



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

Tuesday, 11th October, 2022

At

6.30 pm

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

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact:

Committee Team

0118 938 4611

E-Mail at committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

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



MEETING: Management Committee Meeting

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, 11th October, 2022 at 6.30 pm

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

S U M M O N S

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

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

GRAHAM BRITTEN
Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Management Committee:

Councillor Dennis Benneyworth	Councillor Jo Lovelock
Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor Dave McElroy
Councillor Colin Dudley	Councillor Dexter Smith
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd- DuBey
Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons	Councillor Simon Werner
Councillor David Cannon	

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 30 June and 18 July 2022 (Pages 5 - 18)

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 30 June and 18 July 2022, 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

Recommendation:

To note agenda Item 8 has been recommended from Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee on 11 July 2022.

8. Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) System Contracts and Hardware Refresh (Pages 19 - 24)

Purpose:

To agree the extension of TVFCS Mobilising System Contract, agree to tender for a five year maintenance and support contract, and to note the use of the annual capital expenditure for 2022/23 from the Renewals account.

9. 2022/23 Budget Monitoring - Quarter One (Pages 25 - 36)

Purpose:

To note the estimated revenue outturn, and to receive an update on capital projects at the end of quarter one 2022/23.

10. Appliance Availability by crewing to meet Corporate Measures 16 and 17 (Pages 37 - 42)

Purpose:

To note quarter one performance appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances and the overall On-Call appliance availability in line with Corporate Measures 16 and 17.

11. Forward Plan (Pages 43 - 46)

Recommendation:

That the Forward Plan be noted.

12. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 6 December 2022, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Thursday, 30th June, 2022 at 7.00 pm
 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Newsham Court,
 Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD

Members:
 (*present)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * Councillor Dennis Benneyworth | * Councillor Jo Lovelock |
| * Councillor Jeff Brooks | * Councillor Dexter Smith |
| * Councillor Colin Dudley | * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey |
| * Councillor Paul Gittings | Councillor Dave McElroy |
| * Councillor Pauline Helliarsymons | * Councillor Simon Werner |
| * Councillor David Cannon | |

In Attendance:

- Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
- Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
- Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
- Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
- Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
- Andrew Mclenahan (Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment, HFF&E)
- Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
- Jim Powell, (Area Manager, Collaboration and Policy, AM C&P)
- Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, Dep ChEx)
- Christian Riley (Communications and Engagement Assistant, C&EA)
- Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
- Tony Vincent (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence was received from Councillor Dave McElroy.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23

The 2021/22 Vice-Chairman opened the meeting and asked Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer (MO), to preside over the meeting.

Action

Graham Britten stated he had received two nominations for the position of Management Committee Chairman, from Councillors Colin Dudley and Paul Gittings.

On being put to the vote, **RESOLVED** that Councillor Colin Dudley be elected as 2022/23 Management Committee Chairman.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2022/23

The Chairman asked for nominations for the position of Management Committee Vice-Chairman. Two nominations were received from Councillors Pauline Helliar-Symons and Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey.

On being put to the vote, **RESOLVED** that Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons be appointed as 2022/23 Management Committee Vice-Chairman.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 18 July 2022, 6.30pm at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

(The meeting concluded at 19:57)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Monday, 18th July, 2022 at 6.30 pm

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

- Members:** (*present)
- * Councillor Dennis Benneyworth
 - * Councillor Jo Lovelock
 - * Councillor Jeff Brooks
 - * Councillor Dave McElroy
 - * Councillor Colin Dudley
 - * Councillor Dexter Smith
 - * Councillor Paul Gittings
 - * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
 - Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons
 - * Councillor Simon Werner
 - * Councillor David Cannon
 - * Councillor Biyi Oloko

- In Attendance:**
- Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
 - Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
 - Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
 - Doug Buchanan (Area Manager, Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
 - Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
 - Andrew Mclenahan (Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment, HFF&E)
 - Katie Mills (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
 - Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, Dep ChEx)
 - Hannah Sheehan (Business Support Officer, BSO)

5. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence was received from Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons. Councillor Biyi Oloko was in attendance as her substitute.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest in accordance with the provisions of the

Action

Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct.

8. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2022

There were no recorded actions. Councillor Jo Lovelock requested her Declaration of Interest to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting on 5 April and advised that she will be making an accuracy to the Part II Minutes, which will be addressed at that point of the meeting.

RESOLVED that (subject to the amendments to the minutes) Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2022 be approved as a true and correct record, to be signed by the Chairman.

Post meeting note, the minutes were amended and subsequently updated on rbfrs website.

9. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tragic Drowning at Bray Lake

- A 16 year old boy tragically drowned on Monday, 18 July following an incident at Bray Lake, Maidenhead.
- Crews from Slough, Langley and Maidenhead attended the scene alongside three officers and a water rescue team from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Upon arrival, crews deployed three rescue boats, a rescue sled, throw lines and water rescue poles in a rescue attempt for the boy. Sadly, the person passed away at the scene. Our condolences go out to all of those affected by this tragic loss.

HMICFRS Inspection

- A team from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services have begun their inspection of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS).
- The inspection will take place over six weeks which commenced on Monday, 20 June.
- The inspection is one way for RBFRS to transparently demonstrate how our services are delivered to residents and provides an opportunity to highlight how we have built on the strong foundations highlighted during both the first inspection in 2018/19 and the COVID inspection in 2020.
- Thank you to everyone across the Service for their ongoing commitment and dedication to their roles.

Fire Cadets Graduation

- On Thursday, 7 July, the Fire Cadets held their annual, end of year graduation ceremony.
- Cadets from Maidenhead, Newbury, Crowthorne and Whitley Wood Fire Stations came together at Whitley Wood's Training Centre to parade in

front of their parents and perform a range of drills.

- Despite the incredible heat, the cadets performed admirably and were recognised for their brilliant efforts over the past year by the Chief Fire Officer who presented them all with certificates.
- The Chairman extended his congratulations to all of the cadets and wish them all well for the future.

Wholetime Recruitment

- Last week, the Service opened up recruitment process for new Wholetime Firefighters.
- Prospective applicants have until one minute to midnight on 1 August to apply for the role.
- This is the second year we will be recruiting apprentices into this crucial role. Much like previous wholetime recruitment, anyone, from any background or walk of life can apply to be a firefighter apprentice, so long as they are new to the role. This could be someone at the beginning of their career, those returning to work after a career break or those looking for a change of career later in life.
- The successful candidates will take part in a residential training course lasting at least eight weeks, followed by approximately five weeks training at our training centre. Development will then continue when placed at a fire station.
- I wish everyone all the best in their applications and look forward to meeting the successful applicants in the not too distant future.

