



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

Monday, 7th April, 2025

At

6.30 pm

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

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact:

Committee Team

0118 938 4611

E-Mail at committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

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



MEETING: Management Committee Meeting

DATE AND TIME: Monday, 7th April, 2025 at 6.30 pm

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

S U M M O N S

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

A light buffet will be provided.

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

GRAHAM BRITTEN
Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Management Committee:

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

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

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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 10 February 2025 (Pages 7 - 18)

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 10 February 2025 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. Recommendation of Committees

There were no recommendations from Committees.

8. Challenge and Support Panel and His Majesty's Inspection of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection Report verbal update

Purpose:

To receive a verbal update on Challenge and Support Panel, and HMICFRS Inspection Report.

9. Priority 3 - Enhancing our Response Presentation - verbal update

Recommendation:

To receive a verbal update on Priority Three.

10. Productivity and Efficiency Plan - Productivity Programme Update (Pages 19 - 28)

Purpose:

To note the benefits update and the use of the Transformation Fund, to support the delivery of the Productivity Programme.

11. Forward Plan (Pages 29 - 30)

Recommendation:

To note the Forward Plan.

12. Date of next meeting

Monday 14 July 2025, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

13. Exclusion of the Public

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 10 February 2025 (Pages 31 - 34)

Purpose:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 10 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

15. Decarbonisation Phase 1 Update (Pages 35 - 44)

Purpose:

To agree the uplift for the Public Sector Decarbonisation (PSDS) Scheme.

16. Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Contingency Call Handling Contract Award (Pages 45 - 50)

Purpose:

To agree the TVFCS Contingency call handling Contract Award.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Monday, 10th February, 2025 at 6.30 pm

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

- Members:**
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>(*present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle Councillor George Blundell * Councillor Jeff Brooks * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey * Councillor Peter Frewer * Councillor Paul Gittings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Councillor Wendy Griffith * Councillor Dave McElroy * Councillor Helen Taylor * Councillor Simon Werner Councillor Wayne Smith |
|---|--|

- 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)
 - Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
 - Paul Brooks (Head of Assets, HoA)
 - Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
 - Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
 - Jim Powell (Area Manager, Collaboration and Policy, C&P)
 - Andy Stockwell (Group Manager, Change and Improvement)

Observers: Councillor Tricia Brown

Action

52. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors George Blundell and Wayne Smith.

Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle was in attendance virtually.

54. 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.

Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer informed Members they received a dispensation in relation to Item 11 (Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review).

55. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 DECEMBER 2024

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

56. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

P3 Update – Enhancing our Response Model

Following on from recent work on Priority Six of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), a team is now in place to advance Priority Three of the CRMP.

Priority Three sets out the Authority's aim to develop our response model to ensure that we are providing the most effective response to incidents within Berkshire, making sure it is sustainable, aligned to the risks identified, and provides value for money.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) confirmed an P3 update will be presented at each Management Committee meeting.

Summer Internship Recruitment Open

The Service has recently began recruiting for our next cohort of Summer Interns. The Service is looking for four interns who are 18, live in Berkshire and from groups that are underrepresented in our Service to join us for five weeks in the summer.

The Internship aims to encourage 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.

Each intern will have the opportunity to gain valuable real-world work experience and transferable skills that they can take with them into their future careers or academic pursuits.

The application window is open until the beginning of March, and I would like to ask Members to spread the word about this exciting opportunity.

New Wholetime Recruits and Training Centre Update

Week commencing 17 February 2025, our 12 newest Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices will begin their training with the Service. These Apprentices began their journey to becoming firefighters back in the summer and underwent a rigorous selection process before being chosen to join the Service.

These Apprentices will spend a couple of days with us next week before

travelling to the Fire Services College in Gloucestershire to begin their training.

Returning in April, the Apprentices will be the first cohort of firefighters to train at our new Training Centre building at Whitley Wood, which is expected to become operational that month.

The new Training Centre will officially open later this year once groundworks and landscaping at the site are completed, and I will inform members as to when the official Opening Ceremony will take place as soon as the date is confirmed.

On behalf of the Authority, I'd like to thank everyone who has worked so hard in supporting the recruitment and training of our newest recruits, as well as those who have spearheaded the redevelopment of our Training Centre.

I'm sure Members will join me in welcoming our new Apprentices and wish them the best of luck as they embark on the first steps of their new careers.

