



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

Monday, 16th October, 2023

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, 16th October, 2023 at 6.30 pm

VENUE: Lynda Kenyon Suite
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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 Peter Frewer	Councillor Jeff Brooks
Councillor Wendy Griffith	Councillor Paul Gittings
Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons
Councillor Ishrat Shah	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd- DuBey
Councillor Mike Smith	Councillor Simon Werner
Councillor Helen Taylor	

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 11 July 2023 (Pages 7 - 18)

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 11 July 2023, 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. Contaminants presentation

Purpose:

To receive a presentation on contamination works carried out at Fire Stations and progress made.

8. Automatic Fire Alarm Call Filtering Evaluation (Pages 19 - 38)

Purpose:

To note the evaluation report, agree a Member Task and Finish Group be established to provide strategic direction to the work of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) priority 5 and agree the proposed in principle time line to deliver a review of the Service's response to Unwanted Fire Signals in line with CRMP.

9. 2023/24 Budget Monitoring - Quarter One (Pages 39 - 52)

Purpose:

To note the estimated revenue and outturn and to receive an update on capital projects at the end of quarter one (2023/24).

10. Quarter One Appliance Availability by Crewing to Meet Corporate Measures 16 and 17 (Pages 53 - 58)

Purpose:

To note Appliance Availability (Wholetime and On-call) for Quarter One (April to July 2023).

11. Forward Plan (Pages 59 - 60)

Recommendation:

To note the Forward Plan.

12. Date of next meeting

Thursday, 4 December 2023, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

13. Exclusion of the Public *(Pages 61 - 62)*

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 Paragraphs 1, 2 and 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 11 July 2023 *(Pages 63 - 66)*

Purpose:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting and any recoded actions hel on 11 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

15. Slough Fire Station Refurbishment *(Pages 67 - 76)*

Purpose:

To agree the options outlined in the report for the refurbishment of Slough Fire Station in line with the Authority's Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF).

16. Collaboration Agreement for Pension and Payroll Administration *(Pages 77 - 80)*

Purpose:

To agree the recommendations outlined in the report.

17. Terms and Conditions of Senior Roles *(To Follow)*

Purpose:

To agree contract variations to two Senior Roles.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Tuesday, 11th July, 2023 at 6.30 pm

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters (RBFRS),
Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

- Members:** (*present)
- * Councillor Jeff Brooks
 - * Councillor Paul Gittings
 - Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons
 - * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
 - Councillor Simon Werner
 - * Councillor Peter Frewer
 - * Councillor Wendy Griffith
 - * Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle
 - Councillor Ishrat Shah
 - * Councillor Mike Smith
 - Councillor Helen Taylor

- In Attendance:**
- Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
 - Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
 - Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
 - Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
 - Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
 - Jess James (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection, AM P&P)
 - Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
 - Andy 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)
 - Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
 - Lukasz Wrona (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

Action

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24

With the agreement of those present, Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer presided over the meeting for the election of Chair. He requested for nominations. Councillor Shepherd-Dubey nominated Councillor Jeff Brooks as 23/24 Management Committee Chair. This was seconded by Councillor Smith.

There being no other nominations it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Brooks be elected Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24

With Councillor Brooks presiding, the Monitoring Officer sought nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chair. Councillor Griffith nominated Councillor Paul Gittings. This was seconded by the Chair.

There being no further nominations, it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Gittings be appointed as Vice-Chair for 2023/24.

3. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Werner, Helliard-Symons and Taylor.

5. 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.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 APRIL 2023

There were no recorded actions.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2023, be approved as a true record to be signed by the Chair.

7. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:

Garrard Street Incident

On Friday, 7 July, RBFRS received reports of a fire on the twelfth and thirteenth floors of a high-rise construction site on Garrard Street in Reading.

Firefighters arrived at the scene within 90 seconds and prevented the fire from spreading and ensured all persons on site were safe and accounted for.

Crews from Caversham Road, Wokingham Road, Wokingham, Mortimer, Bracknell, Slough, Whitley Wood and Theale fire stations attended, along with the Aerial Ladder Platform, Incident Command Unit and five Officers. Crews from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service also assisted.

Crews worked hard at the scene, alongside partners, to bring the fire under control and were initially in attendance for over four hours.

An initial fire investigation has been completed. The cause of the fire appears to be accidental at this time.

The Chair offered his thanks to all those that responded to the incident so promptly and contained the fire.

New Wholetime Apprentices

In a few weeks, we will welcome eight new Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices to the Service.

The Apprentices will join the Service on Thursday, 3 August, where they will receive a two-day induction course at Whitey Wood's Training Centre and at Headquarters, Newsham Court.

Afterwards, they will become our third cohort of Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices to go on a 13-week training course at the Fire Service College in Gloucestershire. They will return to Berkshire to complete the final few weeks of initial training before graduating and joining their watches across the County.

A brief update on the recent 999 call outage

Members will be aware of the recent 999 system national outage, following a briefing note circulated on behalf of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer. The total system failure affected all emergency services across the country on the morning of Sunday 25 June which resulted in over 11,000 emergency calls being unsuccessfully connected.

We remain as confident as we can be that there were no direct impacts to the safety of Royal Berkshire residents on this occasion. However, this is clearly a serious and concerning failure of a system we rely on. BT have published an overview of their understanding of what led to the failure and have already taken steps to improve the robustness of their systems and processes.

Ofcom have now launched their own investigation into BT's compliance with the Communications Act to determine if BT has failed to comply with its regulatory obligations, which the Sector are cooperating with and that we will be following closely.

Please be assured that the Service are working on behalf of the Authority, to support national colleagues in expressing deep concern that such a situation could occur. Further, work has already commenced with local blue–light partners to ensure the Service can respond as effectively as possible should such a situation arise again.

E-bike and E-scooter Safety

Following the tragic incident in Kings Hedges in Cambridgeshire, RBFRS has issued safety advice for e-bikes and e-scooters.

An article that has been published on the Service’s website to help Berkshire residents protect themselves and others from the dangers of e-bike, e-scooter or lithium-ion battery fires.

Work is ongoing across the Service and with partner agencies, to ensure this advice is provided during Safe and Well Visits and other community engagement activities.

The Chair requested Members to support the Service by sharing this message with their constituents.

Senior Leadership Team departures

Doug Buchanan, Area Manager and Andrew Mclenahan, Head of Fleet, Facilities and Equipment, will be leaving the Service to take up new positions this summer.

Doug will join our colleagues at Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service in early September and oversee their Protection, Assurance and Development functions. Doug has been with the Service since 2002, starting as a firefighter at Caversham Road Fire Station and more recently doing a fine job in overseeing our Response function.

Andrew has overseen the Fleet, Facilities and Equipment function for over four years and has been instrumental in delivering real improvements, including significantly upgrading our fire engine fleet – something we’ll hear more about in the agenda.

The Chair thanked both Doug and Andrew, on behalf of the Fire Authority, for the years of dedicated service they have given to the Service and, most importantly, the people of Berkshire.

A process to find their replacements is already underway.

Low Skills Carbon Fund Grant

The Chair announced the Service was one of only three fire services that have been successful in receiving grant funding to assist in our decarbonisation ambitions.

The Service has accepted over £40,000 of financial support from Government's 2023 Low Carbon Skills Fund. The success follows a rigorous application process and will enable the development of detailed heat decarbonisation analysis which will better guide our future investment.

This specialist analysis is also a vital first step in accessing further, more substantial, financial support to assist with the installation of sustainable technologies at some of our most in need properties.

The Service will now commission expert external support, using the initial grant funding, with a view to developing a comprehensive heat decarbonisation plan and accessing further grant funding in the autumn.

Getting to Know RBFRS Event

On Thursday, 29 June, we held a 'Getting to Know RBFRS' Event at Newbury Fire Station.

The event was well attended by Members of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Mayors and we were delighted to be joined by the High Sheriff of the Royal County of Berkshire, Simon Muir.

Following the publication of the Corporate Plan and Community Risk Management Plan, the event provided an opportunity to explore the key themes of the Vision that has been set out for the next four years.

Staff members from across the organisation were on hand to explain how they deliver services to the community and there were demonstrations from Newbury's firefighters and fire cadets.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this event to help showcase the fantastic work of RBFRS.

Berkshire Fire Cadets Graduation

Thirty-seven Fire Cadets from across Berkshire demonstrated their new skills at a Graduation Ceremony held at Newbury Fire Station on the evening of Wednesday, 5 July 2023.

During the event, cadets from Crowthorne, Maidenhead, Newbury, and Whitley Wood demonstrated a range of skills required to deal with different emergency fire and rescue scenarios. These included a decontamination exercise, a house fire, a road traffic collision and a water rescue.

Certificates were presented to each cadet along with Cadet of the Year awards from each Unit.

The Braidwood Shield is awarded to the Unit that has demonstrated the best overall development, enthusiasm and energy throughout the year. This year it was given to Maidenhead.

Congratulations to all of our cadets for successfully completing this course, and a huge thankyou to the staff, Cadet Mentors and volunteers for all of their hard work behind the scenes.