Chairman's Interns arrive

- Next week, Monday 25 July, will mark the beginning of the Chairman's Internship Scheme, an opportunity aimed at young people aged 16-18 from under-represented communities in Berkshire.
- 10 interns will join different teams from across the Organisation to develop their workplace skills and gain experience to support their future education or career ambitions.
- This is an exciting opportunity for young people and the Service. Not only will they be learning the functions of their host department, they will be visiting four fire stations and Thames Valley Fire Control to understand the importance of each area of the Service and how they interlink with each other.
- Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Chairman will be meeting the interns on their first day, and on behalf of the Fire Authority will wish them all the best as they embark on this exciting opportunity.

Maidenhead Open Day

- On Sunday, 19 June, Maidenhead Fire Station hosted the Service's first open day since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The station welcomed hundreds of guests from the local community and thanks to their generosity, they raised a staggering £1,500 for charity, which will be split between the Fire Fighters Charity and the Brett Foundation, a Maidenhead based charity which supports the Homeless and families that are living in poverty.
- The Chairman thanked everyone who supported the Open Day and helped

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to make sure it was a resounding success.

- Looking ahead, other stations were working at running their own open days and it's very positive to see the Service resume this incredibly popular initiative following its postponement during the Pandemic.

10. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from Audit and Governance Committee.

11. CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMME UPDATE - PRESENTATION

Andy McLenahan, Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment (HFF&E), delivered a short presentation on the minor capital works programme. He stated the Fire Authority approved £1.25m in February 2020 for minor capital works. The following six fire stations had been identified in greatest need based on condition surveys.

- Caversham Road
- Wokingham Road
- Bracknell
- Newbury
- Slough
- Maidenhead

The original key principles for improvements are to improve facilities to support a more diverse workforce and improve contamination control. The improvements were based on staff feedback and was signed off via Property Development Working Group (PDWG).

He reported the capital works was behind original schedule due to pandemic, however, listed the current progress. Phase One of Slough Fire Station was complete, which consisted of a new drill yard, external drainage and electronic security gates. Works at Bracknell had begun which was due for completion in mid-September. Some of the key areas of work at Bracknell Fire Station include:

- Separation of kit from the office area
- New Dying Room
- New External Washdown facility with canopy
- Removal of communal shower area and extension to male shower to provide individual shower/changing cubicles
- New two bed female dormitory and a new door in to female shower area
- Complete refurbishment of Mess Room

The works at Maidenhead Fire Station was scheduled to start mid-August, similar to works described in the key principles. This programme of works was scheduled to take 16 weeks to complete.

In discussing sustainability, Andy reported the Service had commissioned PlantMark to undertake a carbon footprint assessment to understand a baseline to develop strategies to improve and implement new and sustainable initiatives around our estates and fleet. This information would be used to support and inform the development of Sustainability Strategy and inform areas of focus for future works programmes and the refresh of the Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF).

He explained the Service had applied for external funding to support sustainability initiatives through government Decarbonising Schemes, he advised the most recent application was for the Low Carbon Skills Fund. If successful, the intention is to further develop feasibility and sustainability plans which would form part of a second application to the Decarbonising Fund, to deliver against those plans. He discussed the competitive nature of receiving this funding.

Andy highlighted sustainability had been included as a fourth principle to the original three principles, as part of the minor capital works programme.

The Service will be refreshing the SAIF this autumn. Current market factors will be considered, for example Bracknell and Maidenhead procurements have demonstrated an increase in costs for building and construction works. He reported that Officers will continue to work with Members through PDWG to inform SAIF and other relevant plans.

Councillor Gittings queried the timeframe for completion of the Sustainability Strategy. Andy reported the Service were around 90% complete in data collection. One year's worth of data collection was required to be sent to PlanetMark from various departments across the Service. Once all data is submitted, it would then take between six – eight weeks to formulate a report. On receipt of PlantMark's report at the end of August, the Sustainability Strategy will be formulated to include Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), stated he wanted to reassure Members, the report from PlantMark and the development of Sustainability Strategy would hopefully unlock funding and further opportunities to invest, for example electric charging points and solar panels.

In answer to a question from Councillor Werner, Andy reported in addition to and subject to possible government funding, the SAIF will be reviewed to include a budget bid on sustainability which will be brought back to Members.

In response to a question from Councillor Shepherd-DuBey, Andy listed the current sustainable and energy efficient changes the Service had made to its buildings, for example the installation of LED lighting at stations, double glazing windows and energy efficient heating systems. In addition, the Service has ordered some hybrid and electric vehicles. He reiterated, additional funding would be required to make more changes across the Service.

Councillor McElroy queried whether the audit report from PlantMark included

analysis on recommended energy efficient changes from site visits? Andy reported PlantMark analysis was data driven and were looking at the Service's energy, fuel waste and utility usage, their analysis was not based on site visits.

Councillor McElroy commended the commissioning of an independent company to analyse and recommend energy efficient strategies for the Service.

12. 2021/22 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P), outlined the provisional 2021/22 revenue and capital outturn and reserves position. He stated 2021/22 had been a challenging year financially, due to pay award exceeding budget, as well as accelerating inflation. He stated, the one-off receipts received from business rates, rebates and cross-border income prevented the Authority from a year-end deficit of over £400,000.

Receipts from one-off income has meant the 2021/22 outturn had a small deficit of £40,000 on a budget of £35.8m, which was a variance of 0.1%.

In discussing employment costs, he reported staffing salary budgets were based on the Government position of a public sector pay freeze, the National Joint Council (NJC) subsequently agreed a grey book pay award of 1.5% effective from 1 July 2021. The final green book pay award of 1.75% backdated to 1 April 2021. Together, these pay awards were an additional £361,000.

Conor also stated there was an increase in overtime costs, which were off-set by vacancies.

Conor stated *premises, repairs and maintenance costs* were £77,000 over budget due to major roof repairs at four stations, air-con chiller repairs at Headquarters and work on the extractor unit at the Fire House.

Over the year, the Authority has been fortunate to receive hedging from our energy supplier which meant utility cost increases had been subdued. However, utility price rises has fed in the final quarter of the year and further price rises were expected in the current financial year.

The success of Business rate appeals on properties and rebates have amounted to £319,000. He reported the majority of rebates received relate to previous years. This has meant an annual saving of £77,000, which has been built into the 2022/23 budget.

Against these savings the Business rates for the new station at Theale has been confirmed as £53,000 in 2021/22.