Arrival of new fire appliances

Our Service will soon be taking delivery of three brand-new fire appliances, built on Volvo platforms by Emergency One in Cumnock, Scotland.

These state-of-the-art vehicles are part of the aligned Thames Valley series, but boast a range of innovative features to enhance firefighter safety and operational efficiency.

We anticipate delivery of the new appliances in March. They will be allocated to Newbury and Theale fire stations, where crews will undergo comprehensive familiarisation training before they go on the run.

This investment in our frontline fleet underscores our commitment to providing our firefighters with the best possible tools and equipment to serve our community safely and effectively.

Arctic Expedition for the Fire Angel Foundation

Two of our members of staff will be taking part in an Arctic expedition to raise money and awareness for a good cause.

Ellece Ott and Joanna Herring, will be travelling to Umea in Sweden with the Fire Angel Foundation.

The Fire Angel Foundation provides extraordinary experiences for young women, offering immersive training for adventurous journeys that builds self-confidence, develops leadership skills, and helps find a sense of belonging.

The pair have been preparing and training for their trip, ahead of them setting off into the icy climate that can reach -15c!

They will begin their expedition on Monday, 17 February and return on Sunday,

23 February.

We wish them the very best of luck on this adventure.

Jim Powell, Area Manager Collaboration and Policy will be leaving the Service after 27 years. He will be starting a new position at Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service as Assistant Chief Fire Officer. On behalf of Management Committee, I'd like to wish him success at Northamptonshire FRS.

57. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no issues from Audit and Governance Committee.

58. AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM UPDATE - PRESENTATION

Jim Powell, Area Manager Collaboration and Policy (AM C&P) reported the purpose of the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) update was to inform Members of the impact of this new policy since implementation on 20 September 2024.

In referring to the bar chart, it showed the percentage of AFA calls over a 5-year average in quarter 3 (Q3). He stated the percentage of calls where Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) did not attend increased significantly to 51.5% in Q3 2024. This was a significant increase compared to the same period from Q3 2019 to Q3 2023 which showed an average of 24.3%.

To date, this new policy has enhanced productivity saving 248 hours which can be redirected to more impactful activities such as Community Safety Events, Safe and Well Visits and Firefighter Training. Other benefits included reduced road risk and lower emissions.

He assured Members the following:

- In Q3 2024, 496 AFA calls were not attended as a result of effective call challenging.
- Of the 496 AFA calls challenged, 0 AFA calls resulted in confirmation of a reported fire.
- There have been no reports of injuries to people or damage to property as a result of AFA call challenging during Q3 2024.

In response to a question from the Chair, Jim Powell reported that the calculation to determine savings in diesel had not been carried out.

In response to a question from Councillor Griffith, Jim Powell reported since the implementation of the AFA policy, only one request was received from a premises to continue AFA attendance at their establishment.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (CFO) added RBFRS staff had fed-back their comments and were complimentary of this policy in relation to undisturbed

and meaningful work.

Jim Powell stated that Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) partners (Oxfordshire FRS) and Buckingham FRS AFA policy was either aligned to Royal Berkshire or soon to be aligned, which will assist Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) staff in call challenging.

The Vice-Chair asked whether AFA impacted Response Standards. Jim Powell advised there was a relationship which would be brought out via the evaluation plan. In terms of the evaluation of time saved (time and motion study), Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey commented on the reduction in emissions.

For a copy of the Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA presentation please contact committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

59. PRECEPT CONSULTATION RESULTS

The Chair stated that Management Committee will be recommending to the Fire Authority they adopt the Budget.

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P) reported a public consultation was held in January 2025 seeking responses to increase the Council Tax Precept by £5. The consultation received 400 responses, 75.50% (303) respondents were in favour and 19.50% (19) were against. The £5 increase was central to Budget Working Party's (BWP) objective to produce a balanced budget.

The Chair stated BWP's objective was to also ensure an effective Service to the public and investment. He added Reserves remained at a prudent level and in referring to page 21 of the report, highlighted Earmarked Reserves had reduced and emphasised the need for additional funding for future capital projects. There was no headroom for increased borrowing as the Authority had set itself a target of not to borrow more than 3% of operating costs.

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

On being put to the vote, 8 voted for and 1 abstained.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The responses to the public consultation on the precept for 2025/26 (Appendix A) were considered;
- 2) The projected reserves position over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix B) be noted; and
- 3) The increase in the Band D precept of £5 for 2025/26 be recommended to the Fire Authority for approval.