Summer Internship Update

A cohort of five interns will join the Service on Thursday, 13 July, as part of the second year of the Summer Internship Scheme.

As part of this year's Scheme, the interns will rotate between five departments and visit six fire stations over the course of their internship.

The internship will conclude on Friday, 18 August, with a ceremony and presentation to see how they have progressed during their time with the Service.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith regarding the Garrard Street Incident, Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), reported the Building Safety Act 2022 will require the building safety regulator involvement from end to end. This was not in place as yet.

In discussing Power outage, Wayne Bowcock explained National power outage planning was on the Services' current risk register.

In discussing community safety messages around e-bikes and storage of lithium-ion batteries for solar panels, Wayne Bowcock reported the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) were currently researching this area.

8. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

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

9. CLEANING CONTRACT WAIVER

Andy McLenahan, Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment (HFF&E), stated the report was seeking Members approval to extend the Service's current cleaning contract for six months. He explained the existing contract was due to end in September. The Service had participated in a National Fire Chief's Council

(NFCC) National Procurement Hub collaborative procurement process with three other fire and rescue services to procure a new cleaning provision.

The outcome of the procurement process resulted in a national cleaning provider as the preferred bidder, however the increase in annual costs far exceeded the initial pre-tender evaluation estimate.

Following comments from Members, Andy McLenahan reported the extension of the current cleaning contract would provide an opportunity to procure a local contract. In response to suggestion from Councillor Shepherd-DuBey, Andy McLenahan stated the suggestion to identify neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services cleaning contract providers was an option that could be explored.

Councillor Smith stated he assumed there was a reduction in the use of office space and did not think cleaning contracts were as high as identified in the NFCC's procurement exercise. He asked, how will the Service ensure quality, going forward.

Andy McLenahan reported the cleaning operatives would be protected under the Transfer of Undertakings (protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE); therefore, employees would remain the same. He reassured Members that the cleaning contract had robust KPI's built in, and service led agreements to manage performance.

Councillor Frewer asked whether the Service had considered employing their own cleaning operatives. Andy McLenahan reported that this was something that had not been explored but could be considered.

The Vice-Chair reported that the above option, could also be used as a route into the Fire Service.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), reported Firefighters currently cleaned appliance bays, which saved the Service £25,000 per year.

RESOLVED that the contract waiver to Sasse Facilities Management Ltd for up to £135,000 for a six-month extension to the current cleaning contract be approved.

10. 2022/23 BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER FOUR

Councillor Smith introduced the report as Budget and Income Generation Lead Member. Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P) reported the forecast revenue outturn for 2022/23 in Appendix A of the report showed a deficit of £733,000. He stated the pay awards during the year had impacted the budget. The pay offer for Grey book staff was accepted and 7% was backdated to 1 July 2022. This had resulted in additional costs for Grey book staff in 2022/23 of £654,000.

The Green book pay award for 2022/23 had been accepted and was backdated to 1 April 2022 at 4%, this resulted in an additional cost pressure of £219,000. Station staff budgets also include overtime costs that were £606,000 over budget. Non-station overtime was £42,000 over budget. However, additional overtime costs were partly offset due to vacancies and different mix of station staff in development and competent roles.

The rise in inflation had meant there was an increase in the cost of goods and services, and utility costs had increased sharply. In referring to the *Transport line*, high fuel prices resulted in additional costs of £46,000 for operational fleet.

Conor Byrne highlighted the successful final appeal on business rates charges for the Dee Road site had resulted in a net refund of £321,000 and in relation to Pension costs, the Government had settled injury to feelings claims arising from the McCloud judgement. The result has allowed the Service to release provisions made from previous years' accounts to cover these claims, which mostly accounts for a variance of £202,000.

The Chair stated there were severe financial pressures to the Service and asked whether the Service received over the border income.

Conor Byrne reported the Service was charging Thames Valley Fire and Rescue partners for over the border fire cover; however, it was unpredictable.

The Vice-Chair asked whether the Service were expected to see an increase in income from Investment Interest. The Chair reported the increase in investment income this year was £242,000.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith, Conor Byrne reported the Fire Authority approved a new Treasury Management policy which included ethical investment with countries recommended by Freedom House.

In referring to Appendix C (Capital Monitoring) Councillor McKenzie-Boyle requested for a RAG rating to be inserted. In addition, Councillor Smith requested for a column to be inserted to identify projects which had been completed.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), explained the column in Appendix C (Fireground Radio Replacement) was a project with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue (FRS) partners. Buckinghamshire FRS were leading on this project. The project was due to be implemented in October and Mark Arkwell stated that he would provide further detail to Members.

DCFO

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The report be noted, and
- 2) The reserves position as set out in Appendix D be agreed.

11. QUARTER FOUR APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17

Katie Mills, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), presented the Quarter Four Appliance Availability report. She reported Whole-time availability across the quarter was 98.2% against a target of 99%. On-call appliance availability was 41.7% against a target of 60%.

She stated the Service employed a lean operating model with an establishment of 324 staff (81 per duty line). Operational staff sickness during the quarter was 5.5%, which was higher than the target of 4%. The leaver profile continues to present challenges due to pension changes and transfers to London Fire Brigade. However, 24 Firefighter apprentices were posted across Whole-time stations in May.

In referring to Hungerford Fire Station On-call availability, she stated there was a significant impact on availability due to the health of two out of three staff members. The Annual Plan had reduced the on-call availability target from 60% to 50%, which will commence in 2023/24 and advised it remained a stretched target.

The Chair commended Whole-time availability reached in the last quarter, and acknowledged, on-call availability remained a challenge.

In referring to priority six of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), paragraph 3.14 of the report, the Vice-Chair stated more work needed to be done nationally around on-call availability.

Katie Mills reported the NFCC was working at national level on on-call availability, and added, on a local level, the Service had established a Response project which was linked to national conversations.

Councillor Frewer asked whether the Service had considered reducing the number of on-call hours to attract new staff. Katie Mills reported the Service offered flexibility as part of its on-call recruitment.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (CFO) explained both on-call availability and whole-time availability data related to the Fire Authority's budget. The on-call model required the recruitment of more people doing less hours, and within the whole-time model the requirement was to reduce sickness figures and overtime. Other Fire and Rescue Services have tackled on-call availability by their investment of over £1m.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), discussed the measure and performance around appliance availability and stated the Fire Authority had invested in 4 x4 appliances which only required two people. He added, the more on-call staff were used, the more experienced they will become, therefore increasing retention levels.

The Chair asked whether the Service had considered a referral scheme as a financial incentive. Becci Jefferies, Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development (HHR&L&D), reported it was something that could be considered.

Councillor McKenzie-Boyle commended Crowthorne Fire Station for their on-call availability in the last quarter.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The 2022-23 quarter four performance of 98.2% appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16 be noted, and
- 2) The 2022-23 quarter four performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of 41.7% in line with Corporate Measure 17 be noted.

12. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 16 October 2023, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

14. 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 Paragraphs 1, 2 and 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.

15. SERVICE HOUSES

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) reported the Fire Authority owned three houses as a result of legacy arrangements to support the Service operationally. He outlined the report was seeking Members to approve the recommendations outlined in the report.

In answer to a question from Councillor McKenzie-Boyle, Mark Arkwell stated he was unaware of what other Fire and Rescue Services had done with their Service houses; however, London Fire Brigade had retained some of their properties. He had sought treasury guidance.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (CFO) reported there were a mix of Service houses up and down the county and explained that it was a legacy issue.

Prior to moving the recommendation, the Chair requested for an update at a future Management Committee meeting. The Chair moved the recommendation which was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the recommendations outlined in the report be approved.

16. TRAINING SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Mark Arkwell (DCFO) reported the Fire Authority, in February 2023 approved the intention to redevelop the Training Centre as part of its 10-year Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF). The Training Centre experienced major flooding last year, of which some of the financial implications to refurbish have been met by the insurance company.

Councillor Griffith asked whether there was a risk the site could be flooded again. Mark Arkwell reported the flood was internal. Councillor Smith stated he endorsed the recommendation of the report. The Chair moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Smith.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The recommended redevelopment scheme of Option 2 be approved.
- 2) The sum outlined in the report be released to support enabling pre-construction costs, be approved.

17. FLEET REPLACEMENT BUSINESS CASE

Andy McLenahan, Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment (HFF&E) reported the Service planned fleet replacement programme renewed vehicles that were at the end of life. The Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) approved by the Fire Authority, was a budget provision used to fund annual fleet replacements.

Councillor Shepherd-DuBey asked whether old appliances were used as part of a disposal programme sent to Ukraine. Andy McLenahan reported old appliances would be disposed of by public auction. The National Chief Fire Council (NFCC) if viable, would consider using and transporting older appliances to Ukraine.

In answer to a question from Councillor McKenzie-Boyle, Andy McLenahan reported the Stations that were most busy would receive new appliances first, then it would be cascaded down. In response to Councillor Helliard-Symons, he reported some electric vehicles were on order for operational use, however they were not the eight (red fleet) appliances.