The *IS Equipment & Licences* line include additional costs for the deployment of Microsoft Office 365, to enable flexible working. He stated that this was part of the ICT Strategy, but had been accelerated due to Covid.

The *Community Fire Safety Supplies* line was underspent due to restrictions in the early part of the year relating to in-person Safe & Well Visits, due to Covid.

In relation to costs pressures, the *Pension line* was £148,000, due to the ongoing impacts from the McCloud judgement, based on the latest guidance. Further provision have been made to deal with future liabilities.

Funding received from Berkshire unitary authorities was not confirmed until after the budget had been set by the Authority. The Authority received an extra £296,000 compared to budget.

He stated the expenditure on Capital Projects in 2021/22 was £3.6 million, three quarters of that has been spent on completing the construction of Theale Fire Station. In terms of capital receipts, Pangbourne and Wargrave Fire Station were sold during 2021/22, generating £1.2 million.

The General Reserve remains unchanged at £2.268 million for 2021/22. The earmarked reserves shown in Appendix D showed a net increase of £185,000 due to the receipt of Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) and pension administration grants.

Conor stated the fast changing economic situation will continue to impact the Authority's finances in a negative way, therefore it was imperative the Authority sought efficiencies through invest to save projects.

Looking forwards, pay awards for 2022/23 require agreement by National Joint Council (NJC), the budget has assumed 2.5% for a pay award. He stated, each 1% above this level adds a pressure of £280,000.

The government announced a reduction of the FireLink grant by 20% year on year. This grant contributes towards the cost of Airwave. The Authority's FireLink grant has fallen from £368,000 in 2021/22 to £294,000 in 2022/23, a reduction of £74,000.

Councillor Werner asked how certain were Officers that 2022/23 budget would not rely on one-off payments/grants to balance the budget? Conor reported the current year will hinge on the pay award, in terms of a deficit position.

Councillor Werner stated he felt the budget approved in February 2022, £5 for fire was ill defined and was not clear on how the Authority intend to spend the additional income. Conor stated that the Budget Report presented to Fire Authority last February made clear that the £5 for Fire would be used to revenue fund capital expenditure.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey asked when the hedging deal received for utility costs would cease? Conor stated this had come to an end in 2021/22.

Councillor Lovelock queried the cost of fuel for vehicles? Conor reported there was an increase in fuel costs, however they were off-set due to reduced activity during Covid. A bigger impact will be seen in the current year, however the

increase had been built into the budget.

Councillor Brooks stated it was pleasing the Authority got within £11,000 of forecast and referred to the additional funding received from business rates and cross border income, which he acknowledged was difficult to predict. In referring to the reserves, he stated he would like to see the Authority working hard on investing to save projects.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

13. PROPOSED FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES INSPECTION PROGRAMME AND FRAMEWORK 2023/24

Katie Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), reported, in May, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) consulted on the proposed inspection programme 2023/24. In summary, the proposals included a third round of inspections timeframe, questions on the judgement criteria and proposal to include a fifth category to the judgement outcome of '*adequate*', in addition to '*outstanding*', '*good*', '*requires improvement*' and '*poor*'.

The consultation closed on 6 June, and the Chairman of the Fire Authority at the time was consulted on the response, attached at Appendix B.

In referring to a comment received from Councillor McElroy on the consultation relating to sustainability, Katie stated across two answers that related to climate change, the Service outlined it was happy for that to be included in the inspection. She explained the response was more a comment about how it would be embedded across the pillars.

RESOLVED the response from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service to the recent consultation on the proposed inspection programme and framework 2023/24, be noted.

14. APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 15 AND 16

Doug Buchanan, Area Manager Response and Resilience (AM R&R), stated Whole-time appliance availability for quarter four was 92.8% across the Service. He stated this equated to 13 shifts where crewing had not been achieved in line with Corporate Measure 15, and on two occasions appliances were unavailable.

He reported managing 14 Whole-time appliances with a lean establishment of 324 remained challenging with increased sickness levels and a volatile staff turnover position. He stated the Service remained committed to make best use of resources to manage risk most effectively, and was about to introduce a Summer Crewing Strategy. The Strategy will not only include appliance availability, it will also provide the availability of specialist appliances e.g. Arial

Ladder Platform, water rescue appliance and off-road firefighting vehicles. It would allow officers the flexibility to consider the Response Standard and the likely requirement of special resources to tackle seasonal risks, such as wildfire.

Doug stated whilst the availability of On-Call, 43.8% was below target, there had been an improvement from the previous two quarters. He stated, the number of leavers outweighed the number of joiners. During covid, there had been recruitment successes into On-Call. He reported, due to the training and development timeframe, there would be a lag in new recruits achieving their competencies.

The On-Call Station Manager in Service Delivery and Learning and Development Team had been working to implement pragmatic measures to support On-Call development and availability.

Doug reported of the uncertainty around Pensions (McCloud judgement) and stated it was likely crewing availability would continue to be a challenge.

Councillor Gittings asked about the length of time it would train Wholetime apprentices. Doug listed the various recruitment processes arranged by the Service. He explained, transferees that were being implemented into the Service in August, would bring the establishment level over the number for a short period of time. He discussed the challenges the Service faced in relation to the number of staff (42) that will be of pensionable age by 1 April 2023 and the additional challenge of staff transferring to other Services e.g. London Fire Brigade and Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE).

Councillor Brooks requested clarification relating to the On-Call availability 60% target. He stated, paragraph 1.3 of the report show the targets for each station was either above or below 60%. He questioned whether it was time to recalibrate the targets in light of the current situation?

Doug reported paragraph 3.11.2 explained the target variations between stations included the number of individuals at each station, qualifications and skills sets held, and the amount of operational cover each individual can provide. He stated, Pangbourne was removed part way through 2021/22, however its targets were included in the overall figures. He believed the target was achievable and reminded Members the target was achieved during covid, due to the furlough scheme had effected On-Call staff.

Councillor Werner asked the effect on low On-Call targets to the overall service provided. Doug reported the Response Standard remained at 75% of emergency incidents attended in 10 minutes. He advised On-Call offered extra resilience to the Service e.g. to provide rest periods for Wholetime appliances. He stated some of the specialist appliances were located at On-Call stations. For example, the off-road appliance is located at Maidenhead Fire Station which was placed strategically and was readily available for incidences, such a field fires.

