

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



Held on Monday 21 May 2012

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

**Members of the
Committee**

Councillor Jeff Brooks
*Councillor Dr Paul Bryant
*Councillor Colin Dudley (Chairman),
*Councillor Paul Gittings
*Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons (vice-Chairman)
Councillor Iain McCracken
Councillor Angus Ross

In Attendance:

Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Andy Mancey (Area Manager, Response, AMR)
Caroline Redzikowska (Director Corporate Services)
Carolyn Rowe (Committee Manager)
Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)
Andrew Vallance (Authority Treasurer)

Observers:

Cllr Emma Webster
Area Manager (Prevention and Protection AM PP)
Area Manager (Risk Management, AM RM)
Fire Brigades Union Representatives (FBU): Maurice Whyte and Paul
Watts.

**Denotes attendance. (Cllr Gittings left the meeting at 7.15pm).*

Action

379. The Chairman invited the Union representatives to identify agenda items where they wished to speak, and it was noted there were none.

380. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jeff Brooks and Cllr Angus Ross. Councillor Paul Gittings advised he needed to leave at 7pm.

381. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Councillors relating to 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 relating to items to be considered at the meeting.

382. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2012

Resolved:

a) That the minutes be agreed.

The Chairman went through the actions from the last meeting which were confirmed as discharged.

383. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The chairman announced that he had attended a service at the National Arboretum accompanied by the AM PP which was a wonderful occasion. Every Fire Service was represented. It was the first opportunity to raise the RBFRS Standard.

The Chairman took the opportunity to raise with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at Communities and Local Government, Bob Neil, the awarding of the Queens Diamond Jubilee medal to fire fighters, and also the impact of the funding arrangements for already lean Fire Services such as Royal Berkshire. The Minister undertook to look at the funding for RBFRS and to email the Chairman.

- b) The Chairman announced that Cllr McCracken had recently suffered a house fire, and had been impressed with the speed of response and the service from RBFRS.

384. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

There were no reports referred by the Audit and Performance Review Committee.

385 THAMES VALLEY CONTROL SERVICE PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Area Manager Risk Management (AM RM) introduced the report.

Cllr Bryant advised he is happy to report that the work augers well, and completion is planned for April – Oct 2014 (largely depending on the timing for the new Brigade Headquarters). He advised that there is no longer a need for the Control Working Party, as its work is now complete.

Members noted that Cllr Heathcote from Oxfordshire County Council has been invited to attend and address the Fire Authority Meeting on 17 July 2012.

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to the members of the Control Working Party and in particular Cllr Paul Bryant for his work. The Chairman proposed the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Cllr Paul Bryant, and it was unanimously

Resolved

- a) That the report to the Committee be noted
b) That the Control Working Party be stood down.

386. HUMAN RESOURCES MONITORING REPORT

The Human Resources Manager (HRM) introduced the report highlighting some of the key aspects of the report. There have been 3 ill health retirements in this period, and staff turnover has increased slightly. Sickness has increased and is higher than this time last year, but it is

SPPM

recognized that ill health retirements and one or two long term sickness cases affect this. Absence due to mental health issues has doubled. There have been a significant number of staff who have had no sickness at all in the last year.

Some analysis is underway to look at short term sickness.

The Chairman asked if the finding could be brought back, if possible to the next Committee meeting, and the vice Chairman asked if analysis of the impact of management training and the use of return to work interviews could be included.

HRM

Members commended the recognition of staff with full attendance.

The vice Chairman commented that staff who organized their own shifts have better attendance, and also commended a McMillan Trust booklet to HR - to provide to managers and staff if required.

Cllr Bryant commented that as the numbers were small it can skew figures and distort the reliability of trends.

Cllr Gittings asked about encouraging general fitness training amongst all staff and also asked if data from comparator Fire Authorities could be included. HRM advised data had been difficult to get but would be pursued.

HRM

(Cllr Gittings left the meeting)

The report statistic for incident "near misses" is misleading and the Chairman asked if it could be reworded. The CFO confirmed that this is being looked at as part of a report which will be brought to members.

Resolved:

- a) That, the report be noted.

DCFO

387. 2011/12 PROVISIONAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET OUTTURN

The Director of Resources (DR) introduced the report and advised the Committee that there is a revenue under spend of just over £500,000. Items taken out of the base budget last year, have resulted in a reduction in under spends.

The DR advised that the money for Swinley Forest fire has now been received.

With regard to capital, the DR advised that there was a genuine £200,000 underspend.

Members asked about the delay in telemetry, and the DCFO advised that new spectrum is awaited, which is in the hands of Ofcom. It was agreed that it be raised at the South East Fire Improvement Partnership (SEFIP).

Chairman/
DCFO

With regard to dry suits, the Area Manager Resources (AMR) advised of the problems on resolving whether we can legally purchase from the manufacturer and that it is a very high priority.

The Director, Corporate Services (DCS) advised that the framework for the original tender expired in November 2011, and the exact nature of a change of ownership of the suitable provider will determine whether a purchase would be compliant without retendering. The CFO advised that if it was not compliant we may be liable to pay other bidders in the original process.

Members thanked the Director of Resources for the report and

Resolved:

that the provisional out turn report be noted.

388. THE FORWARD PLAN

It was confirmed that the two reports on crewing proposals taken to the May and June meetings of the Integrated Risk Management Group Working Party would be brought to Management Committee on the 5 July 2012, and Fire Authority on the 17 July 2012.

Resolved

That the forward plan be noted.

389. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Management Committee was noted as now being **Thursday 5 July 2012 at 6.30pm.**

The Chairman reminded Members that they were asked to hold the original date of the 23 July 2012 in case it was required.

390. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

- a) 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.

391. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH 2012

The Chairman advised the meeting that he had a matter arising on minute 378 and accordingly those officers left the room.

Resolved:

- a) That the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- b) That the matter arising was would be brought back to members if required as agreed.