A discussion was held on hydrogen technology as an alternative fuel. Andy McLenahan reported this new technology will have to be monitored.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) Option 2 in the attached business case be agreed; and
- 2) The capital expenditure for Option 2, set out in the attached business case be approved.

(The meeting concluded at 20:17)

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	16 OCTOBER 2023
SUBJECT	AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARM CALL FILTERING EVALUATION
LEAD OFFICER	JIM POWELL, AREA MANAGER COLABORATION AND POLICY
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR PAUL GITTINGS CRMP LEAD
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following a public consultation in early 2022, the Authority agreed to make changes to how the service responded to calls (False Alarms or Unwanted Fire Signals) from Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA). This change came into effect in June 2022.
- 1.2 Officers undertook to “evaluate this change through a 12 month period and report back to members at an appropriate meeting” [Fire Authority 28 April 2022]. This report presents the findings of the evaluation, outlines further action the service will take and proposes how the Authority may choose to take action in respect of the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2023-27.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the evaluation report.
- 2.2 **AGREE** to initiate a member task and finish group to provide strategic direction to the work of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) priority 5.

Agenda Item 8

2.3 **AGREE** to the proposed in principle time line (as set out at 3.29) to deliver a review of the services response to Unwanted Fire Signals in line with the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's CRMP.

3. REPORT

3.1 False alarms make up the majority of calls Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) attends, see figure 1:

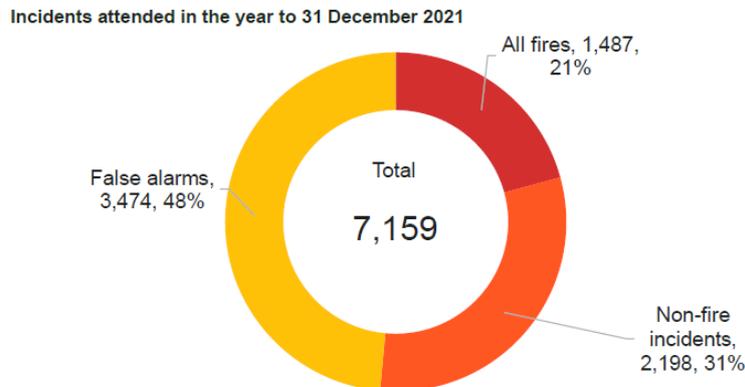


Figure 1 – source RBFRS HMICFRS report 21-22

3.2 The significant majority of false alarms result from the activation of Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA). These are systems within buildings designed to detect fire but often operate in error or where there is not actually a fire. The need for and type of AFA system installed in non-domestic premises is regulated through the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

3.3 Building owners (or Responsible Persons) and Fire Alarm Monitoring Organisations (FAMOs) have a responsibility to evaluate whether the activation of an AFA is an actual fire or a false alarm before notifying the Fire Service.

3.4 For a number of reasons on many occasions this does not happen and the Service is asked to respond to AFA activations that are false alarms. These are then termed Unwanted Fire Signals (UwFS). In our public consultation in 2022 the Service reported that 99% of calls to AFAs were Unwanted Fire Signals.

3.5 The impact of FRS attendance at UwFS incidents can be summarised as:

- Diverting essential services from emergencies (putting life and property at risk).
- Unnecessary risk to crew and public whilst responding (accidents).
- Disruption to Prevention (Safe & Well visits, schools education) arson reduction & business support activities.
- Disruption to critical training of operational personnel.
- Cost to business of On-call fire fighters being released.

- Impact on the environment of unnecessary appliance movements (noise, air and traffic pollution).
- 3.6 The issue of false alarms was highlighted nationally in the first HMICFRS 'State of Fire' report in 2019 and, following RBFRS' first inspection in 2018, the service received an Area For Improvement (AFI):
- “The service should ensure it addresses effectively the burden of false alarms (termed ‘unwanted fire signals’).”*
- 3.7 The AFI was underpinned by the expectation that the service should have a more co-ordinated approach to working with local businesses to reduce the burden of Unwanted Fire Signals and be aligned to the NFCC ['Guidelines for the Reduction of False Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals'](#).
- 3.8 Subsequently the service reviewed and refreshed related internal documentation and published new policy and guidance, aligned to the NFCC position, in October 2021. As part of the review the service explored the potential or likely reductions in UwFS as a result of implementing the NFCC guidance.
- 3.9 The guidance describes how FRS attendance to these incidents can be reduced or removed where business do not manage their false alarms and this behaviour results in persistent UwFS to the Fire Service. RBFRS data from 22/23 indicates that of the total calls to UwFS in non-residential premises, approximately 8% would be eligible for a reduction or removal of an FRS attendance to AFAs at their premise. However, this would not necessarily be appropriate in all cases. Therefore this would likely result in limited improvement in managing and reducing the impact of UwFS on the service.
- 3.10 Section 18C Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 has allowed, since 2012, for levying a charge for persistent UwFS from premises that are not domestic premises and this is also referenced in the NFCC guidance. There are strict criteria for applying a charge and “the Authority must consult any persons the Authority considers appropriate” before applying a charge. These criteria and the relatively small number of persistent offenders provides limited opportunity for cost recovery and to date RBFA has not levied a charge.
- 3.11 The service will be evaluating its performance against elements of the NFCC guidance, related to how the service interacts with business that have persistent UwFS and local businesses more generally, towards the end of 2023. This will include a cost benefit analysis of potential cost recovery considered against any future proposals to how the service may manage its response to UwFS.
- 3.12 A key element of the NFCC guidance is ‘call filtering’. For Fire and Rescue Services this means actions taken by Fire Control staff to determine if an emergency response to an AFA activation is necessary e.g. is it an Unwanted Fire Signal?

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- 3.13 RBFRS already had a call filtering procedure in place via Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS). As part of the review undertaken following the 2018 HMICFRS AFI, the service recognised that this procedure could be streamlined, enabling the service to manage its resources and its risk more effectively. This resulted in the public consultation of 2022, the agreed change to the procedure and is the subject of the evaluation at appendix A.
- 3.14 The change was relatively minor. It removed a step in the procedure that required Fire Control operators to call premises back after a set time period. It placed an emphasis on the Responsible Person and/or the FAMO having local systems in place to confirm if there was a fire or if it was a false alarm. If they were unable to do this a Fire Engine would not attend the site.
- 3.15 The consultation was underpinned by a data led methodology that predicted the change to procedure could result in fewer Fire Engines being mobilised where they were not needed, freeing them up for more serious incidents or to undertake Prevention or training activities, thus managing risk more effectively.
- 3.16 The evaluation, undertaken independently by the RBFRS Data and Performance team, indicates that, whilst there has been a small improvement, the service has not been able to benefit from the expected improvements the original data suggested could be achievable.
- 3.17 Although improvements have been lower than expected the data suggests that the application of the streamlined process has made a positive change and therefore the service intends to maintain this position.
- 3.18 The evaluation team reviewed quantitative data and worked with control operators to try and understand what the underlying issues may be and the report subsequently provides a number of recommendations:
1. Consider how it could work to more effectively collaborate with Thames Valley FRS partners to align the operational response to Automatic Fire Alarms.
 2. Review the current mobilisation protocol to seek a more effective balance between community risk management and managing the burden of false alarms (specifically Unwanted Fire Signals), cognisant of recommendation 1.
 3. Explore how it could influence Alarm Receiving Companies, through existing regional and national structures, to consistently adopt practices that would support RBFRS in managing the burden of false alarms.
 4. Considering any future change, ensure it places the appropriate emphasis on cultural change.
 5. Review document control processes to ensure staff are only able to access appropriate information.

- 3.19 In relation to recommendations 1 and 2, through the existing collaboration partnership, Thames Valley FRS have already commenced discussions on how to manage UwFS and having a common approach to mobilisation of resources for this type of incident. This was primarily driven by all services having similar Areas For Improvement, relating to UwFS, identified by HMICFRS.
- 3.20 There is also a legacy aspect to this, driven by the introduction of a joint control function (TVFCS) in 2015 and the intent to operationally align all Pre-Determined Attendances (PDAs) across the Thames Valley. Having differing mobilisation protocols for each service is not optimal, in that application of call filtering processes becomes more challenging and increases the risk of operator error.
- 3.21 TVFRS partners are keen to explore new options in how they mobilise to UwFS incidents to reduce the impacts set out in 3.5 and are undertaking work on proposals at this time. RBFRS would wish to be cognisant of these proposals along with reviewing how other FRS are dealing with the issue.
- 3.22 RBFRS recognises that there is limited scope to reduce the burden of Unwanted Fire Signals through the application of the NFCC Guidance. The service will continue work in this area and evaluate how well it does this (see 3.10, this will also encompass recommendation 3 of the evaluation report and meet elements of CRMP Priority 5). However there are likely to be minimal gains and the service will need to balance Protection resources against this and other key activity such as delivering the Risk Based Inspection Programme (RBIP) and monitoring High Rise Residential Buildings (HRRB) in our area.
- 3.23 The Fire Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2023-27 Priority 3 sets out the intent to *“develop our response model to ensure that we are providing the most effective response to incidents within Berkshire, ensuring that it is aligned to the risks identified, is sustainable and provides value for money.”*
- 3.24 Further, under Priority 5 - *“We will develop our fire protection service to support the resilience of businesses, to ensure the safety of all people using buildings covered by the Fire Safety Act 2021, Building Safety Act 2022, and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to ensure that our enforcement role is effective and clear.”* – the Authority has specifically committed to ‘review our operational response to Unwanted Fire Signals (Automatic Fire Alarms) to reduce the impact on the service and public’.
- 3.25 The service intends to commence that review in quarter three of 23/24 and look at developing a range of proposals for consideration by the Authority. Members of the Management Committee should consider how they may support the strategic development of any such proposals and this paper recommends a focussed member led task and finish group to review any such proposals (see 2.2).