In answer to Councillor Werner's supplementary question, Doug provided

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reassurance that Wholetime resources modelled the Response Standard.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey asked what was the Service doing to increase On-Call availability, and due to climate change and the possible increase of wild fires, how will the Service deal with this? Doug stated that the answer to the above questions would involve a wider Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) analysis, which was currently underway. He added he will be presenting to the Senior Leadership Team a strategy on the possible ways the Service could deal with present pressures, e.g. the hot, dry weather conditions and how the Service will use its resources. He reported the Service has received On-Call recruitment successes in the last few months due to positive action events, which will continue.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), reported in terms of On-Call recruitment, due to the number of interest received, two stations, Mortimer and Crowthorne had reached its establishment.

In referring to the On-Call target figure, Councillor McElroy asked whether there were trigger targets if the number reached far below target? Doug stated there was an opportunity to examine some of these points during CRMP.

Councillor Brooks stated that based on establishment figures had been reached at Crowthorne and Mortimer, he expected increased availability at these stations. Mark stated, the availability will increase over a period of time due to the development of skillsets.

Nikki Richards, Deputy Chief Executive (DChX), reminded Members the Fire Authority recently abated Driver trainer's pensions, to recruit additional trainers into the post. This was also a factor, which would delay all competencies being met.

The Chairman highlighted, through the pandemic and the rise of covid infections, the Service still achieved its Response Standard. He commended, the goodwill of Firefighters and thanked them for giving up their time to fill roles and move around to keep appliances available.

RESOLVED that:

- a) The 2021/22 Quarter Four performance of 92.8% appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 15, be noted;
- b) The 2021/22 Quarter Four performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of 43.8% against the Service target of 60% in Corporate Measure 16, be noted.

15. FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Gittings reported the Forward Plan had not reflected the date of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting will be held on 20 September 2022.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 11 October 2022, 6.30pm, at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

17. 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.

18. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2022

Councillor Lovelock requested for her Declaration of Interest to be included in the minutes of 5 April, in relation to Item 73 (Urgent Late Item – Disposal of the Dee Road Site), and to remove that she abstained.

RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2022 and recorded actions, be approved as a true and correct record, to be signed by the Chairman.

Post meeting note, the Part II minutes were amended and subsequently updated on rbfcs website (restricted access).

(The meeting concluded at 19:39)

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	11 OCTOBER 2022
SUBJECT	THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE SYSTEM CONTRACTS AND HARDWARE REFRESH
LEAD OFFICER	JIM POWELL, AREA MANAGER COLLABORATION AND POLICY
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLORS SIMON WERNER AND JO LOVELOCK
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals for the future support of key Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) systems and the requirement to refresh the mobilising system hardware to ensure TVFCS can continue to deliver a quality, robust service for the Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services (TVFRS) and the communities they serve.
- 1.2 This report has been recommended by the TVFCS Joint Committee. Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) is represented on this committee by Councillors Simon Werner and Jo Lovelock. At the Joint Committee meeting of 11 July 2022, where this paper was considered, Councillor Morag Malvern substituted for Councillor Lovelock.
- 1.3 The report accounts for a number of complicating factors in the external environment, primarily the acquisition of the service provider of the two contracts in question (SSS Public Safety Ltd, formerly known as Capita SSS Ltd) ('SSS') by NEC Software Solutions UK.
- 1.4 The TVFCS Joint Committee is recommending that the 'Vision 4' mobilising system maintenance and support contract be extended for five years and that the Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS) 'DS3000' maintenance and support contract extension is aligned with the Vision contract.

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- 1.5 It also recommends that TVFCS undertakes a hardware refresh for the Vision system using the profiled annual capital expenditure from the renewals account as set out in the 2022/23 budget.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management committee:

- 2.1 **AGREE** to extend the Vision mobilising system maintenance and support contract for five years, from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028, authorising Oxfordshire County Council as lead Authority to undertake this extension.
- 2.2 **NOTE** the use of the annual profiled capital expenditure for 22/23 from the Renewals account to deliver the hardware refresh for the Vision system.
- 2.3 **AGREE** to tender for a five year maintenance and support contract, for the ICCS DS3000 from 10 April 2023 to 10 April 2028 (with options to extend for two years).

3. REPORT

- 3.1 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) utilises the 'Vision 4' mobilising system which is provided by SSS Public Safety Ltd. Royal Berkshire Fire Authority ('RBFA') and Oxfordshire County Council ('OCC') entered into a contractual agreement for this provision which formally commenced when TVFCS 'went live' in April 2015.
- 3.2 The duration of the TVFCS partnership agreement (the 'agreement') covers a 15 year period from the commencement date of April 2015, expiring in April 2030. The project team delivered the current Mobilising System contract (the Vision contract) to mirror this arrangement, building in a review at seven years, creating the option for a contract break or contract extension (in single or multiple periods of twelve months, not exceeding eight years).
- 3.3 In March 2021, Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited and Capita (USA) Holdings Inc. announced their intention to sell SSS as part of a restructuring programme. This created some uncertainty for customers and, based on a recommendation from the Joint Committee in July 2021, the partnership authorities (Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, OCC and RBFA) resolved to extend the Vision Maintenance and support contract for one year whilst the sale took place.
- 3.4 In January 2022 the sale was completed to NEC Software Solutions UK Limited (NECSWS). This acquisition is subject to a Competitions and Markets Authority (CMA) investigation. This investigation is concerned with three SSS products. It does not include Vision, but does include the SSS DS3000 ICCS product.
- 3.5 Both the current Vision and DS3000 maintenance and support contract periods end in April 2023. Therefore TVFCS needs make provision beyond that date and provide certainty and stability in the medium to long term.

