his thanks to those who have supported the transition to the new structure, as well as congratulated Dave Crease, Chris Hutton and Andy Stockwell on their success in the recent Group Manager process.

Remembrance Day and Armed Forces Veteran's Hub

The Chairman announced that staff across the Service marked Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday alongside our communities.

This year we were once again able to come together in person to mark the sacrifices that were made by all those who served.

Representatives from the Service attended a number of Remembrance Services across the County, including at Theale, Bracknell, Reading, Windsor, Maidenhead, Sandhurst, Newbury and Crowthorne.

Alongside this, staff marked the occasion observing the national two minutes' silence. Crowthorne Community Fire Station was also home to a Remembrance Sunday display, using artwork from local children to decorate the windows of the fire station.

We were also happy to be able to hold our first in-person Armed Forces Veterans' Hub at Crowthorne Community Fire Station on Wednesday, 17 November.

Having hosted these events for a year virtually, it was great to finally invite speakers, veterans and armed forces associations to Crowthorne and attendees were treated to stories from Air Commodore Peacock-Edwards as our guest

speaker.

The Chairman thanked all of those who attended and said he was looking forward to hosting similar events in the months ahead.

Aerial Ladder Platform

On Friday, 19 November, an official handover ceremony was held for the Service's new Aerial Ladder Platform.

The Chairman joined several other Members at Whitley Wood Fire Station to officially hand over the new ALP to Whitley Wood's Green Watch. During the handover, attendees were given a demonstration of the ALP, its reach, and how it would better equip our Service for handling incidents at height.

The ALP is able to extend to a maximum height of 45m and importantly, it enables extra horizontal reach, which will enable firefighters to access more difficult to reach areas.

It has already been in service for several months and the Chairman had no doubt it would directly benefit residents of Royal Berkshire for years to come.

AFSA Award Nominations

Several members of the Service were nominated for awards at the recent Asian Fire Service Association's 2021 Conference.

Helen Morbin, Fitness and Health Advisor, won the 'Addressing Health Inequalities in the Community' award for her work during the pandemic. Meanwhile, Will Johnson, Data Entry and Analysis Officer, received a Certificate of Merit for being an EDI Champion for his work as the volunteer representative for the Thames Valley Employer's LGBT+ Network.

Kuldeep Kuner, Protection Co-ordinator, also received an EDI Champion Certificate of Merit for her work in a number of areas, including being the Service representative for the Asian Fire Service Association, activities with the EDI Forum, and the One Team For Berkshire Recruitment campaign.

Former Deputy Chief Fire Officer Steve Foye was also recognised for his service to the Asian Fire Service Association.

The Chairman was very proud of each of our representatives who were at the conference for their contributions to the important cause of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across Berkshire.

End of Year message

As 2021 draws to a close, the Chairman wanted to reflect on the last year. Whilst COVID has continued to pose significant challenges for us, this time of year offers the opportunity to think about some of the important achievements of

2021.

Back in January, we faced further lockdown measures nationally. As these restrictions were in place, it was incredible to see the spirit of our team who continued to work incredibly hard to deliver the best possible service to the people of Royal Berkshire.

We supported our partners in the national fight against COVID. This included a group of firefighters who drove ambulances in support of South Central Ambulance Service, supporting Slough Borough Council with their mass rapid COVID testing, providing full time members of staff to support with the set-up of the vaccination centre at the Madejski Stadium and supporting surge testing in the Sandhurst area.

Whilst we faced challenges this year, we also took great strides forward. A new, state-of-the-art community fire station in Theale now has firefighters serving the local community from it, following a successful build. The Chairman was also delighted and privileged to have been able to attend the official opening of Crowthorne Community Fire Station.

Both of these new stations offer the opportunity for closer working with our partners in Thames Valley Police and South Central Ambulance Service, who share the facilities.

This year, we also added a number of new appliance to our fleet. This included new fire engines at Bracknell, Ascot and Wokingham Road and a new Aerial Ladder Platform, further strengthening the Service's capabilities to respond to the people of Royal Berkshire in times of emergency.

Separately, work continued to make a positive difference to the communities we serve by supporting the delivery of our equality, diversity and inclusion objectives. We are committed to creating a culture where everyone feels included and respected. This year, we achieved our Disability Confident Leader accreditation, whilst also becoming a Stonewall Diversity Champion, Business Disability Forum member and continuing to be an Asian Fire Service Association Corporate Member. As well as continuing to support the Armed Forces community.

This is only a few of the achievements this year. With this in mind the Chairman said a big thank you to the team at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, as well as to the Members for the work you do as the Fire Authority to champion and support the Service.

38. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee.

39. CAPITA CONTRACT NOVATION

Jim Powell, Area Manager Collaboration and Policy (AM C&P), presented the report. He explained Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) required the provision of two key contracts, 'Vision 4' mobilising system and the DS3000 Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS) supplied by the Secure Solutions and Service business ("SSS") that currently sit within Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited ("CSIS") a subsidiary wholly owned by Capita plc.

The report was seeking Members approval to novate the contracts following Capita's plc restructure in some areas of its business with the intention to transfer the entire SSS business to a new company within the Capita group.

The report was also seeking Members to retrospectively approve the ICCS maintenance and support contract that was put in place between January 2021 and April 2022.

The Chairman sought clarification that the contracts were the same under a different company name, which was now Capita (SSS) Limited.