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- 3.26 In considering potential future changes to the way the service responds to UwFS, it may be necessary to undertake a public consultation. Therefore the Fire Authority will be presented with, and required to agree, any proposals before the service consults publicly.
- 3.27 To ensure the service provides sufficient time to undertake the work to develop any such proposals, allow for public consultation (if required), and implementation of any changes prior to future HMICFRS inspections and aligned to the CRMP, this paper recommends that any such proposals be put before the Authority in February 2024.
- 3.28 Furthermore, the Fire Authority will be required to conscientiously consider the results of any such consultation prior to taking any decisions. This paper recommends that this is put before the Authority in June 2024.
- 3.29 Therefore, to deliver the review of our operational response to Unwanted Fire Signals, aligned to the CRMP and in support of the HMICFRS AFI, officers are recommending, in principle, the following timeline:
- Review, presentation of findings and proposals, decision on next steps – February 2024
 - Public consultation (if required) – February to May 2024
 - Fire Authority consideration of consultation and decision (if required)– June 2024
- 3.30 In recognition of recommendation 4 of the evaluation report, Officers will ensure, should any future changes be agreed, appropriate and adequate consultation, training and support will be provided to staff to deliver effective cultural change.
- 3.31 Lastly, in respect of recommendation 5, Officers have ensured only the current version of the guidance and protocols are available.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Prevention: We will reduce the risk to our communities through our partnership duties and prevention education activities, ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.2 Protection: We will support those with responsibility for premises to understand their duties in ensuring the safety of all people using buildings covered by the Building Safety Act 2022 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, whilst ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.3 Response: We will ensure that our people are trained and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.

- 4.4 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.
- 4.5 Sustainability: We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this paper.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a legal requirement under Section 7(2)(c) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to “make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and for summoning personnel”, in order to discharge its obligations under section 7(1) to extinguish fires in its area, and protecting life and property in the event of fires in its area.

- 6.2 The Localism Act 2011 brought into force changes to the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. Three sections were added to the :Sections 18A, 18B and 18C allow Fire and Rescue Authorities to charge for responding to a report of fire where the call is made within the following circumstances:

- There is a report of fire.
- The premises are not domestic premises.
- The report is false.
- The report is made as a direct or indirect result of warning equipment having malfunctioned or been mis-installed.
- There is a persistent problem.
- No charges are introduced without a prior period of appropriate consultation.
- In setting the amount of a charge the authority's income from charges must not exceed the cost to the authority of taking the action for which the charges are imposed.

- 6.3 The legal obligations concerning the requirement to consult on CRMP matters as set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England. The Authority would also need to consider the common law framework set out in the four Gunning Principles (R v London Borough of Brent [1985] 84 LGR 168).

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct Equality and Diversity implications associated with this paper. Changes to any future activity would require a suitable and sufficient Equality Impact Assessment.

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8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no risk implications related directly to this paper. Consideration of Community Risk Management would be a key factor in any future decision making in relation to the RBFRS response to Unwanted Fire Signal and would form a key part of any future proposals.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 Exploring an aligned Thames Valley response to Automatic Fire Alarms would support RBFRS meeting the duty to collaborate and would form a fundamental part of ongoing operational alignment that began with the formation of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Chief Fire Officer
10.2 Chief Finance Officer
10.3 Monitoring Officer

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Automatic Fire Alarm Consultation Results – [Minutes of the meeting of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority 28 April, 2022 \[Minute 69\]](#)
11.2 [State of Fire and Rescue – The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2019 \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](#)
11.3 [Effectiveness, efficiency and people 2018/19: An inspection of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](#)

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Annex 1 - Glossary of terms
12.2 Appendix A - AFA policy change evaluation

13. CONTACT DETAILS

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

Annex 1 – Glossary of Terms

Automatic Fire Alarm	(AFA) An automatic fire detection and fire alarm system – as defined in BS5839-1
False Alarm	A fire alarm signal resulting from a cause or causes other than a fire, in which a system has responded, either as designed or as the technology can be reasonably expected to respond.
Unwanted Fire Signal	(UwFS) A false alarm from an automatic fire detection and fire alarm system that has been passed through to the FRS.
Persistent Unwanted Fire Signals	Premises with four or more UwFS incident dates within a twelve month period and in the opinion of RBFRS: Have not taken reasonable measures to reduce the number of false alarms; or do not satisfy the British Standard recommendations in relation to the ‘Acceptable Rate of False Alarms’ (BS 5389 part 1, section 3).
Fire Alarm Monitoring	(FAMO) a company or organisation that has the Organisation responsibility for the administration of the connection and monitoring of fire alarm systems and operates an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).
Alarm Receiving Centre	(ARC) a continuously manned remote centre to which information concerning the status of one or more alarm systems is reported. The ARC will pass the fire signal (or UwFS) to the Fire and Rescue service.
Call filtering	Also known as ‘call challenge’. Steps taken to limit a false alarm being transmitted to FRS as an UwFS and action taken by the FRS to determine if an emergency response is necessary.
Pre-Determined	The specific level of resources, including personnel and Attendance equipment, that are dispatched to an incident based on the type and severity of the incident.

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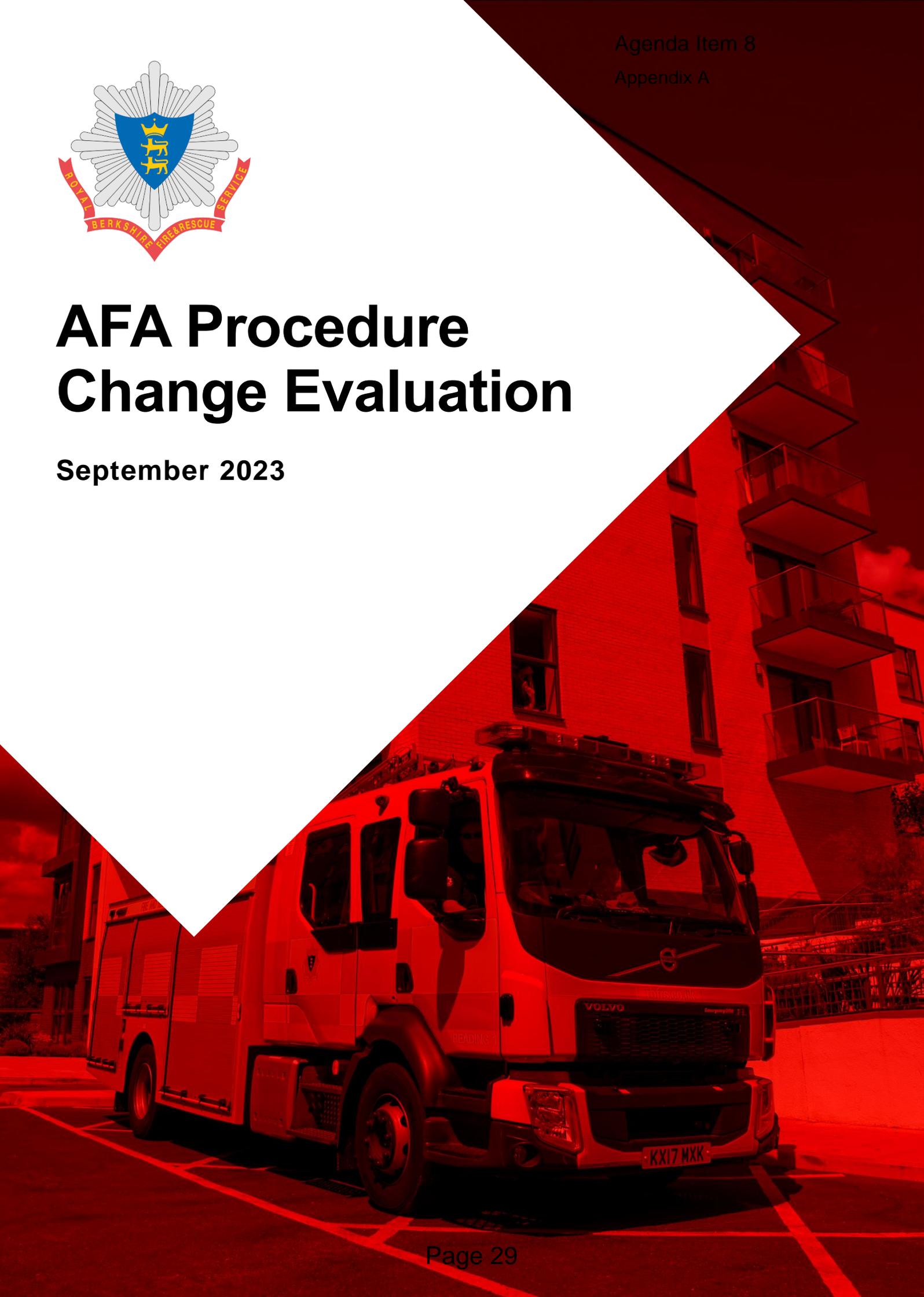
Regulatory Reform

Establishes the legal framework for fire safety standards (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and regulations in various premises and workplaces. This order primarily focuses on ensuring the safety of individuals in non-domestic properties and communal areas of residential properties.