- 3.6 In relation to any periods of extension, the Vision contract required SSS to provide a 'system report' (the report). The report sets out expected performance levels and recommends hardware refresh options that would be necessary for TVFCS to maintain an appropriate, robust and resilient level of technological capability that will ensure the service can continue to take the software upgrades aligned to the Vision pathway. Equally, any hardware refresh would also minimise risk in relation to issues affecting system stability and reduce the likelihood of experiencing critical system failures.
- 3.7 The report was received, reviewed and challenged by the Joint Coordinating Group (JCG), consisting of a Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) from each service, technical subject matter experts from each service and the TVFCS management team and a final version was agreed in March 2021.
- 3.8 The current hardware, based on a specification that was defined approximately ten years ago, is coming to end of its seventh year of operational use. The requirement to undertake a refresh programme is becoming an increasing priority to mitigate the escalating risk of poor system performance or failure as the equipment is nearing 'end of life'.
- 3.9 In considering the term of any extension, the Vision contract can be extended for a minimum of one year up to a maximum of seven years (aligning to the 2030 expiration date of the partnership agreement). As set out in past papers, an optimum extension period would provide value for money on refreshed hardware and enable the service to maintain system stability and performance, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Emergency Services Network (ESN, the replacement for the current Airwave communications system) currently planned for 2027.
- 3.10 Therefore it is proposed that the Vision contract is extended for a period of five years, April 2023 – April 2028. During this period the JCG will consider a number of internal and external factors and make recommendations on when to commission a tender project for a full system replacement, which would take circa three years to deliver. RBFA and OCC will still have the option to make further extensions to the Vision contract beyond 2028 (up to 2030) should that be advantageous based on circumstances during the extension period.
- 3.11 The decision to extend the Vision contract will enable TVFCS to commence with the hardware refresh. The original pricing structure, provided by SSS in the system report in December 2020 has increased due to global supply chain issues as a result of Covid-19 particularly in relation to semi-conductors. The actual cost (supply and fit) will be £496k. The Annual Capital Expenditure (Capex) profile, agreed by partnership authorities for 22/23, included a number of factors to account for likely increases in price as well as an additional contingency. The total profile identified for 22/23 is £676k.
- 3.12 The additional contingency of £88k can be accessed as per schedule 7 of the Inter-Authority Agreement which defines the level of decision making dependent on the amount required. It is unlikely that this will need to be utilised as the cost of the refresh is within the original profile which had

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accounted for potential increase due to prevailing market conditions. These assumptions were set out in the TVFCS 22/23 budget papers.

- 3.13 The renewals account will stand at just over £2m for 22/23. Therefore, in using the profiled Capex for 22/23, the account will stand at £1.5m at year end 22/23. This forecasting was included as part of the long term forecast set out in the 22/23 budget.
- 3.14 In relation to the DS3000 ICCS, the intent would be to secure a maintenance and support contract to align to a similar timeline, namely a five year contract from April 2023 – April 2028 with options to extend for a further two years (in one year increments). Whilst there is still some uncertainty around this product due to the CMA investigation, the timeline for a tender process can be designed to account for the outcomes of the investigation. An unfavourable outcome could result in changes to the DS3000 product and the JCG would need to consider the impact of this and make appropriate recommendations at the time. At this time Joint Committee members are recommending a decision in principle to the commencement of a tender process and future papers will be presented for decision as required.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 1 – We will provide advice on how to prevent fires and other emergencies.
- 4.2 Commitment 2 – We will ensure a swift and appropriate response when called to emergencies.
- 4.3 Commitment 3 – We will provide advice, consultation and enforcement in relation to fire safety standards in buildings.
- 4.4 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial implications are set out in 3.11 – 3.13 of the report and the 22/23 budget papers.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The 'DS3000' (ICCS) contract and the 'Vision 4' mobilising system contracts are defined in the Inter Authority Agreement as requiring the unanimous consent of the three fire and rescue authorities for its extension or renewal (per clauses 17.3, 17.5 and Schedule 6; and Schedule 5, para 1.2.15).
- 6.2 RBFA is a party to the 'DS3000' (ICCS) contract. OCC and RBFA are parties to the 'Vision 4' mobilising system. The legal implications of terminating or extending the contract are set out in the contract and procurement teams of RBFA and OCC have been engaged to ensure that the contracting authorities comply with the relevant legislation.
- 6.3 The DS3000 tender will be undertaken in compliance with the requisite legislation by RBFA on behalf of the partnership authorities.

7. EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications identified at this time.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 If suitable maintenance and support arrangements for TVFCS systems and appropriate provision of equipment to deliver those systems are not secured, a number of key areas of functionality will be compromised resulting in a high risk to delivering an effective control function that may result in risk to life or property.

8.2 There is a risk that the CMA investigation may result in changes to the DS3000 product. By undertaking the ICCS maintenance and support tender to account for the investigation conclusion this will enable more informed decision making in relation to the future of this system. At this time this risk is perceived as low and it is unlikely any changes, should they be required, would have an immediate operational effect. A significant proportion of UK FRS use the DS3000, any CMA decision should not impact on the operational effectiveness of those services. The JCG have regular meetings with SSS and will monitor the situation closely.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

9.1 The contents of this report support the following primary objectives as set out in the TVFCS partnership agreement.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Chief Fire Officer
- 10.2 Head of Finance and Procurement
- 10.3 Monitoring Officer

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 TVFCS mobilising requirements 12 July 2021
- 11.2 TVFCS budget 2022/23 16 December 2021
- 11.3 Capita contract novation 16 December 2021
- 11.4 TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement

12. APPENDICES

12.1 None.

13. CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Area Manager Jim Powell powellj@rbfrs.co.uk 07774215664

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	11 OCTOBER 2022
SUBJECT	2022/23 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER ONE
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform members of the estimated revenue outturn and to provide an update on capital projects at the end of quarter one 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATION

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

3. REPORT

Commentary on Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 The detailed revenue outturn for quarter one, 2022/23 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) for quarter one are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2022/23 Revenue Budget agreed by Members in February 2022 was set at £38.446m as a balanced budget with no use of reserves.
- 3.3 The forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 is shown in Appendix A, and shows an anticipated deficit of £618,000, to be funded from reserves. Variances against individual revenue lines are explained below.
- 3.4 Station staff budgets are under pressure, with overtime forecast to be £274,000 over budget. There are various factors for this, including the need to cover absences for sickness and those on light duties, annual leave and training in order to maintain crewing levels. 18 new recruits came onto stations in mid-April but need time to build up operational competency and have an

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effect on crewing cover. On a positive note, these additional overtime costs have partly been offset due to a different mix of station staff in development and competent roles compared to budgetary assumptions.