In answer to a question from Councillor Ross, Jim Powell confirmed that both Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Oxfordshire County Council had agreed the recommendations of the report.

The Chairman moved the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Ross.

It was unanimously RESOLVED that:

- a) The Deed or Novation between Oxfordshire County Council, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited ("CSIS") and Capita (SSS) Limited (in relation to the 'Mobilising System Contract') be completed, be approved.
- b) The Deed of Novation between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited ("CSIS"), and Capita (SSS) Limited, in relation to the contract for the provision, maintenance and support of the DS3000 Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) be completed, be approved.
- c) Retrospectively the ICCS maintenance and support contract that was put in place between January 2021 and April 2022 as this decision was not put before the Authority at the time, be approved.

40. IMMEDIATE DETRIMENT FRAMEWORK

In referring to the supplementary item circulated separately to the main agenda

pack, Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), introduced the report. He explained the original report provided the latest information at the time of publication, however the Home Office had withdrawn its guidance on the management of immediate detriment cases. The supplementary report was a further update on immediate detriment cases and an amended recommendation.

Becci Jefferies, Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development (HHR&L&D), reported the McCloud / Sergeant legal case had identified age discrimination. Advice confirmed that the Authority could rely on the ruling of the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) to make a non-discrimination alteration to the scheme.

At its meeting on 17 February 2021, the Authority resolved that all firefighters who were members of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 1992 or New Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2006 were to be treated as their old scheme. It did not apply to members who had already retired.

On 8 October 2021, the Home Office had reached an agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Framework and Fire Authorities were asked to consider its adoption. The MOU made a distinction between category 1 (individuals who have not yet retired) and category 2 (retired individuals).

On 29 November 2021, notification received that the Home Office was removing its guidance on immediate detriment cases due to uncertainties for schemes and individuals identified through work on the remedying legislation.

Becci Jefferies reported that officers had considered the position and the existing decision of the Authority and that not processing category 1 cases would create a risk to the health and wellbeing of individuals. She stated that in adopting the Framework, there would also be a financial impact to the Authority as the Government was unwilling to provide additional funding for costs paid outside of the pension account. Costs would therefore have to be met from existing budgets. She added, that further assessment of the position for category 2 pension cases was required before returning a recommendation to the Authority.

The Chairman asked officers to confirm that if the Authority did not adopt the recommendations as set out in the supplementary report, would the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) support its affected members legally through the courts.

Becci Jefferies responded by stating the Chairman was correct and that the FBU had issued a circular which stated that legal action would be taken. She added that there were two Immediate Detriment cases currently being processed and stated the implications would be significant to employee relations and risk of costly legal action if not processed.

In answer to a question from the Vice-Chairman on the costs to the Authority, Becci Jefferies reported that payments would be made to individuals leaving, would attract additional tax charges. She reported there were twelve category 2

members and reiterated, there were two category 1 cases.

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P), stated in relation to costs, it would be taken on a case by case basis in liaison with the Authority's payroll providers; West Yorkshire Pension Fund, and Home Office.

Wayne Bowcock, CFO, reported costs were known from legal proceedings from cases in other Authority areas. He stated legal action would incur fees to Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

Councillor Gittings asked whether officers knew when the Government would publish legislation. Becci Jefferies reported that the primary legislation had been passed. She stated it was secondary legislation which had brought the above uncertainties and implications to light and did not know when any further clarification would be made.

In answer to a question from Councillor Ross on the impact on officer time, Becci Jefferies discussed the impact on the payroll section of Human Resources department, payroll provider and pension administrator due to the need to manually calculate pensions.

The Chairman thanked Becci Jefferies and HR team and stated he supported the recommendations as set out in the supplementary report in order to give affected staff certainty.

The Chairman moved the recommendation and it was seconded by the Vice-Chairman.

Unanimously RESOLVED that:

- a) The contents of this report, which supplements the information contained in the Immediate Detriment Framework report (7 December 2021 meeting – agenda item 8) be noted..
- b) The Officer's recommendations in the Immediate Detriment Framework report are replaced and superseded by the recommendations in this report be noted.
- c) The Immediate Detriment Framework be adopted on behalf of the Authority for those individuals who are deemed to be 'Category 1' individuals only be agreed.
- d) It be noted, Officers will assess the position for 'Category 2' members in line with emerging information and present a recommendation to the Authority for resolution as soon as reasonably practicable.
- e) It be agreed the Head of Finance and Procurement be:
 - i. the authorised signatory for any 'Record of Agreed Compensation and Remedy' ('Compensation Record') on behalf of the Authority; and

- ii. authorised to agree with Scheme members variations to the timescales for dates of payments when in the interests of the Scheme Manager and the Scheme member to do so.
- iii. The Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive reviews and agrees on behalf of the Authority, the response to the current consultation on the amendments to the pension scheme regulations (3.14 in the Immediate Detriment Framework report) being prepared by the LGA on behalf of FRAs, be agreed.

41. BUDGET MONITORING

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P), reported the 2021/22 Revenue Budget agreed by Members in February 2021 was set at £35.779m. Expenditure was anticipated to exceed income by £29,000 which meant that the Fire Authority was reliant on its reserves to balance the budget.

He reported the Green Book (non-operational staff) pay award was still to be determined. The final offer of the Green Book pay award if agreed, would be effective from 1 April 2021 and will cost the Authority an additional £132,000.