AFA Procedure Change Evaluation

September 2023





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Introduction

In 2022 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service altered its 'call filtering' procedure for Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA) following a period of public consultation.

The consultation asked stakeholders to consider a change to the extant AFA mobilisation protocol. The consultation was supportive of change and on the 28 April 2022 Royal Berkshire Fire Authority voted to adopt consultation Option A:

Option A - change our current procedure to help reduce the burden of false alarms on our Service (please see flow chart below). When the Fire and Rescue Service Control Room receives a notification of an Automatic Fire Alarm sounding, we will ask the building to confirm the cause of the alarm. As part of Option A in this consultation:

- The second call back after 20 minutes is removed because the occupier will do their necessary fire safety checks and let us know if there is a fire.
- If there is a fire, we will send a fire engine.
- If we can't make contact with the building, we will send a fire engine.
- If they don't call back or confirm there is a fire, we won't send a fire engine at that time.

The procedural change was enacted on 01 June 2022.

At the time of consultation RBFRS attended about 2,200 automatic fire alarm incidents each year. The consultation stated that the procedural change would result in call challenging approximately 650 incidents per year, freeing this time to be used for other priority work.

The consultation stated that RBFRS spends an average of around 30 minutes attending to each AFA, and envisaged a saving of up to 1,300 hours of firefighter time.

This evaluation is intended to assess the effectiveness of the amendment to the Automatic Fire Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals procedure and the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Mobilising general protocol.

The evaluation of the procedural change is highlighted in relation to an area for improvement by HMICFS in its 2021/22 report on RBFRS:

"The service should ensure it monitors and evaluates its revised approach to the burden of false alarms (termed 'unwanted fire signals')"



Evaluation

When the change to the protocol was put in place, we made a commitment to ensure the impact was evaluated. The evaluation is intended to inform the Fire Authority, RBFRS and TVFCS managers whether the change has had the intended impact by evidencing how many AFAs RBFRS attends, what the impact of the policy change was and how much capacity has been released from attending AFAs to use for more productive work.

We use staff time, equipment and resources to respond to AFAs to determine if the 999 call is due to a fire or an unwanted fire signal from an AFA. This activity should result in a determination of the cause of the alarm and may involve firefighting, regulatory activity or fire safety advice and education to improve the understanding of responsible person about their duties.

If the change to the TVFCS Automatic Fire Alarms and Unwanted Fire Signals Policy and Automatic Fire Alarms Mobilising General Protocol worked as intended the outcome should be a reduction in number of AFAs attended. The impact of this should be increased emergency response availability, and increased availability for prevention activities, risk inspections, and training activities.

This should lead to improved public safety and more effective use of RBFRS and TVFCS resources.

Evaluation Questions

1. Has the implementation of the AFA policy change reduced our response to unwanted or false AFA calls?
2. What has been the staff experience of implementing the new AFA policy, including personal feedback on improvements, barriers and suggestions for improvements?

Method

In order to answer our evaluation questions, we used these data collection methods:

Quantitative Data- analysis of AFA response data before and after the policy change

Qualitative Data- Survey Monkey collection to collect control staff feedback and 1:1 interviews with those in management roles.



Findings

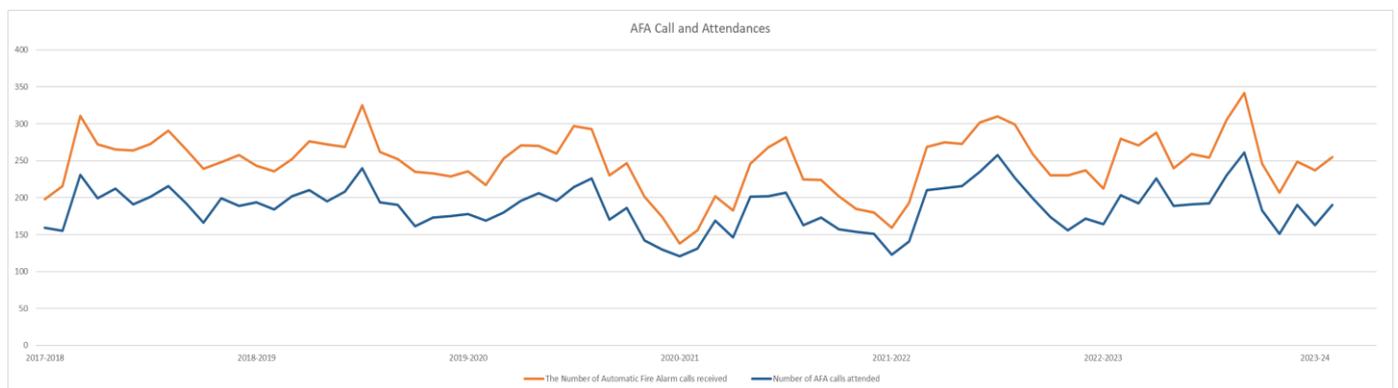
1. Has the implementation of the AFA policy change reduced our response to unwanted or false AFA calls?

We analysed AFA data from April 2017- May 2023 to see if there had been any change in AFA attendance since the policy change was implemented in June 2022.

The table below shows this:

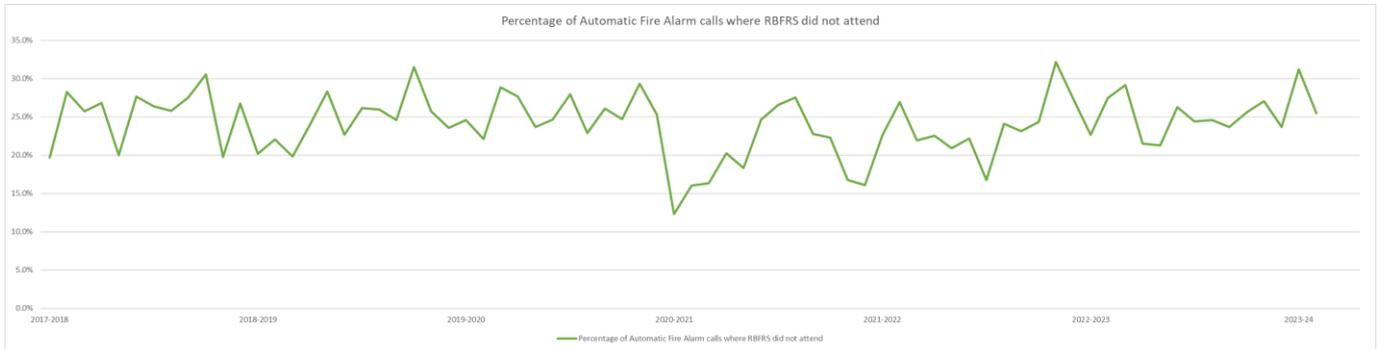
	Pre Policy Change		Post Policy Change
	Long-term April 2017 to May 2022	Short-term June 2021 to May 2022	June 2022 to May 2023
Average AFA calls per month	244	265	264
Average AFA calls not attended per month	59	62	66
Percentage of AFA calls not attended	24.1%	23.6%	25.2%

The figure below shows the number of AFA calls received and attended from 2017-2023:





The figure below shows the percentage of AFA not attended from 2017-2023.



- The data shows a very small increase in the number and percentage of AFA calls which were not attended per month after the policy change.
- Post policy change, there were on average four more calls not attended than in the 12 months prior to the policy change.
- This may not be statistically significant.

From the quantitative data, we can see that the implementation of the AFA policy change caused little impact on AFA attendance. In order to gain a wider understanding and context of why that might be we collected some qualitative data from Control Staff using a survey monkey questionnaire and 1:1 interviews.

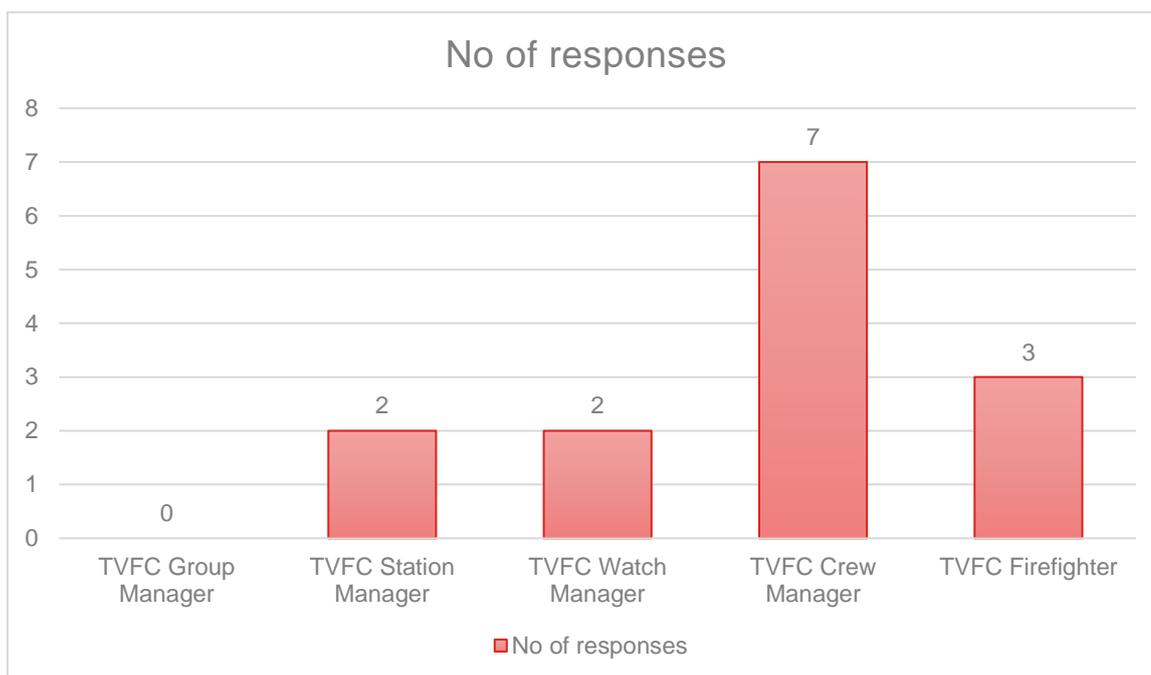
2. What has been the staff experience of implementing the new AFA policy, including personal feedback on improvements, barriers and suggestions for improvements?

We created a survey monkey questionnaire with 10 questions to gain feedback from staff about their experience of the AFA policy change, any barriers to its implementation and suggestions for improving the AFA attendance process. This was an opportunity for staff to provide their personal feelings and feedback anonymously.

This survey was sent to all control staff and was open for four weeks from Thursday 10th August to Friday 1st September. We sent two reminders to staff to take part during this time via the TVFCS Group Manager.

In total we received 14 responses. There are estimated 40 members of control room staff.

Of the 14 responses we received, the staff roles were as follows:



We also held 1:1 interviews with the following individuals:

TVFC GM

2 x TVFC Station Manager

1 x TVFC Watch Manager

1x TVFC Crew Manager

Themes in findings:

We analysed the qualitative responses from those who took part and identified the common themes emerging from their feedback to aim to answer our evaluation questions.

Has the policy change improved AFA attendance?

- There were mixed responses from the staff feedback about whether there was a feeling that the policy change had improved the AFA attendance process.
- Some people felt that the policy change was already cementing practice that was in place prior to the policy change so it would be hard to see an improvement.
- A number of respondents said that at times *previous* to the policy change, the 20 minute call back procedure was not always applied anyway due to resourcing and capacity in the team, so appliances were usually mobilised when not needed. There seemed to be mixed practice across responses.



- A small number of people felt that the policy change has caused an increase to AFAs as they were sending an appliance if they didn't hear back as precaution.
- There was a suggestion that when the GM CRMP came to talk to staff about the change and emphasised that staff would be supported in not mobilising according to the new policy that there was a brief reduction in unwanted AFA response, but this then returned to previous levels.

Barriers to implementing to AFA policy change

We asked staff what they felt the barriers were in implementing the AFA policy change. We have summarised this feedback below and looked for common themes emerging across the individual responses. The themes were as follows:

- Some people felt that the practice of not using the 20 minute call back was already happening in the control room and the AFA policy change formalised it, hence such a small change in attendance figures
- One person felt that in their opinion the potential resource savings identified in the AFA consultation may not have been accurate and therefore this might be why the impact of the policy change had been minimal
- Some people felt that the communication with teams about the policy change was not sufficient, and that it could be good for staff to have more support to feel confident in not mobilising an appliance if it's not needed.
- Some people reported mixed practice when implementing the new policy.
- Frequent feedback was a feeling that there are issues with Alarm Receiving Companies and designated premises wardens not fulfilling their contracted responsibilities and calling 999 as a default, hence adding more pressure on control room staff.
- One person felt that the AFA policy was weighted towards sending a response rather than not, which could be impacting staff practice and feeling confident and able to not mobilise.
- A common theme in feedback was the difficulty of having different AFA response policies across the three FRS.

What would make AFA response easier?

- Most people felt that a single unified policy across all three services would enable the biggest change in outcome
- Some people felt that making the policy easier to understand and a simplified flow chart would help with clarity



- One person noted that the information on the systems need to be updated as currently both policies are still available there.
- A number of people felt that Control Staff need to feel more confident that their decisions to not send an appliance are supported by senior leaders, in order to make decisions in line with the policy change.
- Alarm Receiving Companies fulfilling their contract with the premises rather than defaulting to calling 999, as well as them having up to date information for the premises they are contracted to, as well as premises utilising their designated key holders or fire wardens appropriately.
- Some people suggested considering only mobilising to high risk premises and not commercial properties during working hours, as well as only sending an appliance if there is a confirmed fire at the premises.

Recommendations

The evidence from this evaluation supports the following recommendations. RBFRS should:

1. Consider how it could work to more effectively collaborate with Thames Valley FRS partners to align the operational response to Automatic Fire Alarms.
2. Ensure that managing the burden of false alarms is considered in Community Risk Planning, particularly when reviewing the response model as set out in the current CRMP Priority 3.
3. Explore how it could influence Alarm Receiving Companies, through existing regional and national structures, to consistently adopt practices that would support RBFRS in managing the burden of false alarms.
4. When considering any future change, ensure it is implemented in a way that ensures TVFCS staff feel confident in following new procedures.
5. Ensure future changes create procedures that are simple and easy to implement.
6. Review document control processes to ensure staff are only able to access appropriate information.

ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

-  RoyalBerksFRS
-  @RBFRSOfficial
-  RoyalBerkshireFire
-  Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service
-  rbfrs.co.uk

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	16 OCTOBER 2023
SUBJECT	2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER ONE
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR MIKE SMITH
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform members of the estimated revenue outturn and provide an update on capital projects at the end of quarter one 2023/24.
- 1.2 The report also contains a quarterly update on treasury activity.

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, 2023/24 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of TVFCS for quarter one are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2023/24 Revenue Budget agreed by Members in February 2023 was set at £41.975m. Income was anticipated to exceed expenditure by £573,000 meaning that the Fire Authority was replenishing its reserves – specifically the Budget Contingency Reserve.
- 3.3 The forecast revenue outturn for 2023/24 is shown in Appendix A, and shows an anticipated surplus of £28,000 compared to the original budget. Variances against individual revenue lines are explained below.

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- 3.4 *Employee costs.* A settlement was reached in 2022/23 for the rates of pay for Grey book staff that also covered the current year. The Service was under establishment for April and May. The 23 new recruits that joined in February are now all on station. A further eight new recruits have been taken on and after training will join the stations in November. Taking into account known leavers the net result is anticipated to be net cost savings of around £135,000. The overtime forecast is showing at £124,000 over budget for the year. These figures do not take into account any further leavers beyond those that are currently known.

On-call stations are currently showing a net negative variance across the county of £57,000, mainly at Lambourn and Crowthorne. .

The Green book pay award has not yet been reached. A forecast rise of 4% (from 1 April 2023) has been used, which is the same as budgeted. Various posts have been or remain vacant.

The cost of new trainee firefighters has been built into the forecast with an additional 24 forecast to be taken by the end of the financial year, at an additional budgetary pressure of £113,000. This is shown on the non-stations line, which is where new recruit costs are posted while in training and before they go onto stations.