- 3.5 On-call stations are showing positive and negative variances across the county – with forecasted expenditure for stations in the west of the county being below budget and those in the east over budget.
- 3.6 Not reflected in this forecast is the potential impact of the pay negotiations for Grey Book staff. The budget was set with salary increases of 2.5%. An offer of 2% has been rejected. Each additional 1% above the budgeted pay level for grey book staff would equate to approximately £200,000 of additional cost in the base budget.
- 3.7 The latest Green Book pay award for 2022/23 that has been offered by the employers' side equates to an additional budget pressure of £218,000 and has been built into the Q1 forecast. This additional cost is mitigated by a number of vacancies that have not been filled due to the overall budgetary position.
- 3.8 *Repairs and Maintenance.* Water damage to the lecture block at the Whitley Wood Fire Station is estimated to cost around £77,000, but will be mostly reimbursed through an insurance claim (see other income below).
- 3.9 *Rates.* The final appeal on business rate charges (Dee Road site) has been successful and has resulted in a net refund of £109,000.
- 3.10 *Utilities.* As Members will be aware, energy costs have been rising sharply. Prices for energy used by commercial enterprises have not to date been subject to any price cap though fortunately our energy contractor has mitigated market extremes through hedging. Although additional budget provision for utilities has been made in the current year, it is anticipated that costs will exceed the budget allocated by an additional £230,000. This does not take into account any support the Government will provide to the public sector.
- 3.11 *Transport.* It is estimated that the rise in fuel prices will result in an additional £45,000 in transport costs this year.
- 3.12 Cross border charges have been agreed with Thames Valley partners for the first quarter of the year and, based on this, it is estimated that charges will be £19,000 lower (under *Contracts Other*) and income £6,000 higher than the budgeted targets.
- 3.13 *Income other* also includes £15,000 as our share of prior year surpluses that have been distributed by the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company as well as the insurance claim for the water damage at Whitley Wood.
- 3.14 The *Grants* line is showing an adverse variance as the Authority unexpectedly received notification from the Home Office that the grant funding provided for Firelink will be completely phased out over a five year period, starting in 2022/23. A 20% reduction in funding will occur in each of the next five years.

This has resulted in a £76k budget pressure in 2022/23 and the ongoing pressures will now need to be incorporated into the MTFP.

- 3.15 *Investment Interest.* Given the recent interest rate rises it is anticipated that yields from invested sums should generate additional income this year of £61,000.
- 3.16 *Gov Grants/Precepts.* As part of budget setting the Authority had to estimate the income it is due from central Government for section 31 business rates relief payments, for both the current and prior years. These figures are still to be confirmed fully, and are made up of a number of variables outside of the direct control of the Authority. The net expected variance is £190,000 in reduced income.

Capital

- 3.17 Capital expenditure to quarter 1, 2022/23 and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

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

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The forecast outturn position on the Revenue Account is expected to increase the call on reserves by £638,000 by the end of the financial year.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

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

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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 2022.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A – Revenue position at quarter 1 2022/23

12.2 Appendix B – Net costs of TVFCS quarter 1 2022/23

12.3 Appendix C – Capital position at quarter 1 2022/23

13. CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Mark Hawkins
Finance Manager
07785 573434

13.2 Conor Byrne
Head of Finance and Procurement
07585 991602

	Annual Budget £'000	Q1 Outturn £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES				
STATIONS	17,137	4,331	17,330	193
NON-STATIONS	11,853	2,757	11,911	58
TRAINING	705	67	708	3
OTHER	265	59	275	10
	29,960	7,214	30,224	264
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	757	79	844	87
RATES	821	237	712	(109)
CLEANING	285	48	285	0
UTILITIES	530	35	760	230
	2,393	399	2,601	208
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	397	227	397	0
EQUIPMENT	520	79	532	12
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	744	442	758	14
CLOTHING/PPE	370	109	370	0
COMMUNICATIONS	799	25	801	2
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	221	87	221	0
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	143	82	152	9
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	180	26	180	0
SUPPLIES OTHER	197	42	204	7
	3,571	1,119	3,615	44
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	930	211	919	(11)
LEGAL	50	1	50	0
CONTRACTS OTHER (incl Professional Services)	695	41	677	(18)
	1,675	253	1,646	(29)
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	727	160	772	45
TRAVEL	211	41	212	1
	938	201	984	46
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	434	125	433	(1)
	434	125	433	(1)
INCOME				
GRANTS	(2,048)	(1,671)	(1,972)	76
RENTAL INCOME	(243)	(61)	(243)	0
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(354)	(88)	(354)	0
INCOME OTHER	(384)	(61)	(486)	(102)
	(3,029)	(1,881)	(3,055)	(26)
NET COST OF SERVICES	35,942	7,430	36,448	506
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	388	(1)	371	(17)
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(60)	(7)	(121)	(61)
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	1,748	0	1,748	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	(273)	0	(273)	0
FINANCING COSTS	701	0	701	0
NET EXPENDITURE	38,446	7,422	38,874	428
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(38,446)	(11,564)	(38,256)	190
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	0	(4,142)	618	618

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report 2022/23

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to June 22 £'000	Forecast to Y/E £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	1,868	461	1,834	(34)
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	354	88	354	0
SUPPLIES/ OTHER	39	0	41	2
TECHNOLOGY	252	21	255	3
NET COST OF TVFCS	2,513	570	2,484	(29)
RBFRS Share of Costs (37%)	930	211	919	(11)

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Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget	Spend in Prior Years	Spend to date 2022/23	Total Estimated Spend in 2022/23	Estimated Project Spend to Completion	Total Estimated Project Spend	Commentary
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
		A	B	C	D	E	B+C+E	
Property, Capital Projects and Estates	Fire stations - Minor Capital Works Programme	1,250	197	17	879	1,036	1,250	Phases 1 & 2 have been completed at Bracknell, phase 3 is underway and expected to complete in Q2. Contract has been awarded for works at Maidenhead, the first package is underway and all packages are expected to be completed in Q4 22/23. Recent tender evaluations have shown a significant increase in prices compared to initial estimates compiled in 2020. Plans are being reviewed to ensure opportunities are maximised.
Fleet & equipment	White Fleet	501	43	0	310	458	501	Approval has been given since February 2021 for the purchase of 19 vehicles, including one in collaboration with the Environment Agency. 3 vehicles to date have become operational, a further 4 hybrid vehicles are due for delivery in September 2022 and 3 electric vehicles in October 2022. Suppliers continue to advise of long lead times; a further 3 hybrid vehicles have recently been ordered and their estimated delivery is May 2023. Delivery dates for 4 vehicles ordered in June are still to be confirmed. User requirements and final specifications for the two remaining vehicles are being finalised.
	Breathing Apparatus Equipment	972	6	0	804	804	810	The project is on track and is currently in the training phase. Equipment orders were placed last year to enable training to commence and a second and final tranche of equipment is due to be received in late September / early October. It is estimated that Berkshire will go live in late November 2022. This has been a collaborative project, and Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire are due to go live in early 2023. As part of the Thames Valley alignment agreement we will be supporting their training and roll out, as they have been supporting us. This means that once the equipment goes live here, the project will continue so that the training can be completed in the other services. The budget approved in the business case was prior to the procurement process commencing. The cost of equipment was less than estimated and the fleet modification costs were also considerably less than predicted, as the supplier selected had the smallest modification requirements. The estimated outturn will be subject to any inflationary pressures that are still to be realised in the current economic climate.

Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total	Spend in	Spend to	Total	Estimated	Total	Commentary
		Project Budget	Prior Years	date 2022/23	Estimated Spend in 2022/23	Project Spend to Completion	Estimated Project Spend	
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
ICT	Network Refresh	481	0	0	87	481	481	Upgrading and updating of our network infrastructure is a key activity that underpins many of RBFRS' strategic plans going forward. The network hardware refresh is to align with new Wide Area Network (WAN) provision, and some of the ground work is due to commence imminently. Estimated completion date remains as Q2 23/24. A further budget allocation was agreed in February 2022 by Members to improve mobile phone reception in some areas of Newsham Court via a mobile phone signal booster, and one off implementation costs of SANH replacement network connectivity costs for TVFCS. Support for the current SANH link is ending. Both projects are on target to complete in the current year.
	Hardware - Computer peripheral refresh	60	23	2	37	35	60	This project supports the ongoing replacement of computer peripheral equipment, including cameras and monitors. This is an ongoing process with planned spending aligned to the client computer hardware refresh cycle. Final tranche of replacement computer monitors have been ordered in Q2.
	Software - Firewatch Development	50	0	0	50	50	50	System development costs to integrate Firewatch and the Learning Management System. Work to commence in the second half of 2022/23.
	MDT Refresh	141	0	0	141	141	141	Final specification research underway, with options to align with Buckinghamshire's approach being actively reviewed. Procurement via an existing framework may provide the opportunity to complete deployment in Q4 22/23.
	Fireground Radio Replacement	136	0	0	136	136	136	Workshop to identify requirements held, with the final device specification currently being finalised. This will be a collaborative project exercise, with the aim of harmonising fireground radio systems across the three Thames Valley services. Collaborative approach may lead to a slight delay in implementation.
	Station End Refresh	67	0	0	0	67	67	Subject to the successful completion of the tender process, but project is currently on schedule. Lead time on required hardware has been estimated at 30 weeks from point of order, so this project may slip to Q1 23/24.
	Website and Intranet upgrade	90	0	0	93	93	93	One off build and implementation costs for upgrade to both the external website and internal intranet system, including customisation for RBFRS requirements. Project due to complete in Q3 22/23.

Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total	Spend in	Spend to	Total	Estimated	Total	Commentary
		Project Budget	Prior Years	date 2022/23	Estimated Spend in 2022/23	Project Spend to Completion	Estimated Project Spend	
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
	Video Conferencing Equipment	88	15	23	73	50	88	Additional funding secured from central Government for specific projects linked to COVID-19 has enabled the purchase of additional video conferencing capabilities and equipment. Delivery and installation of new equipment has commenced in HQ meeting rooms, and the remaining items are expected imminently.
	Helpdesk System	45	33	0	14	14	47	The stores element of the project is the final section to be completed (previous element completed in October 2021). Estimated spend in 22/23 reflects quotation received and project will be completed in this financial year.
TOTAL		3,881	317	42	2,624	3,365	3,724	

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	11 OCTOBER 2022
SUBJECT	APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17
LEAD OFFICER	DOUG BUCHANAN, 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 one performance with supporting narrative on the whole-time duty system and the on-call duty system appliance availability.
- 1.2 As agreed by Fire Authority when finalising the Annual Plan, the corporate measure definition for whole-time appliance availability has now changed (details in section 3.3). Against the new measure definition, whole-time availability across the quarter was **97.6%** against a target of **99%**.
- 1.3 On-call appliance availability through the quarter showed a slight improvement on quarter four, with an overall availability of **44.4%** against the Service target of **60%**. Whilst some way off target, this represents the fourth consecutive quarter of an improved position.
- 1.4 Crewing and availability across both duty systems is likely to continue to be volatile for some time, so it is imperative that workforce planning and effective service delivery management and monitoring continue with sharp focus. It is positive that despite some of the challenges faced, the Service continued to exceed the response standard target with an average of **75.9 %** of emergency incidents attended in 10 minutes.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

¹ Corporate Measure 16: Percentage of wholetime frontline pumping appliance availability (fire engines).

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

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- 2.1 **NOTE** the 2022-23 quarter one performance of **97.6%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16¹
- 2.2 **NOTE** the 2022-23 quarter one performance of overall on-call appliance availability of **44.4%** in line with Corporate Measure 17².

3. **REPORT**

Whole-time Duty System Appliance Availability

- 3.1 This report provides the 2022-23 quarter one update of performance against Corporate Measure 16; *percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability*.
- 3.2 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) employ a lean operating model including the whole-time duty system provision. With an establishment of 324 staff (81 per duty line), maintaining sufficient minimum numbers of qualified firefighters requires effective management combined with flexibility and commitment to provide additional hours from staff on a pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) basis.
- 3.3 As agreed by Fire Authority in the annual plan, the corporate measure relating to whole-time duty system appliance availability has been amended from the start of this financial year. Whereas the previous measure looked only at crewing availability based on a whole shift, the new measure identifies the percentage of time our whole-time pumping appliances are available for mobilisation. There will be periods of unavailability based on factors such as crewing deficiencies, mobilisations of specialist vehicles or unplanned maintenance. It is a more precise reporting of availability than our previous method and also more in keeping with data requested by HMICFRS. Quarter one appliance availability was **97.6%**.
- 3.4 Of the 182 shifts in the quarter, there were 43 in which there was insufficient crewing to provide our optimum cover of 14 appliances and the Service had to enact its degradation guidance. On six of these occasions two appliances were unavailable due to crewing deficiencies.
- 3.5 Operational staff sickness levels continue to add pressure to the Services ability to meet its target for corporate measure 16. Additionally, the leaver profile has continued to present challenges in maintaining full establishment levels across our whole-time duty system.
- 3.6 To help mitigate these pressures a number of actions have been taken:

Service Delivery continued to lead a cross-departmental 'Crewing Task Team' to closely monitor and manage crewing deficiencies. This oversight has provided opportunities to make a number of interventions to maintain

appropriate response standards balanced across immediate and longer-term impacts for the organisation. These included:

- i. Monitoring the impacts of planned training events and either delivering in a different way or postponing these where they had a direct impact on appliance availability.
- ii. Realigning operationally competent staff performing other duties (such as projects or resilience planning) to targeted operational shifts. Staff on restricted duties were used to backfill this impact where possible.
- iii. Recruitment of a further 13 transferees (to be on station early August).
- iv. Ensuring that the Service's degradation policy was consistently applied to reduce the impact on response standards.
- v. Utilising On-Call during peak periods as immediately available appliances.

3.7 As reported in quarter four, the Service expect to see continued pressures in relation to maintaining establishment levels over the coming months. The leaver profile due to retirement continues to be high and with the cost of living challenges (particularly impactful in Berkshire) retention of staff will be more difficult than usual. London Fire Brigade continue to seek transferee's in significant numbers and this comes with the attraction of a significant London weighting payment. Combining these two factors and also a continued higher than usual sickness profile, the Service has developed a summer strategy to ensure our resources are best deployed. Additionally, in August we will be recruiting a further cohort of apprentice Firefighters. Workforce planning is currently anticipating recruitment of 18 apprentices, but this can be flexed to take on more should the requirement be identified. The Service are also seeking both internal and external candidates for crew manager and watch manager roles.

On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability

- 3.8 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 17, which sets a target of *60% of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)*. This measure being applied across the individual and overall availability of the Service's five On-Call appliances.
- 3.9 The overall availability for On-Call appliances in Q1 was **44.4%**; whilst this may appear to be poor performance against a target of 60%, it is a positive increase from the previous three quarters and actually more in keeping with pre-pandemic levels.

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

STATION	TARGET	04	05	06	QTR 4 2021	QTR 1 2022 TOTAL
HUNGERFORD	70%	55.28%	54.30%	50.56%	43.56%	53.39% ↑
LAMBOURN	30%	13.33%	7.66%	6.94%	13.94%	9.29% ↓
MORTIMER	70%	63.33%	62.23%	50.83%	38.61%	58.84% ↑
CROWTHORNE	80%	64.72%	62.10%	73.47%	78.33%	66.71% ↓
MAIDENHEAD	50%	35.0%	43.41%	23.06%	44.61%	33.93% ↓

The target variations between stations are indicative of their differing establishment profiles (the number of individuals at each station, the qualifications and skill sets held, and the amount of operational cover each individual can provide). These have been adjusted for quarter one to reflect the current station circumstances.

3.10 A target of 60% is a stretched target which will always be challenging and subject to some of the volatility of the On Call model. There are a number of factors that have contributed to overall on-call appliance availability falling short of the 60% overall target in quarter one including higher than usual sickness levels, station establishments being lower than planned (due to covid recruitment freeze) and high numbers of staff in development.

3.11 Stations:

- Hungerford – improvement of almost 10% from quarter four 2022-23. This is predominantly related to key individuals returning from long term sickness absence.
- Lambourn – continues to present challenges as there are currently only five crew members on the run. There is also only one crew member competent in incident command level one.
- Mortimer – improvement of almost 20% from quarter four 2022/23. Similar to Hungerford, this has been supported by the return to operational duties from key individuals who were off with long term sickness.
- Maidenhead – this station presents slightly different challenges to the other on-call stations. Whilst the establishment number is healthy, most of the staff are dual contract and therefore are limited in the amount of availability that can be offered to the on-call appliance availability.
- Crowthorne – continues to achieve good availability and has a resilient mix of experience and qualifications.

3.12 Hub-based management teams continue to provide support to all On-Call station-based teams to promote and increase the availability of On-Call fire appliances across the Service through management of provided hours. Whilst overall on-call availability remains below the 60% target in quarter one it does represent a slight increase over the previous quarter from 43.8% with increases identified every quarter since Q1 2021.

3.13 Additional resources have been allocated to supporting on call availability with the recruitment of an On Call learning support Watch manager. This will provide a positive impact to the West on call stations from quarter two. Continued on call recruitment has been ongoing, with particular successes at Lambourn where two additional recruits have commenced employment. However due to the long lead times for recruits to become qualified the full benefits of this is unlikely to be fully felt until the end of the financial year. There is a focus at Maidenhead to bolster new recruits to mitigate the impacts of dual contract employment. The Service have also changed the on call crewing policy, allowing greater flexibility in relation to station detachments.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

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

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5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to be utilised take support a lean crewing model and to mitigate other extractions. This requirement means that the PAOT expenditure is above planned levels.
- 5.2 The use of PAOT through **Q1** continued to enable the Service to maintain an operational availability that supported the achievement of the Service's response standard commitment.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None identified.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 None identified.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Annual Plan 2021/22.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None.

12. CONTACT DETAILS

- 12.1 Doug Buchanan – Area Manager Response and Resilience, Service Delivery
buchanand@rbfrs.co.uk

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
External Audit report	A&GC	17.10.22	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q1 Performance Report	A&GC	17.10.22	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Pensions Update	A&GC	17.10.22	Bi-annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q2	Management Committee	06.12.22	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q2	Management Committee	06.12.22	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Pension Governance	Fire Authority	19.12.22	Ad-hoc	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Communty Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Consultation report	Fire Authority	19.12.22	Ad-hoc	Agree	HCS	CRMP Lead	Part I
Annual Treasury Report	Fire Authority	19.12.22	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
External Auditor Appointment	Fire Authority	19.12.22	Ad-hoc	Agree	HF&P		Part I
Statement of Accounts 20/21	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Annual Governance Statement 20/21	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Agree	Programme Office and Inspection Manager	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance	A&GC	23.01.23	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	23.01.23	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit report	A&GC	23.01.23	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Planning assumptions - Presentation	A&GC	23.01.23	Ad-hoc	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Statement of Accounts 21/22	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Annual Governance Statement 21/22	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Note	Programme Office and Inspection Manager	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	23.01.23	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme - Presentation	A&GC	23.01.23	Bi annual	Note	HBIS	N/A	Part I
Annual Review of Members Code of Conduct	A&GC	23.01.23	Annual	Note and recommend	DChEx	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Pension Board six month update	A&GC	23.01.23	bi annual	Note	HHR&L&D and Pension Board Chair	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	7.02.23	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	7.02.23	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	7.02.23	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 23/24, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	15.02.23	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Built Environment Update	Fire Authority	15.02.23	Ad-hoc	Note	DCFO	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	15.02.23	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Allowances Annual Review 23/24	Fire Authority	15.02.23	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	28.3.23	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	28.3.23	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	28.3.23	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	28.3.23	Annual	Note and Recommend	DChEx	Organisational Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances	A&GC	28.3.23	Annual	Note and Recommend	DChEx	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Annual Plan 2023/24	A&GC	28.3.23	Annual	Note and Recommend	DChEx	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	28.3.23	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Corporate Calendar 2023/24	Fire Authority	27.04.23	Annual	Agree	DChEx	N/A	Part I
Lead Member and Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	27.04.23	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Built Environment Presentation	Fire Authority	27.04.23	Ad-hoc	Note	ACFO	N/A	Part I
Annual Plan 2023/24	Fire Authority	27.04.23	Annual	Agree	DChEx	N/A	Part I

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