60. ANNUAL BUDGET 25/26, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN, SAIF AND TVFCS BUDGET

Conor Byne, HF&P summarised the 2025/26 Budget and stated he was seeking Management Committee recommend to the Fire Authority for approval.

The Chair commented on the challenges presented to BWP and Officers in creating a balanced budget and stated the risk for the proposed Budget included pay awards (Green and Grey Book). In referring to page 37 to the supplementary agenda pack, he stated the budget assumption of pay awards was 2%. Inflation also impacted the budget reserve. He commended the work of BWP and Officers in producing a balanced budget and listed improvements such as increased training.

The Vice-Chair echoed the challenges of producing the 2025/26 Budget and discussed the lobbying of government for a 3-year settlement. The Budget last year enabled the recruitment of 10 additional Firefighters. This year, focus had been made on extra training.

The Chair listed some productivity gains outlined on page 55 of the supplementary report, such as better use of Microsoft 365, Power BI and Staff Development System.

Wayne Bowcock, CFO thanked Members and Officers for their Budget proposal and stated that some risks were speculative, and Members may have to make in-year decisions.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) Management Committee recommend 1.1 to 1.7 to the Fire Authority for approval.

1.1 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix A)

1.2 The Efficiency and Productivity Plan (Appendix B)

1.3 The Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) (Appendix C)

1.4 The Treasury Strategy (Appendix D)

1.5 The Reserves Policy (Appendix E)

1.6 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Budget (Appendix F)

1.7 Fees and Charges (Appendix G)

61. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION WORKING GROUP REPORT

The Chair reported the Recruitment and Retention Working Group recommended areas of focus in the following areas:

- a) Employee Value Proposition
- b) Referral Scheme
- c) Review of Application Process
- d) Improve the Career Pages on Website
- e) Review Candidate experience

Wayne Bowcock reported a) to e) had been presented to Senior Leadership Team and had concurred they will be factored into recruitment processes.

Councillor Griffith discussed her attendance at Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Diversity and Inclusion event and queried whether additional support could be offered to new recruits and suggested the Fire Service should always be looking to make improvements to support provided.

The Chair confirmed he asked Becci Jefferies, Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development (HHR&L&D) to keep this under review based on joiners and leavers within one year of service.

Wayne Bowcock stated that Human Resources currently record leaver profile data and hold exit interviews. In response to Councillor Griffith's comment, he confirmed that the Service had an Employee Assistance Programme and improvements has been made to induction programmes. He discussed that he was informed of a mental health / wellbeing pre-screening tool at a recent collaboration meeting which identifies the type of support could be offered to individuals.

Councillor McElroy commended the report and advised of an Oxford University study and referral scheme for individuals similar to the above pre-screening tool.

The Chair moved the recommendations and it was seconded by Councillor Shepherd-DuBey.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The work undertaken by the Retention and Recruitment Working Group in line with the Terms of Reference (Appendix A) be noted;
- 2) The recommendations made by the Working Group and agreed by Officers in relation to areas of focus as outlined in 3.6 (a-e) be noted; and
- 3) It be agreed a report on progress should be brought back to Management Committee in six months.

62. SCHEME OF MEMBER ALLOWANCES ANNUAL REVIEW

Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer stated under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 regulations 10 and 19 (2) require the Authority to make a Scheme of Allowances before the beginning of the financial year; and, before it makes it, to have regard to the recommendations made by

Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs) of its constituent councils.

The six Berkshire Unitary IRPs all have their member allowances indexed to local government staff pay points.

The Chair moved the recommendation, and it was seconded by Councillor Shepherd-Dubey.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The report be noted and recommend that the Fire Authority;
- 2) Approve that 2.5% uplifted rate of allowances in accordance with annual local government Green Book be applied to Scheme of Allowances effective from 1 April 2025 (Appendix A);
- 3) Approve that the Scheme of Allowances continues to be indexed to the annual local government Green Book increase for allowances (should any increase be agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services in 2025/26);
- 4) The recommendations made by each of the six unitary authority Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs) have been reviewed in line with The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 regulations 10 and 19 (2). (Background papers of each Unitary Authority IRP is located in paragraph 12) be noted.

63. BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3 - 2024/25

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P) outlined the revenue and capital outturns, as well as treasury position at the end of quarter three 2024/25. In referring to Appendix A, he stated the forecast revenue outturn showed an anticipated surplus of £120,000 compared to the original budget. He listed some of the variances outlined in the report which were:

- Occupational Health – costs forecast to be £46,000 higher than budget due to cost increases
- contractual costs were £37,000 higher than budgeted
- Vehicle running costs due to increases costs on the Hampshire Fleet contract and Pension costs higher due to additional Injury award costs.

Conor Byrne stated the good news was that the Income grant was £87,000 higher than budgeted. He briefly referenced the Capital expenditure (Appendix C) and Treasury management activity (Appendix D).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

64. APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY QUARTER 3

Tom Brandon, Area Manager Response and Resilience (AM R&R) reported wholetime availability across the quarter was 96.7% against a target of 97.4% which was a 1.5 percentage point improvement in comparison to Q2.

On-call appliance availability was 24.7% against a target of 50% which was a 10.8 percentage point decrease in comparison to Q2. In discussing the Response Standard, Tom Brandon reported performance was slightly below target at 73.2% of all incidents reached within 10 minutes. Call handling performance improved from 63.1% in Q2 to 70.3% during Q3. This improvement can be attributed partly to the reduction in call volumes and the new call challenge Automatic Fire Alarm policy implemented in September 2024.

He stated Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Priority Three (P3) commenced in January 2025 which should improve overall performance. Wayne Bowcock CFO, reported FRSs Response Standard attracts national attention and advised it was good performance to have a stretched target. The introduction of P3 may require a review of our Response Standard, as well as the reduction in AFA will impact RBFRS Response Standard.

Councillor Werner stated that if targets were too easy there would be nothing to work towards. Wayne Bowcock CFO stated that the Home Office measure of Response Standard show RBFRS was the only Fire Service to show a reduction in relation to performance.

Councillor McElroy stated he felt that the targets were inadequate for what we were measuring and requested further detail at the next meeting.

AM R&R

65. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

66. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

67. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

68. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 4 DECEMBER 2024

RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

69. LANGLEY FIRE STATION REFURBISHMENT - MULTI DISCIPLINARY CONSULTANCY

Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (HoA) reported Langley Fire Station requires extensive refurbishment to provide a fit for purpose workplace to better suit the needs of current and future staff. The work includes dignified facilities and the reduction of carbon output.

The Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group (EDSWG) recently visited the site. Paul Brooks reported the project had been scheduled for delivery during 2024 – 2026 and project costs were provided within the Authority’s Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF). It was a two-stage strategy, and subject to Management Committee approval this paper was seeking the release of capital funding for stage one of this project. He added the key dependency with the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) was in train. The programme includes a large amount of work at Langley Fire Station that had grant derived timeline conditions that must be adhered to, so it was important that planning and project management is co-ordinated and de-conflicted where needed.

Subject to Member approval, detailed design phases were expected to commence on 17 February 2025.

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

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The release of capital funding to meet the costs for professional services, design, and planning be approved.
- 2) A two-stage approach is to be adopted to support diligent planning and delivery of the project, along with reducing risk, which will include a second paper to be submitted for approval later in 2025 (date to be confirmed as the design develops) be noted.
- 3) It be noted here is a key dependency with the PSDS/SAIF decarbonisation project at Langley already underway, which has a delivery timeline that cannot be compromised.
- 4) The above will be de-risked by prudent programming, construction planning and stakeholder management to improve integration and reduce

the likelihood of project fratricide be noted.

70. CONTINGENCY FIRE CREW ARRANGEMENTS UPDATE

Andy Stockwell, Group Manager Change and Improvement reported on 8 October 2024, Management Committee approved that the Service could enter into a Thames Valley FRS collaboration process to identify a replacement contingency provision.

The current resilience fire crew provision ceases in April 2025. The tender process has concluded. One provider responded to the bid. The delivery model was in line with service expectation.

The Chair moved the recommendations, and it was seconded by Councillor Shepherd-Dubey.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The contents of the report be noted and agreed.

(The meeting concluded at 8.12pm)

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	7 APRIL 2025
SUBJECT	PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY PLAN – PRODUCTIVITY PROGRAMME UPDATE
LEAD OFFICER	KATIE MILLS, ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER ELLIE WILDE, TECHNICAL PROGRAMME MANAGER
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on targeted benefits associated with the Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2024-27, since Fire Authority in November 2024. An update on the Productivity Programme and Transformation Fund is also provided.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Management Committee **NOTE** the benefits update and the use of the Transformation Fund, to support the delivery of the Productivity Programme.

3. REPORT

3.1 In November 2024, an update was provided to Fire Authority on the progress against the delivery of the commitments made in the Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2024-27, and the use of the Transformation Fund to support the delivery of this Programme. At the meeting, case studies were shared, showing benefits realised in a variety of areas across the Productivity Programme. It was agreed that a six-monthly update on benefits and the allocation of the Transformation Fund would be provided. Updates on wider efficiency targets are provided through the quarterly Budget Monitoring Report to Management Committee.

3.2 Since November, through the Productivity Programme we continue to focus on the following priority projects:

Project	Status Update
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Agenda Item 10

<p>Understanding Organisational Productivity Data Workstream</p>	<p>This project will strengthen data capture to understand capacity, identify action/change required to improve productivity and implement the change.</p> <p>Time and Motion Study for Response complete, with the same activity underway in Prevention and Protection. Analysis of the results will identify next steps.</p>
<p>Finance System Replacement</p>	<p>With a statutory requirement to “make arrangements for the proper administration of the Authority’s financial affairs”, and Sage 1000 at end of life, the Finance System Replacement Project will implement a new and modern finance system, to replace Sage 1000 and V1. The project will review and refresh processes and procedures, introducing new ways of working in Finance and Procurement, introducing automation where possible.</p> <p>Joint project kick off held with Technology One, the supplier of our new solution, and design workshops complete. Focus is now on the solution configuration, along with integration and data migration requirements and training. Implementation is targeted for October 2025.</p>
<p>Staff Development System</p>	<p>We currently use a variety of systems and tools to support our training and development, learning and performance management processes. Smart Assessor is used for Development and Assessment Pathways and qualifications, LMS for e-Learning, Microsoft Forms for booking training and 360 feedback, as well as Word documents/manual processes for PDRs. This means that information is held in multiple places with no automated links or cross sharing between systems. This project will implement a transparent, integrated and intuitive system to facilitate organisational growth, development and performance.</p> <p>Following a procurement process using the G-Cloud 14 framework, SQEPTech have been awarded the contract as the supplier of our new SDS solution. The project is now targeting implementation later in 2025.</p>
<p>Prevention and Protection Project</p>	<p>This project will identify, implement and evaluate improvements and new ways of working, ensuring robust processes and governance are in place to maintain accurate data. In addition, the project aims to remove corporate risk through the delivery of a new technology solution, to replace IBIS.</p> <p>The Business Analyst joined in February. They will document and analyse current processes and data flows, using this</p>

	<p>information to identify, implement and evaluate improvements and new ways of working, ensuring robust processes and governance is in place, to maintain accurate data. In addition, they will document the requirements specification for a future technology solution and support procurement and delivery.</p>
<p>Microsoft 365</p>	<p>Leveraging the Microsoft 365 suite of products across the Service, the project will establish a clear governance structure and optimise the utilisation of available apps. The project will implement a framework for prioritising and delivering change, including process changes to maximise benefit realisation.</p> <p>A pipeline of requests in place, with changes being delivered according to priority. Valto has been selected to support completion of the M365 governance deliverable.</p> <p>Since the last report, examples of changes implemented include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Accident Injury and Near Misses – the old process was labour intense, and paper based, presenting an opportunity for improvement. The new fully automated process is now live, saving an estimated 120 hours per annum. ➤ Legal Enforcement Notification - Previously a manual process involved numerous emails back and forth with hub managers. Notifications have now been automated, saving time and improving accuracy. ➤ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification Process - The previous manual process involved emailing individuals to inform them EIA updates were required or overdue. With over 100 EIAs with different due dates, this was a time-consuming task. New process utilises Microsoft Lists and Power Automate and automatically notifies staff when updates are expected or overdue. This has resulted in time savings and improved ability to achieve deadlines.
<p>Power Bi Pilot</p>	<p>Power Bi is part of the Microsoft suite of tools. It's a collection of software services, apps, and connectors that bring together data into a coherent, visually immersive, and interactive format, providing insights. The project will complete a proof of concept and use the results to determine how to build capability and capacity more broadly across the organisation.</p>

Agenda Item 10

	The Power Bi pilot is now complete, with results being assessed to determine options and recommendation for wider roll-out across the Service.
Asset Management	<p>This project aims to increase capacity by delivering an efficient and quicker equipment audit process.</p> <p>Pilot underway in Crowthorne and Bracknell, with feedback used to refine asset management solution. The pilot runs to the end of April, with results to determine implementation approach and plan for wider roll-out.</p>
HR System Upgrade to Firewatch 7.8	<p>Delivering the HR system upgrade to Firewatch version 7.8, provides a better user experience and access to additional functionality.</p> <p>Project go-live targeting end of April. This allows time for; migration of Firewatch to Infographics managed solution, implementation of the two-way interface between Firewatch and Vision, and for testing activity to complete.</p>
Personal Record File (PRF) Digitalisation	<p>This project will deliver a digital solution for Personal Record Files (PRFs) removing the need for paper filing going forward, implement file retention rules and back-scan paper files.</p> <p>Business Case is now signed off and project formally commissioned. Project planning now underway.</p>

- 3.3 We have formally launched our Benefits Summary Tracker and are using this to capture benefits targeted and those realised. This is being used as the basis of benefits reporting through the Productivity Board, which meets monthly. Other projects and initiatives that sit outside of the Productivity Programme deliver benefits and information is being captured from all projects and BAU change initiatives, to provide a complete view across the Service.
- 3.4 65 benefits have been identified, of which 40 are targeted and 25 realised. 60% of the benefits realised to date, relate to change delivered using the Microsoft 365 suite of tools. The majority provided time savings, easing capacity issues and allowing time to be reinvested into other value add activities. So far, time savings total 1,479 hours per year. Cost reduction of £30k per annum has also been achieved.
- 3.5 Below is a summary of benefits information supplied as of 12 March 2025.

Benefit Type	Benefit Unit	Actual	Anticipated*
Time Saving	Working Hours	-1479	-6932 hours p/a
Cost Reduction	£	-£30k (↑)	-£52,907

Increase usage/engagement	%	↑ 68% av.	↑ 10%av.
	Number of engagements	↑ 186 av.	-
People Satisfaction	%	-	↑ 10%
Risk Reduction	Risk Score	-	↓12 points av.
Quality Improvement	%	-	↑ 59% av.

*This column represents known anticipated benefits and does not represent all benefits to be achieved via project delivery at this stage. A breakdown of anticipated benefits by initiative is available in Appendix A.

- 3.6 To make the process of benefit reporting and visualisation more efficient, we are exploring the use of Power Bi to support this. This will make the process of benefit reporting quicker, as well as introducing graphical visualisations and the ability to interact with the data, through drill downs.
- 3.7 As shown in the Transformation Fund table below, funds have now been fully assigned. While overall this funding has enabled a good deal of progress, the potential for future change and improvement is vast and as we identify opportunities for business improvement and better use of technology, our ability to deliver against this programme may be limited by existing capacity and capabilities. To support this, the underspend from 2024/25 will be used to top up the Transformation Fund. Since the last report, the remaining £21,531 has been allocated to the HR Adviser role to support the CRMP P3 Project.

Transformation Fund Table

Description	Period	Funding Allocated
Asset Management Project Assistant	18 Months	33,230
M65 and Business Process Improvement Specialist	2 Years	93,938
Business Analyst – Prevention and Protection	18 Months	105,000
Technical Project Manager	2 Years	136,210
Community & Risk Analyst*	18 Months	58,743
CRMP Priority Three - Group Manager and Station Manager Change and Improvement roles*	2 Years	277,468
CRMP Priority Three - HR Adviser*	12 Months	21,531

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Organisational Development Project Manager*	12 Months	93,150
Learning and Development Project Manager*	12 Months	80,730
Total Allocated		900,000

*These posts are in place to support the delivery of the Service's Community Risk Management Plan and Culture Plan/People Strategy and do not form part of the E&P Plan. Separate updates will be provided on the benefits realised through this investment.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

4.1 The priorities set out in the E&P Plan supports the delivery of all six Strategic Commitments.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The report sets out the use of the Transformation Fund to support the delivery of the current projects within the E&P Plan.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Fire Authority has a statutory duty to manage their budgets and spend money properly and appropriately and ensure the efficient and effective use of their resources, pursuing all feasible opportunities to keep costs down while discharging their core duties effectively.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 All projects within the Efficiency Productivity Programme are equality impact assessed.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Corporate Risk: A number of the projects identified within the E&P Plan, directly contribute to managing and mitigating identified Corporate Risk.

8.2 Transition Funding: The identification of future improvements and transformation may be limited by existing capacity and capabilities.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

10.1 In the development of all projects, the Service will consider the opportunities to collaborate in support of the Efficiency and Productivity Plan.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1 Senior Leadership Team.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Efficiency and Productivity Plan 2024-2027.

13. APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A – Benefits Summary broken down by initiative.

14. CONTACT DETAILS

14.1 Katie Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer/Director of Service Delivery.

14.2 Ellie Wilde, Technical Programme Manager.

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The table below shows the benefits summary split by initiative.

Initiative	Benefit Type	Realised	Anticipated
MS 365	Time saving	-1423 hours p/a	
	Cost saving	-£10k p/a	
	Increase usage/engagement	↑21% p/a	
AI – Consultation Analysis *	Time saving	-40 hours	
<i>Annual Schools Programme</i> *	Time Saving		-864 hours p/a
	Increased Usage / Engagement	↑ 22%	
Asset Management	Time Saving		-135 hours p/a (adjusted)
	Quality Improvement		↑20%
<i>At Risk Programme Development</i> *	Increased Usage / Engagement	↑163% (registration)	
	Increased Usage / Engagement	↑186 (# of attendees)	
Case Management System *	Quality Improvement		↑ 100%
	People Satisfaction		↑ 10%
Finance System Replacement	Time Saving		-1924 hours p/a
	Risk Reduction		↓12 points
	People Satisfaction		Tbc
	Quality Improvement		Tbc
	Cost Saving		Tbc
Fire Safe *	Risk Reduction		Tbc
	Time Saving	-16 hours p/a	
LED Lighting *	Cost Saving		-£27,807 p/a

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Appendix A

Mobilisation changes to reduce callouts to false alarms *			-1228 hours p/a (dependent on evaluation)
Photocopier (MFDs) Upgrade *	Cost Saving		-£14k p/a
PRF Digitalisation	Time Saving		-819 hours p/a
	Cost Saving		-£3.5k p/a
Staff Development System	Time saving		-1962 hours p/a
	Quality Improvement		↑ 15%
System consolidation *	Cost Saving	-£20k	
Telephony Integration - PSTN Migration *	Cost Saving		-£7.6k
Zero Paper in Process Approach *	Quality Improvement		↑ 100%

* - Not governed by Productivity Board

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Corporate Calendar 2025/26	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Culture Plan	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Ad-hoc	Note	DChEx	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
Annual Report	Fire Authority	30.06.25	Annual	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Chair / Vice-Chair 2024/25	Fire Authority	30.06.25	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Committees, Lead Members and Member Champions and Outside Bodies 2024/25	Fire Authority	30.06.25	Annual	Appoint	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Governance - to include Member attendance, allowances and expenses	Fire Authority	30.06.25	Annual	Note	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
TVFCS Joint Committee Annual Report 2023/24	Fire Authority	30.06.25	Annual	Note	AM (C&P)	Collaboration Lead	Part I
Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair	A&GC	10.07.25	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Pensions Board Annual update	A&GC	10.07.25	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D and Pension Board Chair	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
ESMCP verbal update	A&GC	10.07.25	Ad-hoc	Note	AM C&P	N/A	Part I
Q4 Performance Report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair	Management Committee	14.07.25	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Outturn	Management Committee	14.07.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Langley Refurbishment - Phase 2	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Priority 3 - Enhancing our Response	Management Committee	14.07.25	Every meeting	Note	DCFO	CRMP Lead	Part I
Sustainability Roadmap update	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Q4 Appliance Availability	Management Committee	14.07.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Recruitment and Retention six Month Update	Management Committee	07.10.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Budget Monitoring Q1	Management Committee	07.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q1	Management Committee	07.10.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
External Audit report	A&GC	20.10.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Governance Statement	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Agree	Programme Office Mgr	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q1 Performance Report	A&GC	20.10.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Annual Treasury Report and Mid-year report	Fire Authority	25.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q2	Management Committee	10.12.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Priority 3 - Enhancing our Response	Management Committee	10.12.25	Every meeting	Note	DCFO	CRMP Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q2	Management Committee	10.12.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I

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