The Authority's business rates charges on its properties will fall by £76,000 annually due to successful appeals to business rates charges applied to our properties. He stated there were significant pressures on *property and maintenance*, and *vehicle* running costs. The Authority had been fortunate to benefit from hedging by our energy supplier which meant price rises had subdued, however price rises will feed into second half of the financial year.

In answer to a question from Councillor Smith on the reserve budget Conor Byrne reported the following:

- o £3m in development fund
- o £2.3 m in general fund
- o £1m in earmarked reserves

In referring to the *Vehicle Running Costs and Maintenance line*, Councillor Gittings queried whether the Fire Authority had considered its carbon footprint by looking at the energy costs of our buildings.

Conor Byrne reported that the Authority had been looking into its carbon footprint and had started looking at the feasibility of electric vehicles.

Councillor Ross stated the Authority would also need to look at the infrastructure when looking at the introduction of electric vehicles.

RESOLVED that:

The report be noted.

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

Doug Buchanan, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), delivered a presentation to accompany his report. He stated the pressures affecting crewing and availability during Quarter Two, were:

- Covid-19 sickness and isolations
- Non Covid-19 related long term sickness
- Impacts of limited recruitment activity
- On-call requirements to take statutory leave
- Wholetime Duty System (WDS) peak leave period

The Service response to the above factors were the following:

- Weekly crewing forecast and co-ordination of crewing
- Review of training activity and interventions to support crewing
- Targeted crewing days from non-station based operational staff
- Consistent application of degradation policy
- 11 Fixed Term Contracts
- Increased number of Transferees

He stated the Service was grateful for the commitment of staff during the period. He discussed the ongoing challenges the organisation faced in relation to maintaining social distance during usual activity, McCloud / Sergeant ruling and London Fire Brigade will be recruiting 500 roles over the next year.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Doug Buchanan reported 11 on-call staff on temporary WDS contracts have maintained Wholetime availability.

Councillor Gittings queried whether other FRSs were experiencing the same issues in appliance availability. Doug Buchanan reported Fire Service partners had been facing the same pressures and stated recruitment campaigns had been planned for next year, based on Government guidelines.

In answer to Councillor Smith, he added that workforce planning historically had been accurate, however the recent McCloud/ Sergeant ruling had widened the number of staff that could retire from the organisation from 25 – 55 people.

Becci Jefferies, advised that Human Resources predict who was likely to retire which had moved from approximately 25 – 55 people.

Councillor Lovelock asked whether there was evidence staff were leaving in response to the HGV driver shortage. Becci Jefferies reported that she did not think that was an issue for Firefighters, but more for driving instructors.

The Chairman commended officers for maintaining the Response Standard during such a challenging period, which was to respond to incidences in 10 minutes, 75% of occasions. He thanked staff for their work, in particular, staff that had given up their time, moving their holiday period to fill gaps in crewing. He acknowledged the dips shown in the figures were where staff had to take their statutory leave.

Councillor Smith echoed the Chairman's sentiments and added the flexibility of on-call staff that had temporary WDS contracts had made a positive impact on appliance availability.

The Chairman moved the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Cannon.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The 2021-22 Quarter Two performance of 84.6% appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16 be noted.
- b) The 2021-22 Quarter Two performance of overall On-Call appliance available of 34.7% against the Service target of 60% in Corporate Measure 17 be noted.

For copies of the presentation please contact committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

43. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

44. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 3 February 2022, 6.30pm at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

45. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the Paragraph 3 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.

(The meeting concluded at 8:15pm)

This page is intentionally left blank

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 FEBRUARY 2022
SUBJECT	2022/23 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 2022/23 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

That Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the report;
- 2.2 **RECOMMEND** that the Fire Authority:
 - 2.2.1 **AGREE** the Scheme of Allowances for 2022/23 (Appendix A);
 - 2.2.2 **NOTE** that subject to any pay award reached by the National Joint Council (NJC) for staff employed under 'Green Book' conditions, be backdated from 1 April 2021; and

Agenda Item 7

2.2.3 **NOTE** the recommendations of each of the six unitary authority Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs).

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 Members will be aware that when the Fire Authority agreed the 2021/22 Revenue Budget, staffing salary budgets were set based on central Government position of a public sector pay freeze. The National Joint Council (NJC) Government Services are currently negotiating a pay agreement for staff employed under 'Green Book' terms and conditions for 2021/22. To date, an agreement has not been made.

3.3 Due to reasons stated in paragraph 3.2, Appendix A reflects that no pay award increase has been applied to the Members Scheme of Allowances effective from 1 April 2022.

3.4 The report is seeking the Committee to recommend to the Fire Authority to note, subject to NJC pay award agreement, any increase will be backdated from 1 April 2021.

3.5 An Independent Review of the Scheme of Allowances is held every four years. The last independent review was held in September 2019 by South East Employers and recommended the following indices are applied to the specified allowances:

3.5.1 **Basic Allowance, SRAs and IP remuneration:**

Indexed to the annual local government percentage salary increase, (known as the 'spinal column point' 49 of the National Joint Councils' agreement) to be implemented from the date of the Authority's Annual Meeting for the year that the index applies to staff.

3.5.2 *It is further recommended that the indices recommended in this review are utilised for four years from the date of the Annual Meeting, or until the Authority requires a further review whichever is sooner.*

3.6 At its meeting on 24 October 2019, the Fire Authority approved the recommendation from South East Employers, with the exception that the indexation references be effective from the start of the financial year. Minute reference 24. The next Independent Review of the Scheme of Allowances will be held in 2023.

Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs)

- 3.6 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.
- 3.6.1 **Bracknell Borough Council** – approved on 28 February 2018 its Member Scheme of Allowance and became effective from 1 April 2018. It is indexed to the annual local government pay increase. Minute reference 49. The IRP review the scheme on an annual basis.
- 3.6.2 **Reading Borough Council** – approved on 23 March 2021, that the 2021/22 Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance remain at the same level as set for 2020/21; and the Basic Allowance paid to individual councillors be set subject to increase in line with the Local Government Pay Settlement for 2021/22). Reading Borough Council minute reference 27.
- 3.6.3 **Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead** – On 27 October 2020, RBWM approved the Basic Allowance payable should remain at its current level, and indexed annually in line with average pay increase given to Royal Borough employees. Minute reference 47.
- 3.6.4 **Slough Borough Council** at its Council meeting on 24 November 2020, it approved the IRP recommendation of recalibrated Basic Allowance effective from 1 April 2021. Minute reference 46.
- 3.6.5 **West Berkshire Council** – On 3 December 2020, West Berkshire Council agreed the new Scheme of Allowances be implemented from the beginning of the financial year (01 April 2022) minute reference 46.
- 3.6.6 **Wokingham Borough Council** – On 21 January 2021, Wokingham Borough Council approved no changes are made to the basic allowance for the financial years consisting of 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Council also agreed that during the municipal year, when a review of Members' Allowances is not required, the IRP are given permission to publish a press release in local news and via WBC media sources, with administrative support from Democratic Services Officers. The content of this piece will focus on the views of Panel members, both before and after appointment to the Panel, on Members' Allowances and the work of a Councillor. Minute reference 87.
- 3.6.7 **CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**
- 3.7 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Agenda Item 7

- 4.1 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.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 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.

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 meeting on 28 February 2018. Minute reference 49.](#)
- 11.2 [Reading Borough Council meeting on 23 March 2021. Minute reference 27.](#)
- 11.3 [Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council meeting on 27 October 2020. Minute reference 47.](#)
- 11.4 [Slough Borough Council meeting on 24 November 2020. Minute reference 46.](#)

11.5 [West Berkshire Council meeting on 3 December 2020. Minute reference 46.](#)

11.6 [Wokingham Borough Council meeting on 21 January 2021. Minute reference 87.](#)

11.7 [Royal Berkshire Fire Authority meeting on 24 October 2019. Minute reference 24.](#)

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

This page is intentionally left blank

SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES

February 2022



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 2022/23.** 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 7

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 7

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 REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 FEBRUARY 2022
SUBJECT	2021/22 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER 3
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR DENNIS BENNEYWORTH
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 at the end of quarter 3 2021/22.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Management Committee **NOTE** the report.

3. REPORT

Commentary on Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 The detailed revenue outturn for quarter 3, 2021/22 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of TVFCS for quarter 3 are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2021/22 Revenue Budget agreed by Members in February 2021 was set at £35.779m. Expenditure was anticipated to exceed income by £29,000, meaning that the Fire Authority was reliant on its reserves to balance the budget.
- 3.3 Whilst staffing salary budgets were set based on the central Government position of a public sector pay freeze, the NJC have subsequently agreed a grey book pay award of 1.5%, effective from 1 July 2021, which will cost an additional £240,000. A final offer of 1.75% has also been made for green book staff. If agreed, this will be effective from 1 April 2021 and will cost an additional £132,000. The salary costs of new recruits is £53,000 higher than budgeted as the budget was set for 14 recruits, and 18 have been taken on.

Agenda Item 8

There have also been some additional costs due to Covid related overtime. Set against these pay pressures there are in-year savings as a result of reduced availability on on-call stations as well as some short-term vacancies. Finally, following a review of corporate priorities, the implementation of the Nucleus Crewing project has been delayed – with one-off in-year savings of £174,000.

- 3.4 Pressure on the *Repairs and Maintenance* line has continued in quarter 3, leading to projected expenditure being £79,000 over budget. Major costs include roof repairs at four stations, a water leak at the training centre, chiller repair at HQ and work on the extractor unit at the Firehouse.
- 3.5 On a more positive note, the Authority has been working in collaboration with a property specialist to appeal business rate charges applied to our properties. This has proven to be successful and confirmation has recently been received of the value of refunds amounting to £321,000 for sixteen stations, which will be received in 2021/22. £245,000 relates to previous years. The process is ongoing in relation to one other station. Business rates for the new station in Theale are yet to be confirmed but a part-year estimate has been included in the outturn forecast.
- 3.6 As has been reported previously, the Authority is facing significant cost pressures in relation to supplies and services. To this point we have been fortunate to benefit from hedging by our energy supplier meaning that cost rises have been subdued. However, price rises will feed in during the final quarter of the financial year and will increase further next year.
- 3.7 The *IS Equipment & Licences* line contains additional expenditure related to the accelerated deployment of Office 365. This has been brought forward due to the working constraints placed on the organisation due to Covid.
- 3.8 As stated in previous quarterly reports, there is an additional cost pressure in relation to legal fees which are forecast to exceed the allocated budget by £70,000
- 3.9 Thames Valley Fire Control Service staffing costs are forecast to be over budget due to the effects of the unbudgeted pay award. Overall, costs are expected to exceed the budget by £52,000 (detailed in Appendix B). The Authority's share of this additional cost is £20,000 as shown in Appendix A.
- 3.10 Cross border charges data have been agreed with Thames Valley partners for the first two quarters of the year and the estimated outturn position is that income will be £60,000 higher than the budgeted target.
- 3.11 The *Grants* line is showing an adverse variance as the Home Office miscalculated the Firelink grant due to fire and rescue services. In our case, the Home Office paid us £47,000 too much in 2020/21, which is being recovered in the current year.