- 3.5 *Repairs and Maintenance.* Repairs to the Firehouse at Whitley Wood are ongoing. The total cost of completing works is estimated to be around £60,000.
- 3.6 *Rates.* The Authority continues to work with a third party to challenge historical and future business rate charges for stations. Since budget setting, an appeal for Newbury Fire Station was successful resulting in an £11,000 refund and a 6.5% decrease in future bills. The final historical refunds in respect of Dee Road were received in Q1 2023/24 and were slightly greater than anticipated, explaining the rest of the forecast underspend.
- 3.7 *Cleaning.* From April 2023 an additional, above inflation, price increase of 8.2% has been applied, due to the living wage increase. In addition, Management Committee agreed a six-month extension to the current contract that expires in September to allow a re-tendering exercise to be undertaken. Cleaning costs are about £22,500 per month, giving a total yearly cost of £270,000, an increase of £28,000 over the budgeted amount.
- 3.8 *Transport* – The cost of the fleet maintenance contract with Hampshire FRS is forecast to be £32,000 over budget. Part of the increase is due to the increased charge rate for vehicle technicians.
- 3.9 *Cross border charges* - These have been agreed with Thames Valley partners for the quarter and, based on this, it is estimated that charges will be £33,000 lower (under *Contracts Other*) and income £5,000 (under *Income Other*) higher than the budgeted targets. These figures include a net adjustment to the 2022/23 figures of £20,000 for cross border activities with Surrey.

- 3.10 *Interest receivable* – Increases in interest rates will result in increased investment income of at least £138,000 more than originally budgeted.

Capital

- 3.11 Capital expenditure for quarter one, 2023/24 and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

Treasury

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

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

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

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The 2023/24 Budget includes an appropriation of £573,000 to replenish the Budget Contingency Reserve.
- 5.2 The forecast outturn position on the Revenue Account is a surplus of £28,000.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 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.
- 8.3 Treasury activity complies with the Authority's Treasury Management Policy.

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 2023.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A – Revenue position at quarter one 2023/24

12.2 Appendix B – Net costs of TVFCS at quarter one 2023/24

12.3 Appendix C – Capital position at quarter one 2023/24

12.4 Appendix D – Treasury activity at quarter one 2023/24

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	18,890	4,555	18,822	(68)
NON-STATIONS	12,807	2,986	12,887	80
TRAINING	542	56	542	0
OTHER	265	66	266	1
	32,504	7,663	32,517	13
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	865	173	931	66
RATES	888	230	857	(31)
CLEANING	275	47	303	28
UTILITIES	880	70	880	0
	2,908	520	2,971	63
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	443	231	443	0
EQUIPMENT	489	113	495	6
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	868	583	886	18
CLOTHING/PPE	361	139	363	2
COMMUNICATIONS	893	131	890	(3)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	268	87	268	0
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	141	75	146	5
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	159	6	159	0
SUPPLIES OTHER	211	64	219	8
	3,833	1,429	3,869	36
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	977	234	978	1
LEGAL	50	9	51	1
CONTRACTS OTHER (incl Professional Services)	793	125	776	(17)
	1,820	368	1,805	(15)
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	810	65	842	32
TRAVEL	251	41	257	6
	1,061	106	1,099	38
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	456	96	456	0
	456	96	456	0
INCOME				
GRANTS	(2,079)	(1,737)	(2,089)	(10)
RENTAL INCOME	(216)	(46)	(216)	0
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(394)	(98)	(394)	0
INCOME OTHER	(526)	(446)	(541)	(15)
	(3,215)	(2,327)	(3,240)	(25)
NET COST OF SERVICES	39,367	7,855	39,477	110
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	333	0	333	0
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(474)	(109)	(612)	(138)
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	1,731	0	1,731	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	334	0	334	0
FINANCING COSTS	684	0	684	0
NET EXPENDITURE	41,975	7,746	41,947	(28)
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(41,975)	(13,022)	(41,975)	0
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	0	(5,276)	(28)	(28)

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to June 23 £'000	Forecast to Y/E £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	1,923	485	1,927	4
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	394	98	394	0
SUPPLIES/ OTHER	47	1	47	0
TECHNOLOGY	275	49	275	0
NET COST OF TVFCS	2,639	633	2,643	4
RBFRS Share of Costs (37%)	977	234	978	1

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Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's A	Spend in Prior Years £000's B	Spend in Q1 2023/24 £000's C	Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's D	Anticipated spend in 2023/24 £000's E	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's B+C+D	Overall variance on Project	Estimated Project Completion Date	Commentary
Property, Capital Projects and Estates	Training Centre - pre-construction	352	0	17	335	352	352	0	Q2 25/26	The pre-construction design phase is progressing as expected.
	SUB-TOTAL	352	0	17	335	352	352	0		
Fleet & equipment	White Fleet	711	280	30	401	288	711	0	Q4 23/24	There are long lead times on vehicles - however, some have arrived and others will be delivered this financial year. The vehicle for the Environmental Protection Unit has been received and is being converted for use.
	Appliances	2,664	0	0	2,664	900	2,664	0	Q1 26/27	The purchase of 8 Volvo appliances over 3 years is progressing,. The purchase order to Emergency One was issued in July 2023.
	SUB-TOTAL	3,375	280	30	3,065	1,188	3,375	0		
ICT	Network Refresh (WAN)	394	0	0	404	100	404	10	Q2 24/25	Contract discussions with BT regarding project implementation are ongoing.
	DCS Implementation (SanH)	47	0	0	66	66	66	19	Q2 24/25	This represents our 1/3rd share of a TV collaboration project. Anticipated costs have increased due to Home Office clarification in relation to the specification.
	Software - Firewatch Development	50	0	0	20	20	20	-30	Q4 23/24	Current Firewatch development is for crewing analysis work
	MDT Refresh	141	0	0	174	174	174	33	Q4 23/24	Contract has been awarded.
	Fireground Radio Replacement	136	0	0	136	0	136	0	Uncertain	A collaborative TV project led by Buckinghamshire.
	Station End Refresh	67	0	0	67	67	67	0	Q4 23/24	Currently being tendered - for completion in 2023/24
	SUB-TOTAL	835	0	0	867	427	867	32		
TVFCS	Vision system and UPS replacement	176	88	0	88	88	176	0	Q3 23/24	Server Hardware update is progressing as planned
TOTAL		4,738	368	47	4,355	2,055	4,770	32		

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Treasury Management Update – Q1 2023/24

Background

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

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

Borrowing

The Authority's debt position was unchanged in Q1 2023/24, total debt remaining at £8,922k. No additional borrowing is planned during 2023/24 and none of the existing debt is due to mature during the current financial year.

	2023/24 Original Estimate (£000's)	Position as at 30 June 2023 (£000's)	2023/24 Outturn Estimate (£000's)
Debt	8,922	8,922	8,922

Investment Portfolio

The Authority held investments totalling £14.38m as at 30 June 2023.

During the quarter the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) increased Bank Rate twice; by 0.25% to 4.50% on the 11th May and by a further 0.50% on the 22nd June to 5.00%. With rates continuing to increase, this provided ongoing opportunities to maximise return. Notice was served on the 95 day notice account investment to enable the funds to be re-invested with counterparties paying better rates.

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Appendix D

Greater usage of fixed term deposit opportunities, in line with the Authority's cash flow needs and the MPC meeting dates has been implemented. A fixed term deposit of £4m matured on the 26th June 2023. A sum of £10m was invested in the first week of July spread across four counterparties in line with our investment strategy, with different durations based on cash flow needs and the anticipated additional Bank Rate increases throughout the remainder of the financial year.

This approach will be maintained throughout 2023/24 with the aim of maximising return whilst following the advice and guidance of our treasury advisors. An income target of £474,000 for interest earnings was approved as part of the budget setting process. Due to the ongoing Bank Rate increases that have occurred, the in-year forecast has now been increased to £612,000. This may increase further in line with further Bank Rate increases.

Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

It is a statutory duty for the Authority to determine and keep under review its affordable borrowing limits. During the quarter ended 30 June 2023, the Authority has complied with the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2023/24. The Head of Finance and Procurement reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with these indicators. All treasury management operations have also been conducted in full compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices.

Treasury Indicators	2023/24 Budget (£000's)	30th June 2023 Actual (£000's)	Estimated Outturn 2023/24 (£000's)
Authorised Limit for external debt	14,422	14,422	14,422
Operational boundary for external debt	9,022	9,022	9,022
Gross external debt	8,922	8,922	8,922
Investments – 30 June 2023		14,380	
Net borrowing – 30 June 2023		(5,458)	

Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing	30 June 2023 Actual (£000's)
Under 12 months	0
12 months to 24 months	394
24 Months to 5 Years	597
5 Years to 10 years	3,581
10 Years to 20 Years	1,350
20 Years to 30 Years	3,000
Total	8,922

Prudential Indicators	2023/24 Budget (£000's)	30th June 2023 Actual (£000's)	Estimated Outturn 2023/24 (£000's)
Capital expenditure	4,672	47	2,055
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	10,085	10,085	10,085
Annual change in CFR	(684)	(684)	(684)
In-year borrowing requirement	0	0	0
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	1.95%	1.95%	1.95%

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	16 OCTOBER 2023
SUBJECT	QUARTER ONE APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17
LEAD OFFICER	DAVID CREASE, 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 a supporting narrative on the whole-time duty system and the on-call duty system appliance availability.
- 1.2 Whole-time availability across the quarter was **97.3%** against a target of **99%**.
- 1.3 On-call appliance availability through the quarter was **46.5%** against a target of **50%**. This represents a 4.8% increase from the previous quarter.
- 1.4 Crewing and availability across both duty systems remain challenging. It is imperative that workforce planning and effective service delivery management and monitoring continue with a sharp focus to mitigate impacts and make the best use of our operational resources.
- 1.5 Against a corporate measure target of **75%** of emergency incidents attended in 10 minutes, the Service achieved **74.6%**.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the 2023-24 quarter one performance of **97.3%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 whole-time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16.
- 2.2 **NOTE** the 2023-24 quarter one overall on-call appliance availability performance of **46.5%**, in line with Corporate Measure 17.

