



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

**Monday, 22nd July, 2024**

**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](mailto:committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk)

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



**MEETING:** Management Committee Meeting

**DATE AND TIME:** Monday, 22nd July, 2024 at 6.30 pm

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

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## **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

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**To: Members of the Management Committee:**

Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor Joshua Reynolds
Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	Councillor Zafar Satti
Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Councillor Wayne Smith
Councillor Peter Frewer	Councillor Helen Taylor
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Simon Werner
Councillor Wendy Griffith	

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

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## **AGENDA**

- 1. Election of Chair for Municipal Year 2024/25**
- 2. Appointment of Vice-Chair for Municipal Year 2024/25**
- 3. 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.

- 4. Apologies for Absence**
- 5. 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.

- 6. Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 (Pages 7 - 18)**

Purpose:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

- 7. Receipt of Announcements**

Recommendation:

To receive announcements from the Chair and / or Chief Fire Officer.

## **8. 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.

## **9. LED Lighting Priority 2 Project (Pages 19 - 28)**

Purpose:

To approve the capital expenditure budget of £0.225m for the delivery of the 'LED Lighting Priority 2 Project' as provided in the Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF), and note the delivery of this project be concurrent with the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funded element of the RBFRS Sustainability programme.

## **10. Estates Minor New Works Capital Spend approval (Pages 29 - 34)**

Purpose:

To approve the release of £171,350 from the SAIF to meet all the costs for estate related minor capital projects

## **11. Fleet Replacement Capital Spend approval (Pages 35 - 40)**

Purpose:

To approve the capital expenditure of up to £220,000 over one year for the fleet assets as identified in Appendix A and note the budget request for fleet requirements represents a 20% reduction on the forecasted SAIF.

## **12. ICT Hardware Replacement (Pages 41 - 44)**

Purpose:

To approve the expenditure on end-user equipment and services required to deliver improvements to deployment system and migration systems to the cloud.

## **13. 2023/24 Budget Monitoring - Quarter Four (Pages 45 - 62)**

Purpose:

To note the report and agree the reserves position as set out in Appendix D.

## **14. Q4 Appliance Availability (To Follow)**

Purpose:

To note Q4 Appliance Availability.

**15. Forward Plan (Pages 63 - 66)**

Recommendation:

To note the Forward Plan.

**16. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, 8 October 2024 at 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

**17. Exclusion of the Public (Pages 67 - 68)**

Recommendation:

To Resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

*Categories of 'Exempt Information' under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

**18. Part II Minutes of Last Meeting (Pages 69 - 70)**

Purpose:

That the Part II Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on Tuesday 9 April 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**19. Internet Services Waiver and New Network and Internet Services Contract (Pages 71 - 76)**

Purpose:

To agree the recommendations in the report.

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# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Tuesday, 9th April, 2024 at 6.30 pm

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

**Members:**  
(\*present)

- |                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * Councillor Wendy Griffith      | * Councillor Jeff Brooks             |
| * Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle | * Councillor Paul Gittings           |
| * Councillor Ishrat Shah         | * Councillor Pauline Helliars-Symons |
| * Councillor Mike Smith          | * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey |
| * Councillor Helen Taylor        | * Councillor Simon Werner            |
| * Councillor Peter Frewer        |                                      |

**In Attendance:**

- Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
- Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
- Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
- Paul Brooks (Head of Assets, HoA)
- Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
- Ben Cairns (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
- Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
- Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
- Jim Powell (Area Manager Collaboration and Policy, AM C&P)
- Tim Readings (Group Manager CRMP)
- Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
- Michaela Smith (Democratic Support Assistant, DSA)

**Observers:**

Ellie Wilde Technical Programme Manager

**64. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

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

**65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**Action**

Apologies were received from Councillor Helen Taylor.

**66. 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.

**67. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting on 6 February 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed the Chair.

In response to a question on the Minutes from Councillor Helliar-Symons, Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO) explained smoke hoods were used at incidents for the safe exit of casualties.

**68. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Automatic Fire Alarm Consultation**

Following the last Fire Authority meeting in February, the Authority launched a consultation asking people across Berkshire to consider how their fire and rescue service responds to Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA).

The consultation focusses on how the Service responds to AFAs in buildings such as shops, offices, leisure centres, colleges, sports grounds, libraries, schools and health centres. A full list of all buildings affected by the consultation is available on the Service's website.

False alarms account for 45% of all the incidents attended and the majority of these are the result of Automatic Fire Alarm systems, of which 99% require no action by our service. This causes significant disruption to the delivery of essential services and training.

The consultation is running for 10 weeks in total and will close on Monday, 13 May 2024. The Chair requested members encourage communities to participate in the consultation to ensure we capture as broad a view as possible on the three proposed changes to our response.

**Charity Car Washes**

Over the past month, several fire stations across the county have hosted the first charity car washes of the year to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity.

Firefighters, volunteers and cadets from Caversham Road, Crowthorne, Newbury and Bracknell fire stations have each hosted a car wash in support of the Charity.

In total, staff and volunteers have raised £4,900 for The Fire Fighters Charity from the car washes.

On behalf of the Authority, the Chair thanked everyone involved in organising and running the car washes, as well as members of the public who came out and donated generously in support of this great cause.

## **Sustainability Grant**

In March, the Service successfully won a grant worth more than £920,000 from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to help reduce our carbon footprint and improve energy efficiency.

Building on the Service's successful Low Carbon Skills Fund Grant bid secured in 2023 and benefitting from further Fire Authority investment, the Service now intends to invest £1.77 million in sustainability improvements over the next two years across five of our least energy efficient buildings.

As an Authority, we recognise that the Service has a key role to play in protecting our environment. By working together, we are incorporating environmental sustainability into all our major rebuild projects and improvement works.

On behalf of the Authority, the Chair thanked Salix who administer the PSDS on behalf of HM Government, for their support and guidance throughout the application process. He also made special thanks to Sophie Fox, RBFRS Sustainability Coordinator and Atkins Realis consultancy group for their work in preparing our successful bid for the grant.

## **Wholetime Recruitment**

Over the past two months, our latest cohort of Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices have been hard at work completing their initial training course and we're now fast approaching their graduation ceremony, marking the completion of the first phase of their journey into becoming firefighters.

The Chair invited members to join him at Maidenhead Fire Station on Friday, 10 May to celebrate our latest recruits and the progress they have made so far.

## **Firefighter Career Discovery Sessions**

Following a successful pilot in 2023, we have announced another series of Firefighter Career Discovery Sessions to help more people find out more about the role of a firefighter.

Sessions will begin on 30 April 2024 and run until 27 June 2024 and so if you have contacts in the community, particularly those that may be unfamiliar with the work of the fire and rescue service, we would be grateful if you would share this information with them.

Moving forward, these sessions will be held on a rolling basis to enable us to take a more proactive and structured approach. Additionally, this will help us to build a wider network of applicants across the region and establish more relationships with community groups.

Anyone interested in attending is asked to register in advance through our website at [rbfrs.co.uk/discovery](http://rbfrs.co.uk/discovery).

### **Veteran's Hub Event**

The Chair announced the Service will be hosting the latest event in the series of successful Armed Forces Veterans' Hub Events, on Tuesday, 14 May at Crowthorne Community Fire Station.

Between 10am and 1pm, attendees will be able to speak to a range of organisations and charities that support the armed forces community, such as Operation Courage - the NHS service that provides specialist care for those Armed forces veterans suffering from a mental health crisis - Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, The Armed Forces Charity and the Royal Navy Association.

The Armed Forces Veterans' Hub was launched in 2020 following receipt of the Gold Award in the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme. This affirms the Fire Authority and Service's ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces community.

The Veterans' Hub is open to all veterans and there is no need to book in advance so I'd like to ask members to please spread the word to anyone who may be interested in coming along and taking part.

### **Fire Cadet Graduation**

The Chair informed members the current cohort of Fire Cadets will celebrate their graduation on the afternoon of Wednesday, 10 July.