- 3.12 At the point of budget setting, there was uncertainty about the final level of funding the Authority would receive via the Berkshire unitary authorities and section 31 grants. Final confirmation was received after the budget was set and the Authority will be receiving an additional £251,000.
- 3.13 In summary, the forecast year-end outturn shows a deficit of £68,000 to be funded from reserves, an increase of £39,000 from the budget setting position.

Capital

- 3.14 Capital expenditure to quarter 3, 2021/22 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 increase the call on reserves by £39,000 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.

Agenda Item 8

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: 17 February 2021.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A – Revenue position at quarter 3 2021/22
- 12.2 Appendix B – Net costs of TVFCS quarter 3 2021/22
- 12.3 Appendix C – Capital position at quarter 3 2021/22

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Mark Hawkins
Finance Manager
07785 573434
- 13.2 Conor Byrne
Head of Finance and Procurement
07585 991602

	Annual Budget £'000	Dec-21 Outturn £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES				
STATIONS	16,850	12,763	16,955	105
NON-STATIONS	11,273	8,358	11,463	190
TRAINING	518	255	519	1
OTHER	263	211	267	4
	28,904	21,587	29,204	300
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	711	433	790	79
RATES	920	474	652	(268)
CLEANING	257	164	276	19
UTILITIES	460	256	515	55
	2,348	1,327	2,233	(115)
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	385	385	385	0
EQUIPMENT	509	354	526	17
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	720	673	783	63
CLOTHING/PPE	374	231	373	(1)
COMMUNICATIONS	776	519	775	(1)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	198	164	194	(4)
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	139	105	133	(6)
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	151	85	151	0
SUPPLIES OTHER	207	125	197	(10)
	3,459	2,641	3,517	58
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	911	682	931	20
LEGAL	50	104	120	70
CONTRACTS OTHER (incl Professional Services)	677	387	681	4
	1,638	1,173	1,732	94
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	723	508	704	(19)
TRAVEL	211	141	203	(8)
	934	649	907	(27)
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	406	268	410	4
	406	268	410	4
INCOME				
GRANTS	(2,257)	(2,062)	(2,210)	47
RENTAL INCOME	(173)	(97)	(173)	0
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(324)	(243)	(324)	0
INCOME OTHER	(311)	(122)	(388)	(77)
	(3,065)	(2,524)	(3,095)	(30)
NET COST OF SERVICES	34,625	25,121	34,909	284
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	374	213	380	6
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(10)	(7)	(10)	0
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	600	0	600	0
CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO STAFFING COSTS	(165)	(118)	(165)	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	(236)	0	(236)	0
FINANCING COSTS	620	0	620	0
NET EXPENDITURE	35,808	25,209	36,098	290
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(35,779)	(31,651)	(36,030)	(251)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	29	(6,442)	68	39

This page is intentionally left blank

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn Dec-21 £'000	Forecast to Y/E £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	1,798	1,388	1,853	55
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	324	243	324	0
SUPPLIES/ OTHER	38	(7)	39	1
TECHNOLOGY	250	179	246	(4)
NET COST OF TVFCS	2,410	1,803	2,462	52
RBFRS Share of Costs (37.8%)	911	682	931	20

This page is intentionally left blank

Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Expected spend in 21/22	Actual Spend in Q1,2 & 3 £000's	TOTAL	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	Commentary
						Estimated Project Completion £000's		
Property, Capital Projects and Estates	New tri-service community fire station - Theale	9,220	6,016	2,570	2,290	914	9,220	As reported at Q2, the station build was completed on time with the exception of the landscaping which was subject to seasonal planting restrictions. This has now been fully completed which enables us to discharge our ecological and landscape planning conditions. All site users have now taken up their occupation of the site and the building is coming to life. The slight delay in completing the landscaping due to having to wait for the planting season, means that we are still collating final project costs. On the basis of our latest draft project accounts, we are still optimistic that this high profile project will be delivered slightly under budget. Final figures will be known in the next few weeks and the project closedown report is scheduled to be presented to Members of Management Committee on 5th April 2022.
	Fire stations - Minor Capital Works Programme	1,250	2	249	37	1,211	1,250	The first package of works at Slough have now been completed and the entire programme of works have been set out for Caversham Road, Bracknell, Maidenhead and Wokingham Road. The team are working on very detailed works scheduling programmes to ensure that the stations remain fully operational at all times throughout the project. The remaining project at Newbury has been more challenging to finalise, however, the team have made good progress recently and it is hoped the scope can soon be fixed in order to progress this through the procurement process, aligned with the other 5 stations. Whilst there has been a slight delay to project commencement, we still anticipate concluding this programme of work within the next 12-18 months.
Fleet & equipment	New Fire Appliances	4,860	4,453	394	394	0	4,847	The final two appliances that have been purchased as part of Phase one of the SAIF were deployed to Slough fire station and became fully operational in November. This means that 19 new Volvo appliances have now come into Service since 2017. This has concluded the procurement of fire appliances as per phase one of the SAIF.
	4x4 Fire Appliance at Maidenhead	175	75	100	100	0	175	The replacement smaller 4x4 appliance for Maidenhead has arrived in Service. As part of the commissioning process a fault has been identified which has required rectification from the manufacturer before the vehicle can be made available for operator/user training. It is anticipated that the vehicle will become fully operational towards the end of quarter 4.
	White Fleet	240	0	43	43	197	240	The first two vehicles have arrived in Service and are in the process of being commissioned before being put into service. Orders have been placed for others vehicles, which include hybrid and electric vehicles. Suppliers have advised of long lead times, so it is expected that most of the vehicles ordered this financial year will not become operational until mid-way 2022/23.
	BA Equipment	972	0	50	6	966	972	In April 2021, Management Committee approved the allocation of £972k of funding for the replacement of BA apparatus. After successful and robust user testing and equipment trials, a competitive tender process led to the contract being awarded to Interspiro Ltd. Contracts were signed by all parties in January 2022 and initial equipment purchase orders are expected to be placed by the end of January 2022. The project team made up of representatives from all three Thames Valley fire and rescue services will be working closely with Interspiro over the coming months to prepare for user training to commence in early 2022 with RFBRS planned to go live with the new equipment around November 2022.
	Network Refresh	394	0	0	0	394	394	Upgrading and updating of our network infrastructure is a key activity that underpins many of RBFRS' strategic plans going forward. The network hardware refresh is to align with new Wide Area Network (WAN) provision. The contract has now been approved and the implementation programme sequencing is underway with the vendor but will not be in this financial year due to delays in equipment supply.
	Hardware - Tablets	11	0	11	11	0	11	This project reflects the increase in deployment of tablet devices to enable use outside of the existing prevention function and to support information management related projects in protection and other areas of service delivery. This project is now complete.
	Hardware - Telephony System	75	0	75	38	37	75	Telephony systems requires a hardware refresh to allow software upgrades that will ensure supportability going forward, and additional applications such as Microsoft Teams. The tender process has completed and order placed for upgrades. The project costs and invoicing are in two stages.

Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Expected spend in 21/22	Actual Spend in Q1,2 & 3 £000's	TOTAL		Commentary
						Estimated Project Spend £000's	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	
ICT	Hardware - Computer peripheral refresh	30	0	30	17	13	30	This project supports the ongoing replacement of computer peripheral equipment, including , speakerphones, cameras, keyboards and monitors. This process is aligned to the client computer hardware refresh cycle. Purchase of the required equipment is ongoing on an as-needed basis.
	Software - Firewatch Development	50	0	0	0	50	50	System development costs to cover a number of one off known initiatives for additional modules, linked to the wider asset management project. Orders for stores ordering upgrades in progress, but will not be spent in this financial year.
	Services - Applications Deployment	63	0	47	35	28	63	Temporary resources required for the successful implementation of the projects and services noted above, including Firewatch / IBIS testing. Long term plan for both posts linked to outcome of ICT department reorganisation.
	Services - Technical Support	47	0	38	28	19	47	Temporary resources required for the successful implementation of the projects and services noted above, specifically implementation resource. Role is currently filled.
	Services - Project Management	88	0	80	54	34	88	Temporary resources required for the successful implementation of the projects and services noted above, specifically technical project management resource. Role is currently filled.
	Video Conferencing Equipment	88	0	22	22	66	88	Additional funding secured from Central Government for specific projects linked to COVID-19 has enabled tender processes to commence to purchase and implement additional video conferencing capabilities and equipment. Orders placed but supply chains issues and semiconductor shortages have resulted in delayed delivery - expected late Q4 2021/22 /early Q1 2022/23.
	Helpdesk System	45	29	4	4	12	45	Alemba platform (both test and production environment) has been upgraded to newer version 10.2 in October. The Stores element of the project is still to come.
TOTAL		17,608	10,575	3,713	3,079	3,941	17,595	



ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	03 FEBRUARY 2022
SUBJECT	APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 15 AND 16
LEAD OFFICER	AREA MANAGER DOUG BUCHANAN
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	TO NOTE

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides information on Quarter 3 (Q3) performance with supporting narrative on the Whole-time Duty System (WDS) and the On-Call (previously referred to as the Retained Duty System) appliance availability.
- 1.2 Whole-time appliance availability for Q3 was **78.8%** across the Service. As with the previous quarter, availability and crewing remained particularly challenging, as a result of direct and indirect impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.3 On-Call appliance availability through crewing for Q3 demonstrated a marginal improvement compared to Q2, but continued to be significantly impacted, with **36.5%** across the Service against the target of 60%.
- 1.4 Despite increased staff extraction levels presenting significant challenges for the Service throughout Q3, the effective and efficient use of available staff and additional mitigating measures applied enabled the Service to exceed the response standard with an average of **79% of emergency incidents attended in 10 minutes.**

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Management Committee:

Note the 2021-22 Q3 performance of **78.8%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 15¹

Note the 2021-22 Q3 performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of **36.5%** against the Service target of 60% in Corporate Measure 16².

¹ Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of full shifts where there is adequate crewing (4 personnel) on all Whole-time appliances (fire engines) through Q3 2021-22

² Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of hours per month where there is adequate crewing on all On-Call appliances (fire engines) through Q3 2021-22

Agenda Item 9

3. **REPORT**

- 3.1 This report provides the **2021-22 Q3** update of performance against Corporate Measure 15; *to ensure 100% of full shifts where there is adequate crewing on all Whole-time frontline pumping appliances.*
- 3.2 RBFRS employs a lean operating model including the Whole-time Duty System provision. With an establishment of 324 staff maintaining sufficient minimum numbers of qualified firefighters requires effective management combined with flexibility and commitment to provide additional hours from staff on a pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) basis.
- 3.3 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 16, 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 five³ On-Call appliances.

Whole-time Duty System Appliance Availability – Q3 2021-22 (Corporate Measure 15)

- 3.4 The availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances is measured by the percentage of shifts (day and night) that all 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.
- 3.5 Corporate measure 15 allows for a two-hour period for any moves of operational personnel between stations. This is known as a critical stand-by move and is usually employed to cover short notice sickness or other unforeseen absences.
- 3.6 Whole-time crewing availability across the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances for Q3 was **78.8%**. This equates to **39** shifts where crewing was not achieved in line with the Corporate Measure 16. On **6** of these occasions, there were two appliances unavailable.
- 3.7 There continues to be a number of pressures contributing to the unusual decrease in this performance measure, which include:
- i. COVID-19 presented a significant impact to operational personnel with many confirmed cases, requirements to 'self-isolate' and/or 'shield'. Across the quarter, there were 101 Covid related absences. At its peak, the week commencing 20 December, the overall sickness across the WDS was 37, equating to 10.7% of staff. This percentage was in line with sector absence.
 - ii. A continued higher than usual level of staff on long-term sickness and restricted duties (in addition to direct Covid conditions). This was caused by staff not being able to access health care support as quickly as usual, due to pressures being felt across health partners including our own occupational health provision.

- 3.8 To help mitigate these pressures a number of actions have been taken that had been originally set out in the Service's 'crewing degradation' scenario plans as established at the start of the pandemic.
- 3.9 Service Delivery continued to lead a cross-departmental 'Crewing Task Team' to closely monitor and manage impacts. This oversight has provided opportunities to make a number of interventions to maintain appropriate response standards balanced across immediate and longer-term impacts for the organisation. These included:
- i. Monitoring the impacts of planned training events and either delivering in a different way or postponing these where they had a direct impact on appliance availability.
 - ii. Realigning operationally competent staff performing other duties (such as projects or resilience planning) to targeted operational shifts. Staff on restricted duties were used to backfill this impact where possible.
 - iii. Implementing the increased establishment (competent transferees) as recommended in Q2. Recommended a further increase to take effect in Q4.
 - iv. Improving the communication and processes availability of PAOT for staff, including on-call personnel.
 - v. Ensuring that the Service's degradation policy was consistently applied to reduce the impact on response standards.
 - vi. Utilising On-Call during Christmas period as immediately available appliance. This happened on 4 separate occasions where Hungerford crews were deployed into Station. Unfortunately, this is not reflected in the WDS availability due to how the measure is recorded, but ultimately improved immediate response to our communities and helped to support the overall response standard performance.
- 3.10 RBFRS' continues to be incredibly grateful for the flexibility and commitment shown by the staff during this period. The high level of co-operation and commitment to provide additional availability displayed by personnel was remarkable. Notably, those on-call staff from Hungerford who effectively switched shift systems over the Christmas period supported the Services ability to deliver a response standard of 79% of emergency incidents attended within 10 minutes, for the residents of Royal Berkshire in Q3 despite the uncontrollable pressures faced.

**On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability – Q3 2021-22
(Corporate Measure 16)**

- 3.11 The overall availability for On-Call appliances in Q3 was **36.5%**; a slight increase from the 34.7% achieved in the previous quarter. While this remains below the level the Service aspires to achieve it is notable that these levels are above that seen prior to the impacts of the Pandemic in Q2 2019/20.

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

Station	Availability target	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Q3 overall
Hungerford	70%	60.1%	60.3%	51.9%	57.4%
Lambourn	40%	11.6%	3.7%	0%	5.1%
Mortimer	70%	24.3%	26.8%	28.2%	26.4%
Crowthorne	85%	50.7%	75.8%	59.9%	62.0%
Maidenhead	70%	43.1%	36.5%	14.6%	31.4%

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

- 3.12 There are a number of factors that have contributed to overall on-call appliance availability falling below the 60% overall target in Q3. Whilst a slight increase in overall availability has been achieved from 34.7% to 36.5% in Q2 on-call availability continues to face pressures due to a variety of factors:
- i. A number of on-call personnel were impacted by Covid-19 resulting in unplanned changes to their working circumstances and availability. This led to an unexpected increase in staff turnover and a relative decline in establishment. The on-call workforce currently has 10 vacancies with 6 personnel due to begin their training for on-call on 24th of January.
 - ii. Until recently, the Service has not been able to undertake its usual on-call attraction and recruitment activity due to pandemic restrictions and other pressures as a result of prioritising the response to Covid-19. Since the easing of restrictions an additional 6 individuals have received job offers with a second phase of recruitment now underway.
 - iii. Staff were required to take statutory leave periods, much of which had been carried forward from 2020, in line with Government guidance. This had a knock on impact in 2021. RBFRS also wanted to ensure that staff had sufficient periods of rest and recovery following a difficult and

challenge year for many on-call staff. A change in the leave policy has resulted in all leave being allocated and recorded on Firewatch resulting in a clearer picture of availability moving forward.

- iv. Staff with key skills, such as Incident Commanders, and Drivers were unavailable for long periods of Q3 due to long term sickness. This has had a disproportionate impact on appliance availability due to the limited resilience provided through the on-call duty system arrangements. A programme of works has been underway to add resilience in these key positions with an additional two ICSL1 incident commanders becoming qualified during Q3, along with an additional three EFAD and LGV drivers, the benefits of which should be felt in Q4.
 - v. Lambourne in particular continues to be extremely challenging, as the establishment number is just seven, of those only two hold Incident Command qualification and two driver qualification. The Service continue to look for recruitment opportunities, but these do have limitations due to local population. Whilst this presents an ongoing challenge, we plan to review our provision in the west of the county. In order to effectively manage risk in the short term, we have increased our prevention activities in this part of the county.
- 3.13 The 11 on-call staff on temporary WDS contracts have sought to maintain on-call availability. This has placed an increased pressure on on-call crewing as the shift pattern requirements of WDS has changed the profile of availability of those staff. Impacts were in line with planning assumptions, but were further impacted with factors noted in i-v.
- 3.14 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 through management of provided hours.
- 3.15 Ongoing recruitment activity has been underway throughout Q3 which following a great deal of interest has resulted in an additional six individuals being offered on-call positions. A further campaign is now underway and is expected to improve establishment figures significantly, however the likely impacts of these additions is unlikely to be identified through appliance availability for some time due to required development and training of staff.

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.

Agenda Item 9

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to be utilised to mitigate other extractions. This requirement means that the PAOT expenditure is above planned levels.
- 5.2 The use of PAOT through **Q3** continued to enable the Service to maintain a operational availability that supported the achievement of the Service's response standard commitment.

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 Doug Buchanan – Area Manager Response and Resilience, Service Delivery

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	03.02.22	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	03.02.22	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	03.02.22	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Asset Release Update	Management Committee	03.02.22	Ad-hoc	Note	HCP&E	Strategic Assets Lead	Part II
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Allowances Annual Review 22/23	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England)	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Ad-hoc	Note	DChEx	N/A	Part I
Modern Slavery Statement / HR Policies	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Ad-hoc	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
HMICFRS State of Fire and Rescue 2021 Report	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Ad-hoc	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 22/23, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	15.02.22	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	23.03.22	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	23.03.22	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance	A&GC	23.03.22	Quarterly	Agree	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	23.03.22	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Member/Officer Protocol	A&GC	23.03.22	every four years	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	23.03.22	Annual	Note	HCS	Organisational Development Champion	Part I
Members Code of Conduct feedback from public consultation	A&GC	23.03.22	Annual	Note and recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances	A&GC	23.03.22	Annual	Note and recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	23.03.22	Quarterly	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Capital Projects Update - project closedown report	Management Committee	05.04.22	Ad-hoc	Note	HCP&E	Strategic Assets Lead	Part II
Corporate Calendar 2022/23	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Members Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Built Environment Presentation	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Ad-hoc	Note	ACFO	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Member Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Member Champions	Part I
Annual Plan 2022/23	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Governance - to include Member attendance, allowances and expenses	Fire Authority	28.04.22	Annual	Note	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
TVFCS Joint Committee Annual Report 2021/22	Fire Authority	30.06.22	Annual	Note	AM (C&P)	Collaboration Lead	Part I
Appointment of Committees, Lead Members and Member Champions and Outside Bodies 2022/23	Fire Authority	30.06.22	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Chairman / Vice-Chairman 2022/23	Fire Authority	30.06.22	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Independent Persons	Fire Authority	30.06.22	every four years	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I

**Categories of “Exempt Information”
under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972**

	Category
	[For each of nos 1 - 7, see <u>Qualification 1</u> below]
1	Information relating to any individual
2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). [see <u>Qualification 2</u> below]
4	Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5	Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6	Information which reveals that the authority purposes: (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7	Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

Qualifications:

- (1) Information falling within paragraph 3 is not exempt information by virtue of that paragraph if it is required to be registered under -
 - (a) the Companies Act 1985;
 - (b) the Friendly Societies Act 1974;
 - (c) the Friendly Societies Act 1992;
 - (d) the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978;
 - (e) the Building Societies Act 1986; or
 - (f) the Charities Act 1993.
- (2) Information is not exempt information if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992.
- (3) Information which -
 - (a) falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 above; and
 - (b) is not prevented from being exempt by virtue of the two preceding paragraphs
 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

Agenda Item 12

in disclosing the information.

Interpretation:

- (4) "*Employee*" means a person employed under a contract of service;
- (5) "*Financial or business affairs*" includes contemplated, as well as past or current, activities;
- (6) "*Labour relations matter*" means -
 - (a) any of the matters specified in paragraphs (a) to (g) of section 218(1) of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992[10] (matters which may be the subject of a trade dispute, within the meaning of that Act);
 - or
 - (b) any dispute about a matter falling within paragraph (a) above;and for the purposes of this definition the enactments mentioned in paragraph (a) above, with the necessary modifications, shall apply in relation to office-holders under the authority as they apply in relation to employees of the authority;
- (7) "*Office-holder*", in relation to the authority, means the holder of any paid office appointments to which are or may be made or confirmed by the authority or by any joint board on which the authority is represented or by any person who holds any such office or is an employee of the authority;
- (8) "*Registered*" in relation to information required to be registered under the Building Societies Act 1986, means recorded in the public file of any building society (within the meaning of that Act).

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank