

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE
AUTHORITY'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**



Held on Monday 17 September 2012

**Strategic Command Centre, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue
Service, 103 Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4FS**

Committee Members: *Councillor Phillip Bicknell
Councillor Jeff Brooks
Councillor Colin Dudley (Chairman)
Councillor Paul Gittings
Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons (Vice-Chairman) (**Cllr Emma Webster substituting*)
*Councillor Edward Plenty
*Councillor Angus Ross
Councillor Alan Ward (**Cllr Paul Bryant substituting*)
* *present.*

In Attendance: Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Andy Mancey (Area Manager, Response AM(R))
Caroline Redzikowska (Director, Corporate Services DCS)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)
Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Andrew Vallance (Director of Resources, DR)

Observers: Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Officers

412. The Chief Fire Officer informed Members of the Chairman's apology of lateness earlier in the day and due to circumstances beyond his control, advised of the Chairman's apology of absence.

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, DCS invited nominations for a Chairman pro tem. Councillor Paul Bryant proposed Councillor Angus Ross. This was seconded by Councillor Emma Webster.

Resolved:

a) That Councillor Angus Ross be appointed as Chairman pro-tem.

413. The Chairman noted that there were no representative bodies attending to request that any matters be brought to the Committee.

414. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeff Brooks, Councillor Colin Dudley, Councillor Paul Gittings, Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons (Councillor Emma Webster substituting) and Councillor Alan Ward (Councillor Paul Bryant substituting).

Action

415. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Councillors relating to the items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations of interest from officers.

416. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 JUNE 2012

Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

417. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2012

Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman noted that the actions from the last meeting had been discharged, and was advised by ACFO that the action on the suggested amendments to the Integrated Risk Management Action Plan (IRMP) 2013/14 had been completed.

418. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The CFO advised the number of Member attendance at the Newbury Show was well received.
- b) The CFO reported the Employers made an offer to Fire Brigades Union (FBU) on retained fire –fighter pensions. The rationale was Grey Book staff would receive increments and each pay offer would be authorised by the Fire Authority paying in. He advised that the Local Government Association (LGA) may want to ask questions. The CFO further advised that a South East Fire Improvement Partnership (SEFIP) meeting would be held on 2 October 2012 to receive greater understanding of the implications on behalf of Human Resource (HR) Teams.

In answer to a question from Councillor Paul Bryant, CFO advised that the payment would be backdated from July 2011. DCS added that the national pay award would need to be paid if the offer was accepted by FBU.

CFO reported following the SEFIP meeting on 2 October 2012, he would report back to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's (RBFA) Management Committee. In answer to the Chairman, DCS advised based on whether the offer was accepted by FBU, payments would go into the next available payrun.

- c) In his capacity of Chairman of Strategic Asset Management Committee (SAMC) the Chairman advised that the RBFA completed the purchase of new Headquarters (Theale Cross) on 5 September 2012. The Chairman advised he would be meeting officers on how best to secure the building and reported that the plans were moving forward. He further stated that the budget for works was set.

419. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no reports referred by the Audit and Governance Committee.

420. THAMES VALLEY CONTROL PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

DCFO introduced and took the Committee through the report. He made reference to the retirement of Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), DCO Colin Thomas. He advised Royal Berkshire Officer, Area Manager (Risk Management), Bryan Morgan would undertake the role of SRO jointly with Area Manager Mat Carlile (Oxfordshire). Bryan Morgan would be attending all meetings in relation to the refurbishment of Control in the new BHQ building in Calcot.

DCFO reported the technical solution was progressing and the work to enable the two separate control rooms to support and mobilise each other would be achieved by the end of this month.

The linking of the software was imminent and advised that it would be necessary to install a separate link (Easynet) between Kidlington and Dee Road and that this was currently being secured. He added that the OJEU notice for the mobilising and resource management system was imminent and lawyers were working on the final document. He also advised the partnership agreement had been signed.

As a member of the Programme Sponsoring Group (PSG), Councillor Paul Bryant advised he took the opportunity to thank Colin Thomas for all his work on the project thus far and wished him the best for the future. The CFO advised on behalf of the RBFA, Colin Thomas was presented with a small gift of appreciation.

In answer to a question from the Chairman on whether decisions on personnel elements would be carried out by both RBFA and Oxfordshire County Council, DCFO advised that personnel decisions and proposals would be made by each FA. He added, HR consultations had not started and on commencement would be conducted on a one to one basis.

In answer to a question received from ACFO on the governance arrangements between RBFA and Oxfordshire County Council, DCFO advised that an agreement on detail would need to be reached based on consultations ongoing with Headquarters staff and the staff from the two Control rooms.

In answer to a point of clarity in the report, DCFO advised that £3.6 million was received as a joint bid from Communities Local Government (CLG) Section 31, Local Government Act grant.

In answer to a query received from Councillor Paul Bryant on what would be the position of RBFA and Oxfordshire County Council towards other partners wishing to join the project as this stage of the process. He stressed that he did not want to see any delays to the project.

In response, DCFO advised it was a matter for both RBFA and Oxfordshire County Council to decide and reported possible other partners wishing to join the project would have to accept the decisions made by both FA's thus far.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be noted.

421. CREWING LEVEL MONITORING

The DCFO took the Committee through the report and firstly referred to the report which looked at the 4th quarter of the 2011/12 financial year (from January to 31st March 2012). He advised during the reporting period the Service maintained 5 firefighters on the first pumping appliance and 4 firefighters on the second pumping appliance.

Detachments from stations were 395 during the period. The Windsor appliance crewed for 100% during the quarter. DCFO referred to the graph which detailed the percentage of Retained Duty System (RDS) Unavailability against the previous year.

DCFO reported 37.8 % was the total of unavailable day Retained and night shift hours during the quarter.

In discussing unavailability of Retained Fire Stations, Station 7 (Pangborne Fire Station) in particular, Councillor Emma Webster advised that the figures appeared that there was no cover every night. In response, DCFO reported that the data showed that Pangborne Fire Station was not available (off the run) for at least part of every night during the reporting period.

The Chairman reported of his concern that members of the public analysing the graphs may receive a false impression and requested for explanatory notes to the graphs were to be included in the report.

DCFO advised that performance monitoring measured in 4 hour slots and reported that he would include a short paragraph detailing the number of hours Retained Stations were available and unavailable.

DCFO

In response to a question from Councillor Edward Plently, DCFO advised that the availability of Retained pumps at night was not likely to improve and reported that the Retained Support Unit improved availability during the day Monday to Friday. He added that the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Working Party would examine the data more closely.

In taking the Committee back to the 1st quarter of the 2012/13 financial year (from 1st April to 30th June 2012), DCFO reported crewing fell below normal during this period and outlined the reasons was due to:

- Creation Retained Support Unit (RSU), reduced number of operational personnel by 9
- Recruitment freeze
- Higher than normal number of Officers on long term sick and on light duties
- 5 Officers lighter in the establishment at the end of the quarter

DCFO further added detachments from stations were 284 and the Windsor appliance crewed 100% of occasions. He advised Newbury Retained Unit was available for 45% and reported this was due to support received from RSU.

Councillor Emma Webster reported there were discussions to place a 2nd pump at Newbury and queried whether the RSU would be deployed elsewhere in the county. DCFO advised that the RSU would most likely remain at Newbury due to support required in the west of the county.

In response to the Chairman, the DCFO advised he would be doing a presentation at the next Budget Working Party (BWP) on the availability and unavailability of Retained Stations and offered to make a similar presentation to the Management Committee.

In response, the Chairman advised for the IRMP WP to look at the data in greater detail.

IRMP
Agenda

In response to Councillor Edward Plenty, DCFO advised he would circulate updated figures to Members via email on the number of personnel on long term sick and restricted duties at the beginning and end of the quarter.

DCFO

In response to a question from the Chairman on the result of the number of Officers on long term sick, the CFO advised that detailed reports on sickness levels was presented to the Fire Authority twice yearly and reported that a report on the above was due to be presented to the forthcoming Fire Authority on 26 September 2012.

In response to a question from Councillor Edward Plenty, DCFO advised that the figures related to operational personnel who were on long term sickness (more than 28 days) and those who were on light duties and not fit for operational duties.

Councillor Philip Bicknell suggested for the publication of crewing levels/data to be published on RBFRS website.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be noted.

422. FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Emma Webster took the opportunity to inform the Committee she recently attended an Audit and Governance Committee as a substitute and it was announced RBFA received its 14th unqualified report from the Audit Commission during the presentation of end of year accounts.

In discussing the new Headquarters site, the Chairman requested for an update report on the progress of new Headquarters (verbal or written) to be presented at each Management Committee.

Forward
Plan

Resolved:

- a) That the forward plan be noted.

423. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:

That the next meeting will be held on Monday 26 November 2012 at 6.30 pm in the Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 4FS.

424. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 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.

425. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2012

Resolved:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

426. FLEET MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The DCFO introduced the paper and members considered the recommendations set out in the report. It was unanimously

Resolved:

- a) That all the recommendations in the report be agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm