ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY

Agenda
for the Meeting
of the
Management Committee

Wednesday, 4th December, 2024
At

<u>6.30 pm</u>

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

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	**Management Committee Meeting**
DATE AND TIME:	**Wednesday, 4th December, 2024 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.

GRAHAM BRITTEN
Monitoring Officer

To:	**Members of the Management Committee:**

Councillor Wendy Griffith	Councillor Paul Gittings
Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Councillor Helen Taylor	Councillor Simon Werner
Councillor Peter Frewer	Councillor George Blundell
Councillor Wayne Smith	Councillor Dave McElroy
Councillor Jeff Brooks	

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

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AGENDA

1. Representative Bodies

Purpose:

The Chair 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 Chair 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 8 October 2024 *(Pages 7 - 16)*

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on Tuesday 8 October 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. Receipt of Announcements

Recommendation:

To receive announcements from the Chair 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. **RBFA ICT Strategy 2024 - 2027**

Purpose:

To approve the ICT Strategy and note the contents of the report.

8. **2024/25 Budget Monitoring - Quarter Two** *(Pages 17 - 30)*

Purpose:

To note the revenue and capital outturns as well as treasury position at the end of Quarter Two 2024/25.

9. **Sustainability Programme - Proposed Roadmap** *(Pages 31 - 56)*

Purpose:

To note the proposed RBFRS Sustainability Roadmap and the additional resources required to develop and deliver the Programme.

10. **Quarter Two Appliance Availability to Meet Corporate Measures 14, 15 & 16** *(Pages 57 - 66)*

Purpose:

To note Quarter Two Appliance Availability to meet Corporate Measures 14, 15 and 16.

11. **Forward Plan** *(Pages 67 - 68)*

Recommendation:

To note the Forward Plan.

12. **Date of next meeting**

Monday 10 February 2025, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

13. **Exclusion of Public** *(Pages 69 - 70)*

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.

14. **Part II Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 October 2024** *(Pages 71 - 74)*

Recommendation:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 8 October 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

15. **Decarbonisation Phase One Update** *(Pages 75 - 82)*

Purpose:

To note the contents of the report.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 8th October, 2024 at 6.30 pm

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

Members: *(*present)*	* Councillor George Blundell Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle * Councillor Jeff Brooks * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey * Councillor Peter Frewer * Councillor Paul Gittings	* Councillor Wendy Griffith * Councillor Dave McElroy Councillor Wayne Smith * Councillor Helen Taylor * Councillor Simon Werner

In Attendance: Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Tom Brandon (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
Paul Brooks (Head of Assets, HoA)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Dave Crease (Area Manager, Protection and Protection, AM P&P)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Andy Stockwell (Group Manager Change and Improvement, GM C&I)
Lukasz Wrona (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

Action

20.   REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

21.   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Wayne Smith.

Action

22. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct. There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

23. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2024

The following actions on page 14 had been completed, which were:

- Tom Brandon, Area Manager Response and Resilience confirmed the Lambourn figure was correct.
- Tom Brandon, Area Manager Response and Resilience confirmed he had passed on Councillor McKenzie-Boyle thanks and appreciation to Tony Jell at Crowthorne Fire Station.
- Nikki Richards, Deputy Chief Executive on behalf of Becci Jefferies confirmed On-Call will be included as an agenda item at the next Recruitment and Retention Working Group meeting.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting on 22 July 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

24. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

CRMP Priority Six implementation

On Monday, 16 September, RBFRS introduced changes to its Operational Resource Management Policy – a key enabler to implement Priority Six of the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

This reconfirms the requirement to provide 14 fire engines as a minimum baseline and now recognises that our On-call staff can form part of this baseline on some occasions.

The intention of this policy change is to ensure we have a more reliable and resilient operating model and that our fire engines are available more often than they have been.

The Service is expected to reduce the overtime budget by approximately £150,000 per year. The money saved is being immediately reinvested into additional fire fighter posts meaning they will be less reliant on the voluntary use of overtime.

Since its implementation there has been 7 occasions where On Call colleagues have formed part of the response baseline, when there were insufficient wholetime firefighters available. This has meant that just over £6,000 has

Action

already been found to support the ongoing investment into additional frontline firefighter roles.

The Service will continue to closely monitor the effects of this change. The Chair stated he looked forward to receiving the three-month evaluation report early in the new year.

Implementation of new Automatic Fire Alarm policy

Following a public consultation and agreement at Fire Authority, RBFRS has now changed the way it responds to Automatic Fire Alarms in certain types of buildings.

The changes took effect on the 20th September, meaning that RBFRS has stopped automatically sending a fire engine when there is an automatic fire alarm notification in buildings such as shops, offices, leisure centres, sports grounds, libraries and health centres.

RBFRS is continuing to attend automatic fire alarm notifications at schools, high risk buildings and where anyone sleeps, such as hotels, hospitals, care homes, houses, and flats.

In all cases, an emergency response is still being sent to 999 calls and confirmed fires.

RBFRS needed to change the way it responds to automatic fire alarm notifications to ensure communities and firefighters are kept safe. This is because 99% of the automatic fire alarm calls received are false alarms.

Attending these types of incidents takes time and resource and therefore causes significant disruption to the delivery of essential services and training.

The changes help to align our processes to neighbouring fire and rescue services in the Thames Valley. Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service are currently running a six-month pilot following the same AFA guidance and Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service will introduce the same measures in October.

The Chair thanked everyone involved in helping to prepare the Service and the wider community for the changes.

Summer Internship Scheme concluded

In August, we welcomed five young people from across the county as part of the third year of the Summer Internship Scheme.

The Summer Internship Scheme encourages young people who may not have considered a career in the fire and rescue sector to explore some of the many roles available to them. This year, the scheme was open to young people from

Berkshire who are aged 17-18 and from ethnic groups that are currently under-represented in the Service.

During the five-week programme, interns worked as part of several teams and took part in activities aimed at increasing their awareness of the work done by the Service.

It was a pleasure to attend the end of internship event where the interns reflected on their experiences whilst with the Service. The Chair thanked the interns for their efforts during their time spent working at the Service and the Project Team, host departments, crews and mentors who supported their journey within the Service.

Multi-agency high rise exercise.

Firefighters from across the Service were joined by Thames Valley Fire Control Service and crews from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service for a major training exercise in the AMS Tower at the University of Reading.

Crews were also joined by Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council for the scenario on the evening of Monday, 16 September.

The exercise saw crews respond to a fire on the fourth floor of the tower, with casualties, made up of volunteers from the Service, the charity Wokingham CLASP and actors from the Casualty Actors Union, being scattered across the fifth and sixth floors above the 'fire.'

During the exercise, staff at Thames Valley Control Service responded to a high number of calls from actors involved in the exercise, feeding that information back to the fireground to inform crews at the scene.

The Chair thanked everyone involved, both in the organising and the performing of this large-scale training exercise.

His Majesty Inspectorate for Constabulary Fire and Rescue Service

The third inspection of the service by His Majesty Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service commenced earlier this week, with the inspectorate having already carried out virtual interviews with partner agencies that the Service works with and the Head of Finance, as well as carrying out a staff survey. This week see's the inspectorate come into the Service to carry out the first in person interviews with staff.

On Wednesday this week, the Chair stated he will be attending the strategic briefing, where the Directors will present to the Inspectorate an update on the improvements that have been carried out since the last inspection in June 2022.

The Inspectorate will return week commencing 21st October, where they will be visiting Stations and teams to get a wider understanding of the service. The findings of the inspection will be reported back to the service in spring next year.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer added to the above announcements, by stating the Service had been in touch with Shinfield Studios in relation to Fire Safety. In discussing HMICFRS Inspection, he confirmed Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), Tom Brandon (Area Manager Response and Resilience) and Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer) were interviewed by the Inspection Team on Productivity, Change and Improvement earlier this week.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer shared that he considered it was a huge privilege to be attending the Cenotaph this year on Remembrance Day as part of his new role as Contingent Commander for the Civilian Services Contingent. Each year, the Contingent Commander nominate volunteers, and he stated last year Tim Weeks was nominated and this year (November 2024) he had nominated William Fox.

25.   **ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

There were no issues arising from Audit and Governance Committee.

26.   **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

No recommendations from Committees were received.

27.   **SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2024 - 2029**

In presenting this report, Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (HoA) stated Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) had recognised there was a climate emergency which had formed the foundation of the Sustainability Strategy. The Strategy had been developed with stakeholders and supports RBFRS's strategic commitments. In outlining the four strategic themes (Our People, Guardianship, Consumption Reduction and Decarbonisation) he stated they had been mapped to 16 UN sustainable development goals.

In addition, an action plan had been developed which will be reviewed by Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group (EDSWG). Attached with the strategy was the policy, which subject to Member approval will be formally signed off by the Chair, Councillor Jeff Brooks and Chief Fire Officer, Wayne Bowcock.

In response to a positive comment on the strategy made by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Councillor Dave McElroy echoed her sentiment. He stated he noticed water was referenced several times throughout the document, in particular the reduction of water pollution and protecting water based eco

	Action

systems. He asked whether this was a new addition to the strategy, as this was something he had raised previously.

Paul Brooks stated there was a cultural change as the strategy was looking to reduce water usage by undertaking assessments at incidents as an example.

Councillor Paul Gittings stated he would have liked to see an action plan alongside the strategy. Paul Brooks he will submit a Sustainability road map to Management Committee at its next meeting in December. He requested Members do not share the road map beyond the Fire Authority. In response to Councillor Paul Gittings, Paul Brooks agreed to insert sustainable implications in the report, subject to Senior Leadership Team (SLT) approval.

<div align="right">HOA</div>

The Chair commented the wider installation of smoke alarms and sprinkler systems would potentially reduce incidents and would reduce the use of water at incidents.

Paul Brooks took the opportunity to thank Sophie Fox, Sustainability Co-ordinator and the rest of the Capital Projects Team.

The Chair made an amendment to the recommendation and changed *RBFRS* to *RBFA* and *note* to ***agree****.* This was seconded by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

In being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

1) The RBFA Sustainability Strategy 2024-2029 be agreed; and
2) The RBFA Sustainable Development Policy Statement for co-signature by the RBFA Chair and RBFRS Chief Fire Officer be agreed.

28.   FLEET AND EQUIPMENT STRATEGY 2024 - 2029

Paul Brooks, HoA explained the Fleet and Equipment Strategy 2024-29 will provide a framework to support the delivery of plans arising from the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Corporate Plan and Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF). The strategy is aligned to the corporate vision and includes the following six principles that support the Service's strategic intent:
- Cost-Effectiveness
- Reliability & Resilience
- Quality
- Adaptability
- Sustainability
- Innovation

Paul Brooks discussed the work that was currently underway with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue (FRS) partners and Hampshire FRS in procuring and fitting appliances to a standardised specification. He reported that RBFRS will receive five new appliances next year.

In response to comments from Councillors Wendy Griffith and Dave McElroy, Paul Brooks explained operational sustainability will be maintained. For example, equipment would not be replaced until the relevant technology was available to support it.

The Chair amended the recommendation from *note* to **agree.** This was seconded by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

On being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** that RBFRS Fleet and Equipment Strategy 2024-2029 be agreed.

29.   BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER ONE

In delivering the 2024/25 Quarter One Budget Monitoring report, Conor Bryne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P) reported the Fire Authority approved the 2024/25 Revenue Budget set at £45.964m. Appendix A show the forecast revenue outturn for 2024/25 and stated an anticipated surplus of £80,000 compared to the original budget.

Employee Costs – Grey Book pay award from 1 July 2024 was agreed at 4% resulting in an additional budget pressure of £39,000. 18 new recruits joined in July, following training will join wholetime stations in November. The number of firefighters in development was higher than in the budget. There was a forecast cost saving due to vacancies of £369,000 on wholetime stations. The Green Book pay award had not been finalised to date.

Occupational Health – costs are forecast to be £46,000 higher than budget due to cost increases and referrals for complex mental health cases had increased.

The Pension Grant to cover additional pension costs was £87,000 higher than budgeted.

In response to the Chair's comment on Appendix C (Capital expenditure), Conor Byrne stated TVFCS DS3000 technical refresh was currently £18,000 under budget at the end of quarter one. The project was due to be completed in quarter two and stated they were not seeing anything that would bring the project off-course.

 RESOLVED that the report be noted.

30.   QUARTER ONE APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY TO MEET CORPORATE
MEASURES 14 AND 15

Tom Brandon, Area Manager Response and Resilience outlined the wholetime availability across the quarter was 97.7%, which exceeded the target against 97.4%. On-call appliance availability in quarter one was 34.1% against a target of 50%. He stated the Response Standard was 74.7% against a corporate measure target of 75% which was an improvement from quarter four of 70.1%.

Action

In referring to the table in paragraph 3.2 which showed average incidents during the day and night, he stated there was more demand in the day. He also explained the Response Standard Performance included call handling time, turnout time and travel time.

Tom Brandon reported On-call availability was 15% below the target against 50%. He briefly listed the performance challenges faced with on-call availability in the quarter.
- On-call appliances were available for 27 shifts out of 34 shifts when the 14th wholetime appliance was degraded, which meant P6 could have been enacted to maintain baseline appliance availability on more than 80% of occasions.
- 19 trained firefighters had left the establishment which led to an overall reduction from 65 to 61
- 14 out of 15 new firefighters were still undertaking the On-Call Training Programme (OCTP).
- Three firefighters will complete their training programme in quarter two.

In referring to the table in paragraph 3.21, the Chair stated the performance of Lambourn in the quarter had stood out. Katie Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) discussed the quality of work that went into managing the crewing model. She advised that a new corporate measure had been developed to monitor the number of times the 14th appliance is turned out. On-call firefighters were normally available at night. This data will be presented to Audit and Governance Committee.

Councillor Paul Gittings stated he felt Lambourn figures were hopeful. He mentioned the controversy around P6 and stated he felt the performance figures gave justification for the policy. He referenced paragraph 3.14 which stated the 14th appliance was degraded on 33 occasions during the quarter because of a lack of uptake for Pre-arranged overtime (PAOT). He asked whether road works affected the Response Standard.

In answer to a question from Councillor Dave McElroy, Tom Brandon explained 10 additional firefighter posts allow RBFRS to recruit above establishment to improve resilience and reduce over reliance of PAOT. He reported some employees had left RBFRS for London Fire Bridge (LFB).

The Chair reported that the Recruitment and Retention Working Group were looking into how to mitigate this risk.

In response to Councillor Paul Gittings, Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer reported the Service received Road Traffic Orders which was sent to stations. He outlined the challenges the Service faced in maintaining Response Standard.

Tom Brandon reported he would forward his presentation to Management Committee.

AM R&R

Action

RESOLVED that:

1) The 2024/25 quarter one performance of 97.7% appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 14 be noted.
2) The 2024/25 quarter one overall on-call appliance availability performance of 34.1%, in line with Corporate Measure 15 be noted.

31.   FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

32.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 4 December 2024, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

33.   EXCLUSION OF 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.

34.   PART II MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting on 22 July 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

35.   **CONTINGENCY FIRE CREW ARRANGEMENTS: INDUSTRIAL ACTION RESILIENCE**

Andy Stockwell, Group Manager Change and Improvement reported the Fire Authority had a legal duty to ensure effective business continuity arrangements were in place. This included but not limited to Industrial Action (National and local) and pandemics.

The report was seeking Management Committee approval to enter into procurement process for replacement provision.

The Chair moved the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Peter Frewer. On being put to the vote 8 voted for, and one abstained.

Action

RESOLVED that:

1) The recommendations in the report be agreed and noted RBFRS intends to request approval of contract award, following a full procurement process, at the Management Committee meeting on 10th February 2025.

36.   THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL - CONTINGENCY CALL HANDLING TENDER

Mark Arkwell, DCFO reported he was seeking Management Committee approval to enter into a tender process for the provision of a Contingency Call Handling Service. The contract was similar to the existing one which was due to expire in April 2025. Costs would be shared with Thames Valley FRS partners via the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) revenue budget.

The Chair moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

RESOLVED that it be agreed to tender for provision of a Contingency Call Handling Service and related services for Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

(The meeting concluded at 19:51)

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

5OMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	4 DECEMBER 2024
SUBJECT	2024/25 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER TWO
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS, FINANCE LEAD
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To inform members of the revenue and capital outturns as well as treasury position at the end of quarter 2 2024/25.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

2.1 **NOTE** the report.

3. REPORT

Commentary on Revenue Outturn

3.1 The detailed revenue outturn for quarter 2, 2024/25 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of TVFCS for quarter 2 are shown in **Appendix B**.

3.2 The 2024/25 Revenue Budget agreed by Fire Authority in February 2024 was set at £45.964m. The budget was set with no addition to or need to draw on the Budget Contingency Reserve.

3.3 The forecast revenue outturn for 2024/25 is shown in **Appendix A** and shows an anticipated surplus of £26,000 compared to the original budget. Variances against individual revenue lines are explained below.

3.4 *Employee costs.* The Grey book staff reached a pay settlement from 1 July 2024 of 4%. This was against a budget rate of 3.75% - at an additional cost of

£39,000. The budget was set with the crewing model that included a buffer of an additional ten firefighters. Station staff salary costs have been less than budgeted for the period, even with the 17 new recruits that joined in February (who went to stations in May), due to the number of leavers and retirements. The 18 new recruits taken on in July have joined stations in November. The proportion of firefighters in development is higher than in the budget. Overall, there is a forecast net cost savings on station salaries of around £419,000.

3.5   The overtime budget was set at a lower level, in anticipation that the implementation of Priority Project 6 (of CRMP) and the additional ten firefighter buffer would help lead to reduced overtime. Due to the delay in the implementation of Priority 6, the time taken to recruit additional firefighters and pressure on the overtime budget to cover sickness, firefighters on light duties and additional overtime for training, the overtime forecast is showing at £586,000 over budget for the year.

3.6   On-call stations are currently showing a net negative variance across the county, with a net variance of £125,000, with Lambourn being £50,000 of this amount.

3.7   The Green book pay award has been finalised at an average of 3.38% against the forecast of 3.75%, an estimated saving against the budget of £33,000. This is more than offset by higher officer overtime, including covering sickness, resulting in a resulting in a net forecast overspend of £50,000.

3.8   *Utilities* – reductions in utility prices are anticipated to save around £41,000 against the original budget.

3.9   *Occupational Health* – costs are forecast to be £46,000 higher than budget due to cost increases, additional number of wholetime staff with additional medicals, increased numbers of referrals – particularly of complex cases needing physician rather than adviser appointments. Referrals for mental health cases have also risen.

3.10   *Contracts* – Internal and External audit cost are forecast to be a total of £22,000 higher than budgeted.

3.11   *Pension costs* – £34,000 higher due to additional Injury award costs.

3.12   *Grants* – the Pension Grant to cover additional pension costs has come in £87,000 higher than budgeted.

3.13   *Interest receivable* –– we have been able to increase our investments and also the higher than budgeted interest rates have been to the advantage of the Authority, with current and anticipated interest from money on deposit forecast to yield around £270,000 more revenue than originally budgeted.

Capital

3.14 Capital expenditure to quarter 2 and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

Treasury

3.15 Treasury management activity for quarter 2 is shown in **Appendix D**. All treasury management operations have been conducted in full compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

4.1 Commitment 5 – Sustainability. We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The forecast outturn position on the Revenue Account is expected to be a surplus of £26,000.

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 Budget setting assumptions that feed into the Medium-Term Financial Plan were reviewed and approved by Fire Authority.

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: 15 February 2024

12.   <u>APPENDICES</u>

12.1   Appendix A – Revenue position at quarter 2, 2024/25

12.2   Appendix B – Net costs of TVFCS quarter 2, 2024/25

12.3   Appendix C – Capital position at quarter 2, 2024/25

12.4   Appendix D – Treasury position at quarter 2, 2024/25

13.   <u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>

13.1   Mark Hawkins
         Finance Manager
         hawkinsm@rbfrs.co.uk

13.2   Conor Byrne
         Head of Finance and Procurement
         byrnec@rbfrs.co.uk

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Budget Update - Revenue Position Quarter 2 2024/25

	Annual Budget £'000	Q1 & Q2 Outturn £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES				
STATIONS	20,743	10,173	20,824	81
NON-STATIONS	14,518	7,024	14,568	50
TRAINING	711	286	720	9
OTHER	306	167	309	3
	36,278	**17,650**	**36,421**	**143**
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	950	438	952	2
RATES	968	566	968	0
CLEANING	294	123	295	1
UTILITIES	787	311	746	(41)
	2,999	**1,438**	**2,961**	**(38)**
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	437	257	437	0
EQUIPMENT	510	218	525	15
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	964	512	982	18
CLOTHING/PPE	373	169	385	12
COMMUNICATIONS	913	419	932	19
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	268	143	314	46
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	142	93	161	19
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	124	60	124	0
SUPPLIES OTHER	232	106	243	11
	3,963	**1,977**	**4,103**	**140**
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS	1,063	523	1,046	(17)
LEGAL	50	8	50	0
OTHER CONTRACTS (incl. Professional Services)	1,046	485	1,084	38
	2,159	**1,016**	**2,180**	**21**
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	806	448	825	19
TRAVEL	232	123	244	12
	1,038	**571**	**1,069**	**31**
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	518	271	552	34
	518	**271**	**552**	**34**
INCOME				
GRANTS	(1,658)	(1,492)	(1,751)	(93)
RENTAL INCOME	(239)	(140)	(220)	19
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(429)	(215)	(429)	0
INCOME OTHER	(544)	(85)	(550)	(6)
	(2,870)	**(1,932)**	**(2,950)**	**(80)**
NET COST OF SERVICES	**44,085**	**20,991**	**44,336**	**251**
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	333	127	333	0
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(467)	(270)	(737)	(270)
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	1,956	0	1,956	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	(493)	0	(493)	0
FINANCING COSTS	550	0	550	0
NET EXPENDITURE	**45,964**	**20,848**	**45,945**	**(19)**
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(45,964)	(27,322)	(45,971)	(7)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	**0**	**(6,474)**	**(26)**	**(26)**

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report 2024/25

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to September 24 £'000	Forecast to Y/E £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	2,108	1,035	2,058	(50)
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	429	215	429	0
SUPPLIES/ OTHER	50	2	50	0
TECHNOLOGY	287	164	291	4
NET COST OF TVFCS	**2,874**	**1,416**	**2,828**	**(46)**
RBFRS Share of Costs (37%)	1,063	523	1,046	(17)

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Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's A	Spend in Prior Years £000's B	Spend in 2024/25 £000's C	Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's D	Anticipated spend in 2024/25 £000's E	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's B+C+D	Overall variance on Project	Estimated Project Completion Date	Commentary
Estates Development Programme	Training Centre	3,860	349	439	3,072	3,181	3,860	0	Q1 25/26	Slight delay due to removal of LPG tanks, but schedule can accommodate this. Modular units lifted in w/c 18 November and topping out ceremony planned for later in November.
	Slough refurbishment	780	415	334	31	368	780	0	Q2 24/25	Work completed on main FS, water rescue, BA room and gym 12 July 24. Old bar area to be completed under self help. Members visited site 19 July 24.
	Water Rescue - Slough	122	3	102	17	118	122	0	Q2 24/25	
	LED Lighting	225	0	0	225	225	225	0	Q3 24/25	SAIF release of funds approved July 24. Contract awarded to Laser. Projects commenced in November 24. ECD January 25.
	Sustainability - Heat Decarbonisation	1,665	0	68	1,597	462	1,665	0	Q4 24/25	Change request to Salix Finance approved, with no impact on the level of grant. There will be change in the level of funding required from RBFRS, which will be taken to Management Committee.
	Minor Capital Works	171	0	1	170	171	171	0	Q4 24/25	This includes EDI and LED lighting at Windsor, EDI and contaminants upgrades at Wokingham and fire alarm upgrades at Lambourn and Mortimer.
	SUB-TOTAL	**6,823**	**767**	**944**	**5,112**	**4,525**	**6,823**	**0**		
Fleet & equipment	White Fleet (including EV vehicle)	711	533	195	0	195	728	17	Q2 24/25	All the vehicles for the year have been delivered. The extra cost was due to VAT not being reclaimable on some vehicles.
	6 Light Vans	220	0	0	220	220	220	0	Q4 24/25	6 additional light vehicles have been approved for purchase in 2024/25. Orders have been placed.
	Appliances	2,664	0	462	2,202	999	2,664	0	Q1 26/27	The first 3 of 8 Appliances are currently being built and ancillary equipment will also be purchased for the trucks. First 3 are in build with projected delivery by the end of March 2025
	SUB-TOTAL	**3,595**	**533**	**657**	**2,422**	**1,414**	**3,612**	**17**		
ICT	Network Refresh (WAN)	394	0	0	394	368	394	0	Q1 25/26	The final stages of agreeing and signing a new contract has now been reached, with a start date for project in Q4 24/25 and anticipated compation in April 2025. The project includes upfront fees for installation and costs for 10 yrs licensing and support.
	Network Refresh (WAN) - 10 year licences	519	0	0	519	519	519	0		
	Software - Firewatch Development	50	12	0	38	38	50	0	Q4 24/25	Futher captial costs to be incurred for the Finance aspect of FW. This will occur from 25/26 Also the FW cloud based migration is expected in 25/26.
	Fireground Radio Replacement	136	0	122	14	136	136	0	Q3 24/25	Q3 - November roll out, further kit to be purchased (Repeaters for FireGround) Full budget to be utilised.

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority　　　　　　　　　　　**Capital Monitoring 2022/23 Quarter 4**

Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Spend in Prior Years £000's	Spend in 2024/25 £000's	Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Anticipated spend in 2024/25 £000's	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	Overall variance on Project	Estimated Project Completion Date	Commentary
	Station End Refresh	67	0	66	0	67	66	-1	Q3 24/25	Waiting for rollout. No further costs.
	Hardware - Laptops phase 1	107	0	107	0	107	107	0	Q1 24/25	Phase 1 has been completed.
	Hardware - Laptops / desktops, etc	361	0	0	361	361	361	0	Q4 24/25	Planning for this phase is underway
	Service /Delivery	192	0	15	177	192	192	0	Q4 24/25	Ongoing costs linked to improvements to deployment system and migration of systems to the cloud
	SUB-TOTAL	**1,826**	**12**	**310**	**1,503**	**1,788**	**1,825**	**-1**		
TVFCS	DS3000 technical refresh (ICCS)	242	0	90	152	242	242	0	Q4 24/25	Work commenced 23 Sept, due to complete in Q4 24/25
TOTAL		**12,486**	**1,312**	**2,001**	**9,189**	**7,969**	**12,502**	**16**		

Treasury Management Update – Q2 2024/25

Background

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. To demonstrate that the Authority has fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out several indicators.

It is now a requirement of the CIPFA Prudential Code that these indicators are reported quarterly.

Borrowing

The Authority's debt position was unchanged in Q2 2024/25, total debt remaining at £8,922k.

	2024/25 Original Estimate (£000's)	Position as at 30 Sept 2024 (£000's)
Debt	8,922	8,922

Investment Portfolio

The Authority held investments totalling £17.23m as at 30 September 2024.

At the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on the 7 November 2024, MPC voted to reduce Bank Rate to 4.75%.

The three fixed term deposits totalling £7m invested on the 12 June 2024 for the duration of six months each will mature on the 12 December 2024. In other to maximise returns and line with our investment strategy, an additional £3m was invested in the call account at the end of Q2 making the total amount held in the call account a sum of £10.23m as at 30 September 2024.

The Authority continues to closely monitor liquidity needs and invests to provide flexibility where needed.

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The budget for interest earnings for 2024/25 is £467,000. With the investments placed, as outlined above, the estimated total return in 2024/25 is £737k

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

It is a statutory duty for the Authority to determine and keep under review its affordable borrowing limits. During the quarter ended 30 September 2024, the Authority has complied with the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2024/25. The Head of Finance and Procurement reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with these indicators. All treasury management operations have also been conducted in full compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices.

Treasury Indicators	2024/25 Budget (£000's)	30 Sept 2024 Actual (£000's)	Estimated Outturn 2024/25 (£000's
Authorised Limit for external debt	16,535	16,535	16,535
Operational boundary for external debt	14,535	14,535	14,535
Gross external debt	8,922	8,922	8,922

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing	30 Sept 2024 Actual (£000's)
Under 12 months	394

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

12 months to 24 months	0
24 Months to 5 Years	597
5 Years to 10 years	3,581
10 Years to 20 Years	1,350
20 Years to 30 Years	3,000
Total	**8,922**

Prudential Indicators	2024/25 Budget (£000's)	30 Sept 2024 Actual (£000's)	Estimated Outturn 2024/25 (£000's)
Capital expenditure	9,003	1,911	7,727
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	9,535	9,535	9,155
Annual change in CFR	(550)	(550)	(550)
In-year borrowing requirement	0	0	0
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	1.71%	1.71%	1.71%

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE	MANAGMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	04 DECEMBER 2024
SUBJECT	SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME – PROPOSED ROADMAP
LEAD OFFICER	PAUL BROOKS, HEAD OF ASSETS
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR RACHELLE SHEPHERD DUBEY, STRATEGIC ASSETS AND SUSTAINABILITY LEAD
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	TO NOTE

1.   **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1   This report is to request Management Committee note the proposed Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) Sustainability Programme Roadmap. The roadmap is a DRAFT, un-resourced action plan that was introduced in the Authority's Sustainability Strategy 2024-2029 as agreed by the Management Committee (MC) on 08 October 2024 (Minute reference 27).

1.2   RBFRS recognizes the climate emergency and the social and economic issues that are creating an impact both globally and locally which culminated in the production of the sustainability strategy. To align the strategy with tangible goals, a sustainability roadmap was produced to provide an action plan which could be further developed into a programme of works.

1.3   During the development of the sustainability strategy, the RBFRS Senior Leadership Team acknowledged that committing to a roadmap or action plan that is not appropriately resourced would inevitably lead to failure in delivery. Therefore, the SLT directed that the roadmap was to be omitted from the

strategy and would be best managed as part of a wider sustainability programme. Further, formally standing up such a complex programme will require much work, which has yet to be forward planned. Notwithstanding this, the Fire Authority Chair requested at the MC that an overview be provided on the proposed programme roadmap as soon as practicable.

1.4 The roadmap is led by the strategy which is in turn aligned with the corporate vision, and it supports the aims and key objectives of the organisation. More specifically it supports one of the Fire Authority's strategic commitments namely:

Sustainability: We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That Management Committee:

2.1 **NOTE** the proposed RBFRS Sustainability Programme Roadmap.

2.2 **NOTE** additional resources will be required to develop and deliver the programme (to be articulated in a future paper).

3. **REPORT**

3.1 The sustainability programme roadmap identifies three phases:

Phase 1 – Reflection and short term. Actions to date and activities already resourced and in progress.

Phase 2 – Near to medium term. Proposed actions and activities over 1 to 4 years.

Phase 3 – Long term. Ambitions for 5 years and beyond.

3.2 Within the above timescales there are five proposed project delivery streams that are listed below and outlined in **Table 1**, and covered in more detail in Appendix A.

- Assets (Estates and Fleet)
- Procurement
- Climate and environment
- Behaviours and culture
- Reporting and leadership

Table 1 – Proposed RBFRS Sustainability Programme project delivery streams.

Project stream	Overview	Additional resource
Assets (Estates, Fleet & Equipment, and Supplies)	The estates project is the most resourced of the programme. The actions which sit under the category are primarily budgeted within the Strategic Asset Investment Framework where budget and funding has already been allocated. The key deliverable of this project steam is to reduce carbon. This is already being undertaken with projects such as the PSDS projects, LED lighting upgrades and transitioning some of our fleet to electric.	To deliver further actions under this project stream there would be a requirement for additional budget for external assistance with carbon monitoring and reporting as well as sufficient resource to deliver additional projects aside from the SAIF as well as endorsement and action from Senior Leadership.
Procurement	The Procurement element of the programme is vital in reducing our Scope 3 emissions and ensuring that we are procurement our contracts and projects through sustainably responsible supply chains. It is recommended that we introduce a sustainable procurement strategy which will capture the deliverables. There would be a high amount of education and training to be undertaken for the strategy/ policy to be credible. Activities surrounding the new procurement act have already been accounted for and will be rolled out with a stronger emphasis on sustainability.	Procurement is already an over committed department, so there would be a requirement for external support to develop and roll out a strategy. In the interim, the new procurement act will help to support more sustainable procurement by focusing on a higher social value of 10%.
Climate and Environment	The Climate and environmental actions within the programme are already embedded within the current prevention and protection processes. The work that is currently undertaken surrounding education within the community on wildfires and	Currently the contaminants working group focuses on the effects of contaminants from a personnel perspective. In the future, this would need to be expanded to consider the effects on contaminants on the environment as well. In

Project stream	Overview	Additional resource
	flooding covers the increase in awareness on the impacts that climate change is having on the service.	addition, environmental protection and climate change should be added to existing boards / groups to introduce the evaluation of impact to existing conversations.
Behaviours and Culture	The behavioural projects within the programme are crucial to the success of both the programme and the sustainability strategy. People are at the heart of RBFRS and without buy in and engagement from staff we cannot effectively reduce our personal impact of the environment and economy. Currently there are several existing platforms and processes in place that can be utilised to introduce training on sustainability and carbon literacy. Providing staff with effective education on topics such as responsible consumption, environmental guardianship and sustainable development will help to empower decision making and introduce effective change.	There will be a requirement for additional support form external providers to set up a training procedure or course for staff to attend and work through. A designated training budget will be needed to facilitate this. Once staff are fully competent in this area, learning material can be filtered through to community talks and engagement.
Reporting and Leadership	This project stream supports our collaboration objective and seeks to standardise sustainability across the blue light and public sector. Governance and leadership focusses on leading the conversation by sharing materials, findings, attending relevant conferences and events as well as hosting our own.	The additional resource required for this project will be about buy-in from Senior Leadership, increased partnership within the sector and filtering objectives down through management layers to embed sustainability within the Service.

3.3   It is anticipated that RBFRS will have to procure the services of an external specialist consultancy to support the development, planning and delivery of the sustainability programme delivery.

4.   CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

4.1   **Sustainability**. We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

4.2   **People**. We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

5.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no immediate financial implications committed to within the programme brief other than that associated with the SAIF. Where practicable, the aim is to manage inflationary risk within the financial headroom of the SAIF and revenue budgets. There is a budget of £2m set aside in the SAIF in year 5, the allocation of this is not currently confirmed, depending on the requirements identified by the service going forward this budget may be available for elements of the programme delivery.

6.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are currently no legal implications associated with this report, however it should be noted that the government are currently reviewing legislation surrounding sustainability and carbon in the public sector which may influence the need for organisational change and resource commitment.
.
7.   EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1   We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) for all our employees and the wider community. An equality impact assessment has been raised to cover the development and implementation of both the strategy and the programme. EDI has been and will continue to be, a core part of the development of every sustainability related initiative.

8.   RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1   If RFBRS does have an appropriate strategy in place for sustainability and a credible action plan, there is a risk of not meeting UK Government and internationally agreed targets.

9. **CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

9.1   Opportunities using collaboration with partners and other FRS to develop and deliver sustainability initiatives will always be explored and exploited if beneficial.

10. **PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

10.1   The Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Head of Finance and Procurement were consulted during preparation of this report.

10.2   The RBFA Lead Member for Strategic Assets and Monitoring Officer were consulted during preparation of this report.

11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1   RBFRS Sustainability Strategy 2024-2029 – Management Committee Agenda and Minutes 8 October 2024.

12. **APPENDICES**

12.1   RBFRS Sustainability Programme Roadmap – Appendix A

13. **CONTACT DETAILS**

13.1   Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (Estates, Fleet & Equipment), brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk

13.2   Sophie Fox, Sustainability Co-ordinator, foxs@rbfrs.co.uk

APPENDIX A – RBFRS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME ROADMAP v1.0

Caveat: This document is an extract from a more detailed active resource and does <u>not</u> represent an agreed and funded programme of activities for RBFRS, nor does it have a start line; it is representing actions that have been completed, are in progress, or could be initiated subject to the RBFRS programme management governance process.

Project stream: Assets (Estates and Fleet)

Strategy theme: Decarbonisation

Departments: Facilities, Capital Projects, Fleet and Equipment, Supplies

Actions to date or ongoing

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced Y/N	Progress
A1	Initial discussions around recycling and food waste with crews.	Waste Management	Key stakeholders have hosted an initial discussion on recycling and food waste segregation with next steps agreed and actions assigned.	Introduce the waste management system and policy for the service. When rolling this out, discussions to be held with station staff.	Waste management contract to be revisited. Discussions to be picked up in regular station visits with facilities	Y	In progress
A2	All staff to work with capital projects to support carbon reduction initiatives	Carbon Reduction	Increased input and support of carbon reduction initiatives for capital projects.	All capital projects and smaller revenue projects to consider sustainability. This may be through sustainable procurement, innovative technologies, sustainable materials or asset longevity.	Sustainability impact assessments to be introduced for projects. Alternatively introduce a reporting system to identify where projects/ initiatives are considering sustainability.	Y	In progress
A3	Install loft insulation at retained sites	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in carbon footprint and electricity outputs.	Loft insulation in available loft spaces	Resourced by facilities maintenance team	Y	Completed

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced Y/N	Progress
A4	Boiler replacement and continuation of building fabric improvements.	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in electricity/gas usage on as seen in utilities bills	Consider further funding opportunities in the future. Look at the remaining boilers and the tech that can be introduced to create more efficient boilers if total replacement is not an option.	Budget required - introduced into facilities PPM for boiler replacement. Or capital project to be rolled out across the estate. Funding opportunities to be considered.	Y	Part 1 in progress
A5	Review of current waste streams and contracts.	Waste Management	Create an options paper and business case by gathering an understanding of number of additional waste bins to be purchased, reduction of others and options for repurpose.	Waste contract to be reviewed and updated in line with the new recycling regulations.	Contract to be renewed.	Y	In Progress
A6	Recycling toner cartridges	Waste Management	Reduction of toner going to landfill measured through waste notes		Process or contract.	Y	Completed
A7	Investigate better recycling facilities and waste segregation with our current Waste Contractor to also include waste food recycling across all sites.	Waste Management	Reduction in overall waste and reflected in auditable waste notes.	Waste contract initiative.	Waste contract initiative.	Y	In progress
A8	Asset reviews and implementation of e-vehicles where possible	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in carbon footprint of assets and vehicles	Regularly review fleet/ assets and assess any sustainable technologies that may be available for implementation.	Already considered in PAMS, SAIF, Fleet and Equipment Strategy.	Y	Completed

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced Y/N	Progress
A9	Solar research to reduce non-renewable energy usage	Carbon Reduction	Research into business case funding for solar panel project	Business case submitted within the SAIF.	Solar PV project has already been allocated funding and has been resourced within the SAIF. delivery sits with Sustainability Coordinator.	Y	In progress

Summary of additional resource required

- Additional budget for boiler replacement / boiler efficiency measures
- Introduction of new reporting or assessment process for staff

Priority tasks

- Waste management contract update and rollout
- Updating processes

Potential progress for years 1 to 4

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
A10	Carbon check-in	Carbon Reduction	Carbon emissions report set for checking footprint	Conduct a carbon assessment of the estate to measure progress.	External Surveyor	N	Not started
A11	Increased awareness of reduced lighting options in HQ & light dimmers	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in electricity/gas usage on as seen in utilities bills	Upgrade to LED - PIR as standard in specific areas such as corridors, offices, bathrooms etc. Introduce signage to encourage staff to consider turning off lights.	Resourced within the SAIF	Y	In progress

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
A12	Reduce heating usage where possible to reduce use of gas	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in gas utility bills	Assess the heating on all sites and looking at introducing a heating strategy and more effective controls	Will require external resources to understand the current condition of boilers/ heating systems on the estates and where efficiencies can be realized.	N	Not started
A13	Install double / triple glazing	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in carbon footprint and electricity outputs	Review estate to understand if there are remaining sites without double glazing.	Survey required to understand the conditions of the windows on the estate - upgrades to be considered within refurbishment projects.	N	Not started
A14	Install solar PV arrays and batteries	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in carbon footprint and electricity outputs	Solar PV Project 2025/2026	Resourced within the SAIF	Y	In progress
A15	20% reduction in carbon emissions	Carbon Reduction	Reduced carbon outputs by 20% since 2019 review	requires data to be reviewed to understand if this is achievable	Annual evaluation	N	Not started
A16	Functional review of all fleet vehicles and convert to sustainable vehicles where appropriate	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in non-renewable fuel-based vehicles where possible		Pool cars and some of the fleet are already EV in line with Fleet and Equipment Strategy	Y	In progress
A17	Development of carbon reduction strategy and actions	Carbon Reduction	Development of strategy for carbon reduction and plan	5-year reduction plan to link with the projects being delivered in the SAIF	Some external resources required for technical assurance	N	Not started
A18	Governance and reporting in place and functioning for government commitments and scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions	Carbon Reduction	Creation of a governance structure supported by the sustainability strategy including reporting deliverables.	Include Scope 1,2 and 3 emission reporting into our annual report and fit into the existing structure developed.	Reporting capability	Y	In progress

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
A19	Energy efficient LED lighting project	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in carbon footprint and electricity outputs	Upgrade all remaining sites to LED	In progress- resourced within the SAIF	Y	In progress
A20	Monitoring of waste input and output	Waste Management	Reduction is overall waste in waste notes	Include waste reporting within the new waste contract for the service to include in wider reports and keep track of waste trends	Resourced within waste contract renewal	Y	In progress
A21	Reduce non-segregated waste bins	Waste Management	Reduce number of general waste bins	covered within the waste contract	Resourced within waste contract renewal	Y	In progress
A22	In partnership with a more sustainable energy company	Carbon Reduction	Reduction of non-renewable power sources	When contracts are due for renewal ensure we are looking at sustainable sources.	Heads of department to endorse sustainable choices and companies. Procurement to assist with Tender processes and contract awards	Y	In progress
A23	Introduction of recycling bins at all sites for segregation of waste	Waste Management	Reduction is overall waste in waste notes	Waste contract initiative	Waste contract initiative	Y	In progress
A24	Create initiatives such as travel plans at all sites and the increase in flexible working from home or nearest stations	Carbon Reduction	Reduction in electricity/gas usage on as seen in utilities bills	Travel plans to be created at Whitley Wood as part of BREEAM requirement. This will be used as the template for the rest of the travel plans.	To be rolled out across all sites. work collaboratively with site users, sustainability coordinator and potentially health and wellbeing officer.	N	Not started
A25	Purchase and make available segregated waste bins and develop waste collection	Waste Management	Increase number of segregated waste bins to improve recycling options	waste contract initiative	waste contract initiative	Y	In progress

Serial	Action	Project / initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
	contract for the waste streams (paper, metal, cardboard, food etc.)						
A26	Development of an all staff and organizational wide waste recycling scheme	Waste Management	Creation of waste and recycling scheme	Waste Contract initiative	Waste Contract initiative	Y	In progress
A27	Introduce EV Charging Infrastructure at all sites where it is reasonably practicable to do so.	Carbon Reduction	Review demand at all sites and implement EV charging infrastructure - explore different options for implementing this effectively such as solar car park spaces	Resourced within the SAIF	Resourced within the SAIF	Y	Not started

Summary of additional resource required

- Budget allowance for external surveys
- Introduce robust reporting system for annual progress updates
- Endorsement from Senior management: senior management to receive carbon literacy training to encourage informed decision making and leadership
- Travel plans for each site – would require resource from additional personnel

Priority projects

- Waste management contract to be re-written to incorporate goals strategy success criteria
- Robust monitoring and reporting system

Ambition for 5 years and beyond

- 50% reduction in carbon emissions check point 2040
- Reach Net Zero in line with Government commitments (currently 2050).
- Reach net positive by 2060
- Funding opportunities won and gained through Sustainability Strategy and action plan
- Addition of more effective & accurate air conditioning system within head office
- Retrofitting buildings with heat pumps and alternatives energy sources
- A contract set up and implemented for commercial white goods with a warranty and maintenance schedule also in place to negate the need to constantly replace the current domestic white goods which have a short life span and no warranty due to being placed in a commercial premise.
- Food waste collections where possible from the local authority and consider composting at stations where possible
- Increase in sustainable building methods, with a priority on sustainable building as opposed to cost
- Increase HQ capacity for EV-charging points
- A sustainable alternative for aircon and ventilation that works to lower our carbon footprint and is environmentally friendly, especially for station gyms that can be unbearable to use in warmer weather
- Use of schemes to support staff purchasing hybrid/plug-in hybrid/electric vehicles

Project Stream: Procurement

Strategy theme: Consumption reduction

Departments: Procurement

Actions to date / ongoing

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
P1	Supporting colleagues in incorporating relevant initiative within the procurement process	Sustainable Procurement	Course or training on sustainable procurement to support colleagues.	Sustainable procurement initiative	Sustainable procurement initiative	Y	In progress
P2	Procurement minimizing use of paper and printing - online contracts	Sustainable procurement	Reduction of paper and printing at HQ	Action to date	already resourced	Y	Complete

1-4 Year progress

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
P3	Develop sustainable procurement strategy	Sustainable Procurement	Strategy developed to procure in a more sustainable manner	Introduction of 10% social value question in all tenders. Map our social value questions against priorities within our strategy to ensure we are procuring services in line with our values.	procurement to review processes and look at how we can introduce more sustainable action. https://greenly.earth/en-gb/blog/company-guide/why-is-sustainable-procurement-a-competitive-advantage	N	Not started
P4	Develop sustainable procurement criteria	Sustainable Procurement	Set of criteria that can be used for procurements	UK Government guides: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sustainable-procurement-the-government-buying-standards-gbs	None anticipated, but to be defined by Procurement.	N	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
				https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sustainable-procurement-tools			
P5	Develop sustainable procurement training for all training and buying managers	Sustainable Procurement	Procurement training to incorporate sustainable options for all staff	All procurement staff and managers attend courses in sustainable procurement and introduce this into departmental practices.	External support with training course	N	Not started
P6	Test run sustainable procurement criteria with a trained manager on small procurement	Sustainable Procurement	Successfully run a single procurement with the sustainable criteria	Sustainable procurement initiative	look at forward plan for procurement and choose project to trial new criteria	N	Not started
P7	Update sustainable procurement criteria from feedback of use	Sustainable Procurement	Make the criteria more efficient and user friendly	Sustainable procurement initiative	Sustainable procurement imitative	N	Not started
P8	Test run sustainable procurement criteria with a trained manager on a large tender	Sustainable Procurement	Successfully run a single procurement with the sustainable criteria on a large tender	Sustainable procurement initiative	Sustainable procurement initiative	N	Nost started
P9	New procurement act being adhered to with greater emphasis on sustainability	Sustainable procurement	More procurements run with sustainable criteria.	New procurement act to be enforced 2025	Procurement is already taking action to ensure we are aligned with the new regulations, and we are emphasizing the need to put a higher weighting on social value and sustainability.	Y	In progress

Summary of additional resource

- Procurement department to receive additional training on sustainable procurement
- Sustainable procurement strategy to be developed
- Provide training to all departments running Tenders to align with sustainable procurement strategy

Priority initiatives

- Sustainable procurement strategy

Ambitions for 5 years and beyond

- Include sustainable procurement criteria use on all small tenders
- Include sustainable procurement criteria use on all large tenders
- Include sustainable procurement criteria for sustainability within all procurement exercises
- Review sustainable procurement criteria and process alongside best practice and update to strategy
- Ensure end products, items and services are recyclable, made from recycled materials and are more sustainable

Project stream: Climate and Environment

Strategy Theme: Guardianship

Relevant Departments: Prevention and protection, CRMP, Service Delivery

Actions to date / ongoing

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
C1	Collate data on wildfires and other outdoor deliberate arson fires to inform resource requirements	Environmental Guardianship	Further embed talks and learning on wildfires, monitor the call outs to these fire types and measure trends	Data is already gathered and used to inform the community risk management plan.		Y	In progress

Potential years 1 to 4 progress

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
C2	Climate change risk recognised, and mitigation measures raised at an operational level	Climate resilience	Mapping of climate change risks being added to operational level.	Capture data on incidents that directly relate to climate change and introduce this to existing board such as OLAB to be discussed and understand the frequency of events. Findings will continue to be fed into the CRMP.	Introduce topic to existing board Data gathering on issues related to climate change. Data on incidents is already being recorded, climate change related incidents can then be captured separately.	Y	Not started
C3	Continuation of the Contaminants Project to track waste and impact to the environment	Environmental Guardianship	Continuation of contaminants project and measured reduction in contaminants.	Introduced an environmental element into existing contaminants work	Review contaminants information - add sustainability into the agenda for meetings and working group	Y	Not started

Summary of additional resource required

- Introduce the topic of sustainability and environment to existing boards and channels to be considered and filtered down to various project streams

Priority projects

- Review our contaminants strategy and include environmental protection elements

Project stream: Behaviour and Culture

Strategy theme: Our People & Consumption Reduction

Relevant Departments: Prevention & Protection, all

Actions to date / ongoing

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
B1	Community talks around wildfires and water and road safety	Sustainable Learning and development	Each fire station has carried out a community talk on sustainability within a year.	The topic of sustainability to be introduced into community talks and education. Training for station staff will need to be held and a criterion to be produced for learning.	External assistance with training resources	Y	In progress
B2	Paper-free where possible	Responsible Consumption	Try to reduce paper consumption, be paperless as far as possible, monitor stationery & ordering so over ordering, duplicates & excessive stock are kept to a working minimum and electronic filing projects	Review stationery and paper contracts and see if we can identify the possibility for reduction	departments to review usage vs standard requirements.	Y	In progress
B3	Car sharing to events & to work where possible and introduction of a car share incentive	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in carbon footprint of staff		Create a platform for car sharing, Travels plans for each site and make pool cars accessible for staff.	Y	In progress
B4	Current reduction in light usage at workshops, opting for natural light over electrical lighting	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in electricity/gas usage on as seen in utilities bills	educate staff on the subject and create incentives for station staff for the most energy reduction.	behavioral change	Y	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
B5	Implementing suitable building and site initiatives, as well as sustainable methods of building and refurbishment	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in carbon footprint of buildings and capital projects	consider sustainable building approaches, materials and technologies in all capital projects. Consider BREEAM certification or other certification for refurbs as well as new buildings.	multi - disciplinary team appointed to projects	N	Only in progress at Whitley Wood training center
B6	To reduce paper and printing, introduce an online photo consent system rather than printing paper forms	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in consumption of paper through online use of forms and storage	Using SharePoint and 365, using online forms and	further training required to utilize this more efficiently	Y	Not started
B7	Where possible recycle non-essential parts and items of equipment etc.	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in overall waste in waste notes	Waste contract initiative	Waste contract initiative	Y	In progress
B8	Researching sustainable alternatives such as lower power IT equipment	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in electricity/gas usage on as seen in utilities bills	Action to date	No additional resources - this is ongoing within the IT team	Y	

Potential years 1 to 4 progress

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
B9	CPD for staff on carbon literacy and climate impacts	Sustainable Learning and development	CPD offered in certified training	Introduce a Carbon literate training course, starting with core staff members and rolling out across the service.	External carbon literate training.	N	Not started
B12	Screens placed in stations to reduce paper where possible	Responsible Consumption	Reduction of paper and printing at stations	Look at alternative ways to present information to site users. Address the	Current process to be reviewed - sits with comms, business,	N	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
				Resources that we are printing and identify if there are any changes that can be made.	support and HR. This should be done with existing resources IE throughout current screens and IT instead of introducing more electrical capacity.		
B13	Reduction of physical financial archiving to reduce carbon cost	Responsible Consumption	Reduction in cost from physical archives (rent, utilities etc.).	Look at the current archiving requirements and what we are currently paying - is there an alternative for backing up information.	Additional resource required to digitalize Archive records and research an appropriate system to back up electronic files - May already be in place with IT but ongoing job.	N	Not started

Summary of additional resource required

- Education and training to be provided to all staff to inform community talks
- Further training to utilise SharePoint more effectively and further reduce the need for printing resources
- Utilse SharePoint as a sharing platform to encourage car sharing
- Allow budget and resource within capital project for sustainable building principle such as BREEAM, LEED
- Digitization of physical archive records

Priority projects

- Educating staff on sustainability and carbon literacy
- Improving efficiency for the use of SharePoint

Ambition beyond 5 years

- Collaborate with Local Authorities on suitable projects, conferences and events
- Overall reduction in waste due to the prevention of as a culture to reduce the overall waste and consumption.
- Initial conference with all staff to introduce the strategy, themes and roadmap including future initiative suggestions, in house training, attendance at relevant conferences
- Environmental awareness materials on recycling such as posters, posts in the Siren etc.
- Overall increase in knowledge within communities to educate and prevent causes of climate change, wildfires and flooding.
- Attending training and educational courses to develop understanding of climate impacts on our environment
- Set up service initiatives around recycling to develop the culture of recycling and responsible consumption
- Offer vegetarian and vegan lunch options as a sustainable alternative.

Project Stream: Governance and leadership

Strategy Theme: Our People

Actions to date/ ongoing

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
G1	Alignment of sustainability strategy with ongoing work within Protection, Prevention and Response.	Strategy Development	Host a workshop to walk through strategy and align projects to prevent duplication of effort.	Host meeting with operational departments to align current activities with strategies.	Staff to attend training to understand the content of the strategy and frequent meetings required to update objectives and align delivery.	N	
G2	Increase publicity of RBFRS Guardianship, internally and externally of our work in this area	Collaboration and Leadership	We use social media to promote safety messaging and organize media interviews where possible.	utilize Linked and share more success stories. engage with different audiences and reach out through the growth made in this setting.	Comms to produce more regular content	N	
G3	Workshops focusing on equality of access from underrepresented communities	Sustainability collaboration	Stations and crews hosting equality workshops for the local community	Covered under EDI Coordinator	Covered under EDI Coordinator work stream	Y	

Potential years 1 to 4 progress

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
G4	Development of sustainability engagement strategy and actions including forums, station activity with communities and others	Collaboration and Leadership	A draft sustainability engagement strategy is created and implemented.	Strategy release to be followed up with effective engagement plan to ensure delivery is successful	Engagement strategy to be produced in comms plan format. This needs to be a well-thought-out document with effective content following the release of the strategy.	Y	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
G5	Creation of governance and reporting in to support the Our People theme and sustainable engagement strategy	Collaboration and Leadership	Creation of a governance structure supported by the sustainability strategy including grass roots forum.	Create a platform on siren which clearly shows the structure of boards, forums and reporting. Create internal board and reporting format. Create a Sustainability forum.	Buy in from staff	Y	Not started
G6	Initial collaboration with Thames Valley partners	Sustainability collaboration	RBFRS initiated and host a meeting discussing sustainable projects and strategy with peers in Thames Valley.	Present the strategy and our progress to Thames Valley partners in an interactive session - Book conference center.	External assistance required to run the session.	N	Not started
G7	Set up a Sustainability Forum	Collaboration and Leadership	Creation of a forum for staff to discuss topics and put forward initiatives.		Sustainability Coordinator/ Head of Service to run the sessions and keep up with forum admin	Y	Not started
G8	Attend sustainability events	Collaboration and Leadership	Increased opportunity for staff to attend sustainability events and conferences for CPD	Keeping up to date with events and learning opportunities for staff.	Platform to share Sustainability related events and keep staff up to date with opportunities	Y	In progress
G9	Host conferences/seminars/knowledge sharing events	Collaboration and Leadership	RBFRS to host an initial conference on a select topic, then to develop to regular hosted events and seminars.	Na	External consultants required to support the running of conferences and events. Internal resources from business support will also be required to facilitate events.	N	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
G10	Leading the conversation within the Fire and Rescue Sector	Collaboration and Leadership	Target to lead the conversation within the Fire and Rescue Sector by actioning projects to directly support the strategy and talking about it.	Update other fire and rescue services with our progress in the FRS sustainability forum. Create a sharing platform for all services to share ideas and project updates.	Regular updates from the sustainability Coordinator.	Y	In Progress
G11	Governance and reporting developed to support the guardianship theme and align with Protection, Prevention and Response strategies.	Governance Development	Review outputs and governance for both sustainability and PPE and host a workshop to walk through and align governance sessions to prevent duplication of effort.			Y	Not started
G12	Governance and reporting in place and functioning for all waste streams to build towards scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions reporting	Governance Development	Gather data through structured governance reporting to be prepared for governmental reporting requests on scope 1, 2 and 3			N	Not started
G13	New improvement initiatives on how we can better help support the environment & sustainability with quarterly initiatives such as grow your own, turning off lights, walking and cycling schemes	Collaboration and Leadership	Creation of quarterly initiatives based on the sustainability engagement strategy.	Behavioral change project	Introduce learning materials, competitions, promotion of schemes and incentives	Y	Not started

Serial	Action	Project / Initiative	Success criteria	Comments	Resource required	Resourced	Progress
G14	Alignment of sustainability of the station plans with sustainability strategy	Sustainability collaboration	Station and crew plans to align with themes from sustainability strategy.	To be fed from senior management into the station plans that are provided to SMs and the watches	Agenda item to revisit the content of the plans and introduce sustainability initiatives to the targets.	N	Not started

Summary of resources required

- Training sessions to align existing department objectives to incorporate sustainability
- Increase of external comms
- Sustainability Strategy engagement plan, internal comms
- Increase collaboration on sustainability with blue light partners
- Set up governance and reporting structure for each strategy theme
- Stations and departments to develop their own sustainability related goals based on personal importance and impact

Priority projects

- Robust Governance and reporting structures for capturing progress and guiding decision making

5 years and beyond

- Leading the conversation through collaboration in the Blue Light sector
- Collaborate with Local Authorities on suitable projects, conferences and events

Acronyms

SAIF – Strategic Asset Investment Framework

PAMS – Property Asset Management Strategy (Estate Strategy)

PV – Photo voltaic

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	04 DECEMBER 2024
SUBJECT	QUARTER TWO APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 14, 15 & 16
LEAD OFFICER	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 two performance with a supporting narrative on the whole-time duty system, on-call duty system, and combined appliance availability.

1.2 Whole-time availability across the quarter was 95.2% against a target of 97.4%. This is a 2.5% decrease in comparison to Q1.

1.3 On-call appliance availability through the quarter was 35.5% against a target of 50%. This represents a 1.4% increase in comparison to Q1.

1.4 Baseline provision of 14 or more pumping appliances, combined whole-time and on-call, was 70.7% against a target of 100%. This is a 20.5% reduction in performance compared to the 91.2% recorded in Q1. *[Performance against this measure is calculated based on whole shifts rather than minutes as with whole-time appliance availability]*.

1.5 Against a corporate measure target of 75% of emergency incidents attended in 10 minutes, the Service achieved 68.5%.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

2.1 **NOTE** the 2024/25 quarter two performance of **95.2%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances, in line with Corporate Measure 14[1].

2.2 **NOTE** the 2024/25 quarter two overall on-call appliance availability performance of **35.5%,** in line with Corporate Measure 15[2].

2.3   **NOTE** the 2024/25 quarter two performance of **70.7%** of shifts where 14 or more pumping appliances were available**,** in line with Corporate Measure 16[3].

3.   REPORT

Response Standard:

3.1   The Response Standard during this period was below the target of 75%, at 68.5% of all incidents reached within 10 minutes of time of first emergency call being answered. This is a reduction from the Q1 performance of 74.7% and below the Q2 performance from the previous year of 72.9%.

3.2   The number of incidents in Q2, 2103, was 9% higher than the 1931 recorded in the previous quarter, which is consistent with the traditionally higher demand experienced during the summer months. The table below highlights both the lower incident demand at night, and the superior performance against the response standard. The lower incident demand and reduced traffic volume overnight can positively impact both call handling and travel times:

Q2 2024	Average Incidents per hour	Response Standard Performance
Day	1.2	65.52%
Night	0.8	70.96%

Incident rates for day vs night including corresponding response performance.

3.3   The Response Standard is made up of 3 constituent parts, the **call handling time,** the **turnout time**, and the **travel time**, with targets of 90 seconds each for call handling and turnout times, and seven minutes for travel time to make up the total 10-minute target.

3.4   The Authority, when setting the response standard, knew it was a stretching and ambitious target to reach 75% of incidents within 10-minutes because the measure is highly sensitive to incident volume and profile, and many rural parts of the county cannot be reached within the target seven minutes of travel time.

3.5   Call handling performance was little changed from Q2 but remained below target throughout the quarter. This will have been partially due to the relatively high call volumes that we see over the summer period in Q2. Spate conditions due to flooding meant call volumes in September were particularly high, and on a par with the five-year maximum recorded for the month. This has had a significant impact on call handling and travel times during that month.

3.6   Worthy of note is the introduction, on 20 September of the change in policy to reduce attendance at automatic fire alarms. Early indicators are that the decision to stop mobilising fire engines to some low and medium risk premises has had a positive impact on call handling times, but a full evaluation will follow.

[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

3.7   To help ensure call handling times are closely monitored, the TVFCS Joint Coordinating Group developed a suite of performance measures for control, which include a more detailed breakdown of call handling performance. This work has already enhanced our understanding of call handling performance and is helping us to understand trends with respect to call handling times by incident type.

3.8   Our turnout times have remained good and consistent over recent years. They continue to be monitored internally to ensure any fluctuations in performance are appropriately managed.

3.9   Much of the reduction in performance against the response standard compared to Q1 can be attributed to appliance travel times, which dropped off significantly because of the increase in call volumes that are associated with the summer months in Q2. Unusually, September recorded higher incident numbers than July or August as a result of demand driven by spate flooding conditions.

3.10   The degradation of appliances is discussed below in more detail but it's impact on the response standard is worthy of note here because modelling shows that even with a single appliance degraded, we can see an impact between 0.6% and 4.5%. During Q2 at least one appliance was degraded on 80 occasions – 43% of the 184 shifts in Q2. While modelling for the impact of multiple appliance degradation is highly complex and uncertain, it is reasonable to expect the impact to worsen with increasing numbers.

3.11   Our Response Standard is an ambitious and stretching measure agreed by the Fire Authority and reports from the time the emergency call is received to the time of arrival on scene. For further context, it should be noted that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service was the only fire and rescue service in England to improve its attendance times at primary fires over a ten-year period, improving our average speed of response by 22 seconds, as reported in 2022/23. All other fire and rescue services saw increased attendance times in the same period. From Home Office data for the 2023/24, we continue to perform above the average for England for most fire incident types in terms of attendance times.

3.12   We will continue to closely monitor and manage our performance against the Response Standard, together with longer-term trends in our incident profile and demand. In addition to the detailed work on call handling, we will continuously review the management of our resources via our internal Response Resourcing Group to ensure we are optimising our ability to respond as quickly as possible and explore opportunities in the longer-term that would support this objective.

[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

Whole-time Duty System Appliance Availability

3.13 This section of the report provides the 2024/25 quarter two performance update against Corporate Measure 14, which is the *percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability.* Overall availability for the quarter was 95.2% against a target of 97.4%.

3.14 RBFRS employ a lean operating model, including the Whole-time Duty System (WDS) provision. 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.

3.15 Very high demand for leave during the summer months is a regular feature of Q2 that impacts staffing and reduces the availability of appliances and this year was no exception. That reduction was amplified as result of a corresponding increase in absence due to ill health. Disappointingly, the downward trend in sickness absence was reversed, with 8.2% of station-based staff working time lost in Q2, compared with 5.8% in Q1. This sickness, combined with the high demand for leave and limited uptake for PAOT resulted in one or more appliances being degraded during 47 day shifts and 33 night shifts.

3.16 The leaver profile continues to present challenges in maintaining consistent establishment levels across our whole-time duty system. Whole-time leaver numbers during the past three financial years have averaged 36 per annum, or 11% of the establishment. The total number of leavers reduced from 12 in Q1 to four in Q2, substantially lower than the 12 that were predicted. However, when added to the predicted 22 leavers for the rest of the year, the annual total would equal the previous record of 38 leavers during 2022/23.

3.17 While the Service continues to recruit apprentice firefighters to replace leavers, the number of WDS does fluctuate throughout the year, which results in the use of PAOT to cover shortfalls due to sickness and training. The overtime budget is currently forecast to be £586,000 overspent for the year. However, thanks to the Authority's decision to recruit to an additional 10 firefighter posts, the cohort of 18 apprentices that arrived on stations in November should ensure a healthy buffer above establishment. This should reduce the Service's reliance on PAOT to maintain baseline service provision for Q3 onwards.

3.18 By virtue of staff turnover during the past two years, the Service now has a significant proportion (38%) of operational staff in development roles. The training and assessment requirements add further pressure to the management of appliance availability. Service Delivery management continues to work closely with colleagues in learning and development to minimise the impacts of training and development on availability by planning and scheduling courses around other demands.

[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability

3.19 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 15, which sets a target of 50*% of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing).* This measure is being applied across the individual and overall availability of the Service's five on-call appliances. The overall availability for on-call appliances in Q2 was 35.5%, a 1.4% improvement compared with Q1 performance but still 14.5% below target and 2.9% lower than the same period last year.

3.20 The Q2 performance continues to reflect the sensitivity of the on-call system. The table below provides year-on-year availability for the previous two financial years. Notably, since the Covid years, the 50% target for availability has not been met in any quarter, and availability has fluctuated with a low of 33.5% to a high of 46.5%.

Year	Q1.	Q2.	Q3.	Q4.
2024/25	34.1%	35.5%		
2023/24	46.5%	38.4%	33.5%	41.5%
2022/23	44.4%	40.3%	35.9%	41.7%

Year on year comparison

3.21 The table below shows availability performance by quarter for the year-to-date. Performance improved in Q2 at all stations except for Lambourn and Mortimer:

5. Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)					2024/25
Station	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Year to Q2**
Crowthorne	43.2%	**51.7%**			47.5%
Hungerford	38.8	**40.4%**			39.6%
Lambourn	3.7%	**3.3%**			3.5%
Maidenhead	19.0%	**25.7%**			22.4%
Mortimer	65.8%	**56.5%**			61.1%

On Call fire engine availability by station.

3.22 Over the past 18 months, recruitment for the on-call team has been very strong, with 15 new starters, one re-joiner, a new dual contract, and two personnel returning from sabbaticals. This positive recruitment trend is

[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

expected to continue into Q3 of 2024/25, with five new starters confirmed and a re-joiner finalising their return to Lambourn.

3.23   In response to feedback, the service has reviewed the training and development for on-call recruits and is implementing ongoing improvements. These will involve more localised training and a reduction in the time recruits must take off from their primary jobs, resulting in a better work-life balance.

3.24   Crowthorne has seen the most significant increase in availability, rising by 7.5% from Q1 to Q2, and this trend is likely to continue. The increase is attributed to three firefighters moving out of trainee status and becoming part of the critical crew.

3.25   Hungerford has seen an increase in availability in Q2, with one new starter and the return of a firefighter from sabbatical. Work is currently underway to identify a new Watch Manager for the station, as the current one is due to retire early in Q3. This transition may temporarily reduce availability while staffing and crewing for the station are assessed.

3.26   Lambourn has experienced a boost in morale since the appointment of a temporary Watch Manager. Due to current staffing levels, this has had a minimal impact on availability. Looking ahead to Q3, expectations are more optimistic with one new starter and a former firefighter expected to rejoin the station.

3.27   Availability in Maidenhead has improved but remains challenging due to several personnel being on reduced-hours contracts and a large number in development. It is anticipated that six trainee firefighters will join the critical crew by the end of Q4. This should result in a significant improvement in availability from that point forward.

3.28   Mortimer's availability has slightly decreased this quarter due to a key firefighter transitioning to a whole-time position, necessitating changes to their on-call commitments. However, there are positive developments, as the station's newest firefighter is projected to be part of the critical crew by the end of Q3 or the start of Q4.

Combined Pumping Appliance Availability by Shift

3.29   This section of the report provides the 2024/25 quarter two performance update against Corporate Measure 16. This is a new measure introduced this year to assist in monitoring our compliance with our CRMP commitment to ensure a baseline service provision of 14 pumping appliances. It sets a target of 100% for the availability of 14 or more pumping appliances. Overall availability for the quarter was 70.7%, down from 91.2% in Q1.

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[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

3.30   It is worthy of note that On Call appliance availability is only included as contributing to the baseline provision where an entire shift is covered - even a single hour of unavailability will mean that the contribution of On Call appliances are not counted for the entire shift. This explains why WDS availability of 14 appliances is significantly better at 95.2% than availability of 14 appliances combining WDS and On Call, which only reached 70.7%.

3.31   There were 14 WDS appliances available for 104 of the 184 shifts that occurred during Q2 which equates to 57%. When On Call appliances are taken into account for baseline service provision, the number of shifts with 14 or more appliances was 130 out of 184, or 70.7% of the shifts.

3.32   This is a significant reduction when compared to Q1 performance of 91.2%, which can be attributed to high levels of leave associated with the summer months, 16 WDS leavers during Q1 and Q2 combined, and the increase in station-based WDS sickness from 5.8% in Q1 to 8.2% in Q2.

3.33   The table below shows performance against this measure across all shifts and broken down by day and night shifts. It is notable that performance is significantly better for nightshifts, where demand for PAOT is higher and On Call availability is better:

Shift	Total	x14 WDS available	x14+ WDS/OC available	% of shifts with x14+ available
All	184	104	130	70.7%
Day	92	45	56	60.9%
Night	92	59	74	80.4%

Performance against CM16 overall and by day/night.

3.34   It is anticipated that the introduction of P6 from 16 September, combined with the arrival on stations of 18 new apprentices in November will substantially improve service performance against this measure.

3.35   It is also noteworthy that work is due to commence in January to address CRMP Priority Three:: *"…[to] develop our response model to ensure that we are providing the most effective response to incidents with Berkshire, ensuring that it is aligned to risks identified, sustainable and provides value for money."* The intention of P3 is to enhance the service that we deliver, and a significant part of that work will be to make sure that crewing models, ways of working, policies and procedures are all enhanced to ensure we have the right people

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[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
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with the right skills located to optimise our appliance availability and provide the most effective response.

CRMP Priority Six Update

3.36 Because CRMP Priority Six was not introduced until 16 September, it had a limited impact on performance in Q2. A verbal update, focusing on the period up to the end of November, will be given at the Management Committee meeting on 4 December 2024.

4. **CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

4.1 Commitment 3 – Response

We will ensure that our people are trained, and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to support a lean crewing model and to mitigate the effects of vacancies, sickness and absences for training.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Reliance on pre-arranged overtime to maintain appliance availability could lead to conflict with the following two clauses of the Grey Book:

6.1.1 *(25) Employees are free to volunteer to work pre-arranged overtime for no more than twenty-four hours per month, averaged over a six-month period.*

6.1.2 *(26) Pre-arranged overtime will not be used to make up any planned shortfall in the overall staffing levels set out in the fire and rescue authority's Integrated (Community) Risk Management Plan'*

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None identified.

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The provision of sufficient minimum qualified firefighters and appliance availability is listed as a corporate risk under risk 681. It is monitored by the Director of Service Delivery, and, as necessary, treatments are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

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[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

9.   CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

9.1   None identified.

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   None.

11.   APPENDICES

11.1   None.

12.   CONTACT DETAILS

12.1   Katie Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director of Service Delivery
       millsk@rbfrs.co.uk

12.2   Tom Brandon, Area Manager, Response and Resilience
       brandonb@rbfrs.co.uk

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[1] Corporate Measure 14: Percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).
[2] Corporate Measure 15: Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (fire engines).
[3] Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of time that 14 or more pumping appliances are available (fire engines available for whole shifts).

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ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	TVFCS Joint Committee	12.12.24	Bi annual	Note	AM C&P and HF&P	N/A	Part I
Call Handling Contract Tender	TVFCS Joint Committee	12.12.24	Ad-hoc	Note and Recommend	AM C & P	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Proposed Budget	TVFCS Joint Committee	12.12.24	Annual	Note and recommend	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Lease changes	A&GC	30.01.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Contract Regulations	A&GC	30.01.25	Ad-hoc	Note and recommend	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts 23/24	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Agree	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance 22/23 and 23/24	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Gender, Ethnicity and Equality Pay Gap	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Discipline and Complaints Effectiveness 6 month Interim Report	A&GC	30.01.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	10.02.25	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 25/26, Medium Term Financial Plan, SAIF and TVFCS Budget	Management Committee	10.02.25	Annual	Note and recommend	HF&P	Finance Lead	Part I
Culture Plan	Management Committee	10.02.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	DChEx	N/A	Part I
Efficiency and Productivity Plan update	Management Committee	10.02.24	Ad-hoc	Note	ACFO	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	10.02.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
AFA update	Management Committee	10.02.25	Ad-hoc	Note	AM C&P		Part 1

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	10.02.25	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Approve	MO	N/A	Part I
Contract Regulations	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HF&P	N/A	Part I
CRMP 6 evaluation	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Ad-hoc	Note	ACFO	CRMP Lead	Part I
Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Locaol Authorty meetings Consultation	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 25/26, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Finance Lead	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	TVFCS Joint Committee	17.03.25	Bi annual	Note	AM C&P and HF&P	TVFCS Chair	Part I
TVFCS Contingency call handling	TVFCS Joint Committee	17.03.25	Ad-hoc	Note and recommend	AM C&P	TVFCS Chair	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	24.03.25	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	24.03.25	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	24.03.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	Member Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances / Code of Conduct annual consultation results	A&GC	24.03.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	24.03.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Contingency call handling	Management Committee	07.04.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	AM C&P	Cllr Frewer	Part I
Langley Refurbishment	Management Committee	07.04.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability	Part I
PSDS Uplift	Management Committee	07.04.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part II
Corporate Calendar 2025/26	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Member and Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Annual Plan	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Agree	HCS	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 Qualification 1 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 Qualification 2 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

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).

Agenda Item 14

PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 8th October, 2024 at 6.30 pm

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

Members: (*present)	*	Councillor George Blundell	*	Councillor Wendy Griffith
		Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	*	Councillor Dave McElroy
				Councillor Wayne Smith
	*	Councillor Jeff Brooks	*	Councillor Helen Taylor
	*	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	*	Councillor Simon Werner
	*	Councillor Peter Frewer		
	*	Councillor Paul Gittings		

In Attendance: Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Tom Brandon (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
Paul Brooks (Head of Assets, HoA)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Dave Crease (Area Manager, Protection and Protection, AM P&P)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Andy Stockwell (Group Manager Change and Improvement, GM C&I)
Lukasz Wrona (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

Action

33.   PART II MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting on 22 July 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

34.   CONTINGENCY FIRE CREW ARRANGEMENTS: INDUSTRIAL ACTION RESILIENCE

Andy Stockwell, Group Manager Change and Improvement reported the Fire Authority had a legal duty to ensure effective business continuity arrangements

Action

are in place. This included, but was not limited to Industrial Action (National and local) and pandemics.

The report was seeking Management Committee approval to enter a procurement process for a replacement provision. Andy Stockwell discussed the opportunity being taken of a collaborative approach with Thames Valley FRS partners. In referring to figure 1 (page 117) and table 1 (page 118), he stated the report recommended a tender provision based on the 6 fire engines (31 personnel in total), the same that is currently in place. Using the current contract and allowing for inflation this suggests anticipated annual retention costs of circa £205,000.

In relation to the current and anticipated model of retention plus additional deployment costs, Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), reported the market was small and specialist so there are unlikely to be many alternatives, but the tender process will identify the actual models and costs on offer. To provide context he suggested that had the current minimum deployment costs, been applied, in full, for the previous pension related strikes of 2012/13 this could have cost the Authority circa £1.5m. The Authority would need to consider the immediate impacts of the need for deployment such as strike action versus the longer term impacts to budgets.

The Chair moved the recommendations which was seconded by Councillor Peter Frewer. On being put to the vote 8 voted for, and one abstained.

RESOLVED that:

1)   It was agreed to enter into a procurement exercise for the provision of a 3rd party resilience fire crew contract for up to 31 personnel (equivalent of up to 6 fire appliances).

2)   It be noted a collaborative approach to tender and potential contract award will be undertaken with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire County Council Fire Authorities. RBFA will act as the lead contracting authority.

3)   It be noted RBFRS is seeking to ensure continuity of resilience arrangements, as its existing resilience contract comes to an end and cannot be extended, by seeking a new contract to be in place by no later than April 2025. Should collaborative partners withdraw from the project, the tender process is designed to enable RBFA to continue as a single entity.

4)   It be noted RBFRS intends to request approval of contract award, following a full procurement process, at the Management Committee meeting on 10th February 2025.

35.   THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL - CONTINGENCY CALL HANDLING TENDER

Action

Mark Arkwell, DCFO reported he was seeking Management Committee approval to enter into a tender for the provision of a Contingency Call Handling Service. The contract was similar to the existing one which was due to expire in April 2025. Costs would be shared with Thames Valley FRS partners via the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) revenue budget.

The Chair moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

RESOLVED that it be agreed to tender for provision of a Contingency Call Handling Service and related services for Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

(The meeting concluded at 19:51)

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

COMMITTEE	**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
DATE OF MEETING	**04 DECEMBER 2024**
SUBJECT	**DECARBONISATION PHASE ONE UPDATE**
LEAD OFFICER	**PAUL BROOKS, HEAD OF ASSETS**
LEAD MEMBER	**COUNCILLOR SHEPHERD-DUBEY, STRATEGIC ASSSETS AND SUSTAINABILITY LEAD**
EXEMPT INFORMATION	**PART II**
ACTION	**TO NOTE**

1.   **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1   The Authority is committed to reducing the impact of the organisation's operations on the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. Strategic planning has been informed following the production of an estate heat decarbonisation plan using the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) grant in 2023. This plan identified five sites eligible for central Government support and subsequently led to a successful funding application of £927,845 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3c, confirmed in February 2024.

1.2   The PSDS 3c grant was augmented with £842,155 of Authority capital investment as approved by Members on 22 April 2024, providing a total allocated budget of £1.77M. The project timeline requires conditional delivery by 31 March 2026, which remains the case as required by accepting the PSDS grant.

1.3   The age and condition of the RBFRS estate, coupled with the pace and nature of the PSDS process, meant there was a relatively high risk of issues arising in the programme as more detailed design and intrusive surveying progressed. For example, it was discovered that the existing heating system pipework was in worse condition than expected and would need to be fully replaced to accommodate proposed heating system upgrades. Further discoveries included the identification of poor roofing conditions, where solar panels were expected to be placed, and the need for significant repair and complex access systems. These additional building fabric issues identified a revised anticipated budget requirement of c£3.963M in August 2024.