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).

3. REPORT

Response activity:

- 3.1 Following an average quarter four with low incident numbers, response activity during quarter one increased but saw a reduction in primary and secondary deliberate fires. There was a tragic incident in Reading where two people unfortunately lost their lives in a house fire, and three were injured.

Response Standard:

- 3.2 The response standard during this period was just below the target at 74.8%. This can be attributed to low establishment numbers in the early part of the quarter, causing appliance availability pressures whilst awaiting the placement of 23 Whole-time (WT) apprentices. As we progressed through the quarter to June, incident numbers increased significantly, with an additional 200 incidents compared to April. Combined with an increase in Wholetime appliance degradation, June's response standard negatively impacted the percentage overall.

Whole-time Duty System (WDS) Appliance Availability

- 3.3 This report section provides the 2023-24 quarter one performance update against Corporate Measure 16, *percentage of whole-time frontline pumping appliance availability*. Overall availability for the quarter was **97.3%**.
- 3.4 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. Whole-time duty system appliance unavailability can be attributed to several factors, including appliance defects, post-incident activity, training, exercising and primary crewing of specialist appliances. In addition to these events, there are sometimes challenges in providing the minimum number of staff to crew all 14 appliances. During this quarter, there were 36 shifts (out of 182) where degradation was implemented because we could not crew all WDS appliances. Of those 36 shifts, 35 had at least one On-Call appliance available. On 32 of these shifts, 14 appliances were maintained throughout using On-Call appliances.

Ongoing pressures/actions affecting crewing:

- 3.5 Whole-time staff sickness continues to add pressure to the Service's ability to meet its target for corporate measure 16 concerning crewing. Through the quarter, the WDS sickness was 3.6%, which is within the 4% tolerance overall but remains disproportionately spread across the four watches, presenting challenges in providing cover at specific times. A significant amount of work is in place to manage sickness (monitored through the strategic performance

board). Additionally, the average number of WDS staff on operationally restricted duties during the quarter was 16, impacting a lean establishment. Service Delivery teams and HR colleagues work very closely to manage and support staff in relation to sickness and restricted duties.

- 3.6 The leaver profile has continued to present challenges in maintaining consistent establishment levels across our whole-time duty system. Workforce planning and Service Delivery are focussed on predicting and monitoring leavers, but this has been more volatile over the past two years, particularly concerning the high number of transfer processes from London Fire Brigade. During the first half of quarter one, the average number of staff posts filled equated to 76 per watch. This represents an overall WDS deficiency of twenty staff. The Service recruited 23 apprentices, who arrived in posts in late May 2023.
- 3.7 In recognition of the establishment volatility, six On-Call staff have also been offered whole-time contracts, which came into effect in quarter four. However, we fully expect with the current profile that by the end of quarter two, all these will be into substantive posts, and we will be at our minimum establishment.
- 3.8 By virtue of staff turnover during the past two years, the Service now has a high number of operational staff in development roles. The training and assessment requirements add further pressure to the management of appliance availability. Service delivery management continues to work closely through our Response Resourcing Group (RRG) with colleagues in learning and development to minimise the impacts of training and development on crewing, such as scheduling courses during lower leave periods and online training where appropriate.
- 3.9 Pre-arranged overtime is utilised when resourcing gaps are identified at the station level or through the RRG. This is now monitored and managed through the Operational Support Team. Service Delivery managers have reviewed some policy positions that should support further management of these arrangements and reduce the overspend concerning overtime costs. The amended policies were agreed by Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and are now in place after consultation (August 2023).
- 3.10 On those occasions where sufficient crewing cannot be achieved through the various interventions, the Service's degradation policy is consistently applied to reduce the impact on response standard and manage any other associated risks.

On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability

- 3.11 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 17, which sets a target of *50% of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)*. This measure is applied across the individual and overall availability of the Service's five On-Call appliances. The overall availability for On-Call appliances in quarter one was **46.5%**;

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- 3.12 The performance in Q1 shows an increase against Q1 last year. The table provides year-on-year availability since 2017. Notably, there was a period during Covid when performance was significantly higher than before or after. This is largely attributed to On-Call staff working remotely (or not working) for primary employers.

Year	Q1.	Q2.	Q3.	Q4.
2023	46.5%			
2022	44.4%	40.3%	35.9%	41.7%
2021	59.8%	34.7%	36.5%	43.8%
2020 (Covid)	72.4%	60.9%	61.1%	68.2%
2019	45.0%	36.2%	42.5%	45.4%
2018	37.1%	33.0%	38.3%	47.6%
2017	36.3%	33.7%	31.6%	35.8%

Year on year comparison Identifying Covid restrictions in 2020.

Service level pressures / actions

- 3.13 A more realistic target of 50% availability has been implemented for the on-call, noting the previous target of 60% would always be challenging due to the volatility of the on-call model. In Q1, we fell just short of the 50% target. However, the on-call manager has worked with the Operational Support Team to improve On-call availability when Wholetime availability is reduced. This has proved relatively successful and is encouraging as we progress towards implementing CRMP priority six.
- 3.14 Daytime appliance availability remains challenging due to losing individuals with key qualifications such as incident command and emergency response driving. However, the recent provision of off-road Firefighting vehicles at some On-Call stations offers a more pragmatic way of utilising available staff due to the reduced number required to crew these vehicles. We had a number of On-Call achieve development status, which has increased the availability. However, there are continued challenges with key personnel moving away from their location.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Response: We will ensure that our people are trained and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.
- 4.2 Sustainability: We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to support a lean crewing model and mitigate other extractions. Due to some of the pressures experienced through the quarter, expenditure is above planned levels. Recognising the financial pressures the Service is currently experiencing and anticipating going forward, delivery of priority 6 of the CRMP should help officers manage the PAOT costs associated with crewing and availability.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None identified.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The increased number of staff in development, therefore 'proportion of staff in development' is listed as a corporate risk under risk number 843. 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 None.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None.

12. CONTACT DETAILS

- 12.1 Dave Crease –Area Manager Response and Resilience (Temporary)
creased@rbfrs.co.uk

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ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
External Audit report	A&GC	30.10.23	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Statement of Accounts	A&GC	30.10.23	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Governance Statement	A&GC	30.10.23	Annual	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Pensions verbal update	A&GC	30.10.23	Ad-Hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Independent Review of Scheme of Allowances Review	A&GC	30.10.23	4 years	Note and Recommend	HCS	N/A	Part I
Q1 Performance Report	A&GC	30.10.23	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Independent Review of Scheme of Allowances	Fire Authority	08.11.23	4 years	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Pension Board Employer Representative	Fire Authority	08.11.23	Ad-hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Serious Violence Duty presentation	Fire Authority	08.11.23	Ad-hoc	Note	AM C&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Treasury Report and Mid-year report	Fire Authority	08.11.23	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
RBFRS Development Programme	Fire Authority	08.11.23	Ad-hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Members Charter	Fire Authority	08.11.23	Ad-hoc	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Training Centre Redevelopment	Management Committee	4.12.23	Ad-hoc	Note	DCFO	N/A	Part I
L4 Resilience	Management Committee	4.12.23	Ad-hoc	Note	DChEx	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q2	Management Committee	4.12.23	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q2	Management Committee	4.12.23	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance	A&GC	24.01.24	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Gender, Ethnicity and Equality Pay Gap	A&GC	24.01.24	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal assessment of effectiveness within discipline	A&GC	24.01.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	24.01.24	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	24.01.24	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	24.01.24	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme - Presentation	A&GC	24.01.24	Bi annual	Note	HBIS	N/A	Part I
Draft Annual Budget 24/25	Management Committee	6.02.24	Annual	Note and recommend	HF&P	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	6.02.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	6.02.24	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	6.02.24	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 24/25, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	15.02.24	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	15.02.24	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Allowances Annual Review 24/25	Fire Authority	15.02.24	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	28.3.24	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	28.3.24	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	28.3.24	Annual	Note and Recommend	DChEx	Member Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances / Code of Conduct annual consultation results	A&GC	28.3.24	Annual	Note and Recommend	DChEx	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	28.3.24	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Corporate Calendar 2024/25	Fire Authority	22.04.24	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Member and Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	22.04.24	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I

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

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

Qualifications:

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

is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest

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in disclosing the information.

Interpretation:

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

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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