1.4   With the potential of an additional Authority contribution of £2.193M to deliver the programme it was deemed necessary by officers to develop a range of options

and mitigation measures during Q2 24. These included scope refinement, design development and value engineering exercises culminating in a proposed pragmatic pathway through the issues. The preferred pathway has resulted in a reduced anticipated additional cost with an upper limit of £1,500,000 on top of the previously agreed £842,000 without denuding the headline benefits of reducing carbon and potential operating costs in the longer term. This approach also sees the Authority retaining access to the full PSDS grant of £927,845.

1.5   Due to reduced confidence in project costs an update to the Authority, in addition to Members of the Estates Development and Sustainability Group, was considered appropriate. Importantly, the project now intends to conduct an open market tender process to identify accurate and reliable costs and inform an additional approval gateway expected to be brought to Management Committee in April 2025, supported by a revised cost-benefit report.

1.6   Recommendations will be presented to Members to continue, adjust or cease the project prior to contract award.

1.7   The programme can continue to progress, up to contract award, with no financial risk to the Authority. Costs prior to contract award remain recoverable via the PSDS grant mechanism.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

2.1   **NOTE** the contents of the report;

2.2.1   **NOTE** the continuation of the RBFRS Estate Decarbonisation Programme (Phase 1), to enable greater confidence of costs through an open tender process.

2.2.2   **NOTE** a detailed cost-benefit report, informed by the outcomes of the open tender process at Management Committee meeting on 07 April 2025. The report will present options for Members to consider including continuing, adjusting or ceasing the project prior to contract award.

2.2.3   **NOTE** following extensive market testing, further invasive surveys and value engineering through our appointed consultants there remains a high likelihood that further capital investment will be required for project delivery. This is currently estimated to be up to £1,500,000.

2.2.4   **NOTE** the PSDS grant of c£1M is still a significant amount of funding that goes some way to supporting the Authority's decarbonisation and sustainability ambitions.

3.   REPORT

Background

3.1   The Authority is committed to reducing the impact of the organisation's operations on the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. This has been

affirmed by positive action including the signing of the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group Charter' by the Fire Authority in February 2023 and by conducting strategic planning with the production of an estate heat decarbonisation plan (HDP) using specialist consultants Faithful + Gould (now Atkins Realis[1]). The Authority has also made the positive step of revising its strategic sustainability objective by recognising the climate emergency along with the release of the RBFA Sustainability Strategy on 08 October 2024.

3.2   The HDP work was funded by central Government using the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) administered by Salix and resulted in five sites being prioritised on 07 November 2023 for an application to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3c grant funding. The five priority one sites were:

- Langley
- Newbury
- Reading: Caversham Road (accommodation annexe)
- Reading: Wokingham Road
- Whitley Wood (fire station)

3.3   The PSDS 3c application for the five priority sites was successful on 20 February 2024 with an offer of £927,845 in grant funding being made by Salix. Thereafter, the Fire Authority agreed on 22 April 2024[2] to contribute funds of £842,155 as provided for in the SAIF, setting a total budget of £1.77M for decarbonisation work on the five priority sites. This allowed the Salix offer to be accepted and for detailed survey and design work to commence in earnest, committing the Authority into a governed process and conditional timeline for delivery by 31 March 2026.

3.4   The pace and nature of the PSDS process, coupled with the age and condition of the RBFRS estate meant there was a relatively high level of risk of issues arising in the programme as the design was developed through the RIBA Plan of Work stages[3]. The PSDS application process and aggressive timelines relied on information from simple site audits, which meant that there was an over reliance on high level, early design stage, quantity surveyor estimates. To reflect these risks a contingency of 15% was included in the original budget.

3.5   Following more intrusive surveys in May 2024, it was discovered that the existing heating pipework at all sites was of worse condition than expected and would not support air-to-water heat pump systems, which the PSDS bid was based on. A lesson learned from this was that, whilst issues with 'systems' was in the risk register, pipework was not specifically broken out, so it was not costed as such.

3.6   Notwithstanding this risk maturing, a value engineering exercise identified an option to switch to air-to-air heat pump systems, as these now represented the best value for money. This approach still added cost but was significantly less intrusive and less costly than replacing pipework and, importantly, it was anticipated that it would not impact on the grant funding. A change request was

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[1] https://www.atkinsrealis.com
[2] See background paper.
[3] https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/riba-plan-of-work

submitted to Salix in June 2024, which was accepted, with their grant offer remaining the same.

3.7 With approval of the change agreed, detailed survey and design work continued at pace, unfortunately leading to more discoveries, particularly around roofs in poor condition and the requirement for complex access systems meaning total project costs had escalated to c£3.9M in August 2024 as a result. This meant that RBFRS would have had to contribute an additional £2.1M on top of the agreed £842,000, which was deemed unacceptable.

3.8 Further meetings with Salix opened up some palatable options; whilst they could not offer any additional grant funds, they provided guidance on how to best reduce our extra contribution without affecting the grant by amending the scope or work. Notably, features that can be omitted with no impact on grant funding are LED lighting and solar PV.

3.9 Several value engineering (VE) workshops were completed to refine the broad options outlined by Salix to arrive at a deliverable scope of work that continues to represent excellent value. The net result of this activity was a 'Salix friendly' reduced scope that incurs a potential additional cost to RBFRS currently modelled with an anticipated upper limit of £1,500,000 without denuding the headline benefits of reducing carbon and reducing operating costs in the longer term, as it still includes key features like heat pumps, insulation and double glazing. It should be noted that the market could respond with costs outside the banding, both lower or higher, but the design time has committed much time and effort to arrive at a well-informed assessment of cost and risk.

3.10 The estimated cost increases have been engineered down to c68% of the expected additional £2.193M identified in August 2024 whilst still meeting the requirement and delivering the headline benefits. Omissions like LED and solar PV are temporary and can be picked up in future SAIF projects – roof related projects in particular are disruptive and costly, so best done as part of a wider refurbishment project. Further, it should not be forgotten that a central government grant of c£1M in uncertain budgetary times is an exceptional opportunity for the Service.

3.11 Besides the VE work, much concurrent activity has been completed, including myriad site visits by the design team, specialist refurbishment and demolition surveys for asbestos, window surveys, structural surveys, acoustics surveys, roof condition surveys, and ecology surveys. The project is still on track, with the RIBA Stage 4 pack issued and, unusually at this stage, costs have also been 80% market tested. The project is now in a position to be issued to tender.

Value for money statement.

3.12 The Head of Finance & Procurement has been consulted on the value for money proposition in the programme with the potential cost increase. At this stage, and based on the work to date and information available, it is deemed to represent good value for money based on the following factors:

3.12.1 Up until the Authority agreeing to the award of the delivery contract, there is no cost risk to the Authority as all costs are recoverable via Salix, with this process already in place and well tested.

3.12.2 The Authority has had a significant amount of design and planning work completed to date at no cost and this, coupled with testing the market to arrive at a fixed contract price with appropriate contingency is an unparalleled opportunity that will be beneficial for decision making and future planning of the SAIF.

3.12.3 In terms of investment balance, the original Salix / RBFRS split was 52% / 48% respectively, which could change to circa 30% / 70% depending on the tender outcome, with the Salix contribution of c£1M still representing a significant amount.

3.12.4 Costs have risen due to infrastructure discoveries and inflation. Revisiting the project at a later date against a backdrop of a government net zero target deadline, there will potentially be a burgeoning requirement to remove carbon from the estate leading to more demand and increased inflationary pressures.

Procurement strategy.

3.13 As noted in the original paper, Atkins Realis has been commissioned via a separate public regulatory compliant framework to manage the programme ensuring there is a professional project management thread through each of the projects, including aftercare contract administration to cover warranty and defect liability periods. Project delivery contractors (or contractor) will be procured by competitive tender, with complementary activities or technologies bundled where possible to reduce risk and seek best value. Langley Fire Station will have special attention as there is a pre-agreed SAIF refurbishment project over 2024-26 that will be subject to Management Committee approval separately.

Programme milestones.

3.14 Based on progress to date and current forecasting, the programme remains on track with the project milestones in **Table 1**.

Table 1 – PSDS /

Milestone	Latest completion date	Days of contingency included in each step	
Project approval	01/04/2024	5	
Designs initiated	01/04/2024	10	Combined
Detailed designs completed	01/09/2024	10	RBFRS
Invitation to tender	01/01/2025	20	
Tender processes complete	01/04/2025	20	
Orders placed	01/05/2025	20	
Works in progress on site	01/06/2025	30	
Completed on site	01/01/2026	60	
Final commissioning	31/03/2026	60	
Completion date	31/03/2026	Total 235	

Sustainability Programme Milestones.

Note. The contingency days in Table 3 are not consecutive as several elements of the project run in parallel with a view to maximising concurrent activity and reducing programme risk.

Next Steps

3.15 The programme team will issue invitations to tender as soon as practicable to ensure RBFRS will meet the targets as set out in the milestone breakdown, whilst achieving a high level of monitoring and reporting assurance in accordance with the Salix guidelines and RBFRS project process.

3.16 The target dates for approvals of future commitment are 12 March 2025 for SLT and 07 April 2025 for the Management Committee – this will allow sufficient time for submission of quality tenders for the work.

3.17 Key stakeholders will continue to be updated on progress directly by written reports and via the RBFRS Estate Management Group and the member's non-executive Estate Development and Sustainability Working Group.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

4.1 **Sustainability**. We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

4.2 **People**. We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 PSDS funding amounts to £927,845 while the Authority is currently committed to investing £842,155, which, with an additional £1,500,000 could rise to £2,342,155 depending on the market response.

5.2 The capital expenditure budget, which Members would be asked to approve in a further paper, exceeds the original provision in the SAIF for this specific programme of works, but it is within the longer-term financial provision for RBFRS sustainability initiatives.

5.3 The Salix process recognises the risks involved with early design data being a foundation of the grant calculator with any costs in year 1 of the programme (i.e. up to 31 March 2025 and culmination of the delivery tender process) being fully recoverable.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Appropriate legal advice will be sought on procurement, planning and construction aspects if required.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An equality impact assessment (EIA) will be completed as part of the project process for each site and will be a requirement for any project that requires planning consent.

7.2   Although not in the scope of this programme, a key outcome for the related Langley SAIF project remains to improve the equality of facilities for current and future staff groups.

8.   RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1   There has been engagement with local planning authorities to de-risk planning consent and other controls with no issues or concerns raised.

8.2   Engagement with the electrical distribution network operator (DNO) has not flagged any critical infrastructure issues.

8.3   At this RIBA 4 stage, a higher degree of cost confidence with significantly more market testing having been completed. A 10% risk margin is also in place to cope with contingencies, to be mitigated by inclusive project management and diligent cost control.

9.   SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1   Sustainability implications are seen as wholly positive with the PSDS grant award and the RBFRS contribution's projects supporting the Authority's sustainability agenda. Using the latest technology and design methodology such as effective insulation, and a low carbon air source heat pump system, we will reduce our carbon footprint.

10.   CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

10.1   As previously reported, opportunities to collaborate with partners, including other FRS neighbours have been discounted for this programme.

11.   PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1   The Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Head of Finance and Procurement were consulted during the preparation of this report.

11.2   The Member for Strategic Assets and the Monitoring Officer were consulted during the preparation of this report.

12.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1   RBFRS Sustainability Programme: Phase 1   (Fire Authority Paper April 2024)

13.   APPENDICES

13.1   None.

14.   CONTACT DETAILS

14.1   Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (Estates, Fleet & Equipment) brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk

14.2   Sophie Fox, Capital Projects Sustainability Co-ordinator foxs@rbfrs.co.uk

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