He stated he attended last year's graduation and was impressed by the cadets and the creative, fire safety inspired demonstrations they performed for families and friends gathered at Newbury Fire Station.

Whilst the venue for this year's graduation ceremony has not yet been confirmed, members should have received a hold in their RBFRS outlook diaries. He requested members to contact Fayth or Michaela if they have not received an invitation.

**69. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

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

**70. RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED** that it be noted item 8 (Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT)) was a recommendation from Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee on 18 March 2024.

**71. MULTI-AGENCY INCIDENT TRANSFER (MAIT) ADOPTION**

Jim Powell (Area Manager, Collaboration and Policy, AM C&P) introduced the item explaining Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) provides emergency services with a messaging solution. This was recommended from the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee on 18th March 2024 and explained as part of the TVFCS legal agreement all new contracts were required to be approved by each Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service partner.

MAIT was identified as a remedy following the Grenfell Tower enquiry with funding received from the Home Office two years ago. The Fire Service sector are leaders in this technology, as they are the only emergency service to have implemented this. The Welsh Fire Service already has this platform and it is hoped all Fire and Rescue services in England will implement MAIT by 2025.

Group Manager Simon Harris who is based in Control is the technical lead in the project team and interest amongst other services in relation to this project has increased.

He reported MAIT will improve efficiencies in how the Service operates in large scale incidents as information can be transferred quickly and smoothly negating the need to use the telephone as contact will be made through a web interface.

Councillor Werner stated communication is key and it was positive to see the Fire Service were taking the lead on this.

Councillor Griffith queried whether MAIT would be affected if the internet went down. Jim Powell confirmed this would be an issue, however connections were robust with back-ups in place. He confirmed in terms of business continuity several layers of resilience have been built in between control rooms.

The Chair highlighted the table on page 27, and stated with Home Office funding the contract cost was not a large investment for the Fire Service.

**RESOLVED** that:

- 1) the contract between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) and AVR Group Ltd for the supply and support of MAIT 'hub' services in TVFCS to commence in 24/25 at a cost of no more than £25,000 for years 3 and 4 of the contract be agreed; and
- 2) the initial implementation costs will be recovered through TVFCS revenue recharges aligned to the stipulations of the Inter-Authority Agreement be noted.

## 72. CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO) provided an update on Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) Cultural Development on behalf of the Chief Fire Officer, Wayne Bowcock.

He stated the Chief Fire Officer had committed to bring an update to Management Committee following detailed analysis of recent prominent Fire and Rescue Service cultural reports including Independent Culture review of London Fire Brigade (LFB 2022), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) spotlight Report and the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Culture Review Report.

Mark Arkwell stated a gap analysis had been completed against the 140 recommendations combined within the above cultural reports, as well as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) also examining the results of the recent staff survey.

He added there were several positive actions RBFRS have taken an evolving approach in the last two years towards workforce engagement in relation to culture, including, Active Bystander, SLT visibility at fire stations and keeping in touch calls and an independent information gathering exercise undertaken by Intersol Global.

The Service continues to work on its culture and due to the quantity of combined recommendations within the above cultural reports, the Chief Fire Officer has requested for a simplified single plan. It is proposed such plan would be brought to Members at the next scheduled Members / Officers workshop. This would give Members the opportunity to understand the data and gain assurance as well as contribute to steering our action plans. Further regular updates will be given to the Audit and Governance Committee as and when required. Timing is critical and the aim is to engage with Members and stakeholders by the summer.

In response to a question from the Chair, Mark Arkwell reassured Members the Service was comfortable with the progress being made thus far.

In response to a question from Councillor McKenzie-Boyle, Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL) gave the proposed dates of the Members / Officer workshop were in July and September 2024, and stated the full calendar

of committee meetings and workshops in 2024/25 will be agreed at the Fire Authority meeting on 22 April 2024.

Thanking Mark Arkwell for the update and referencing paragraph 3.10, the Vice-Chair queried the timeframe of getting this work done in time for the planned His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) inspection in the autumn. Mark Arkwell reported the Service continues to work hard to protect and improve its culture and acknowledged the gap analysis had identified areas that required further consideration and improvement. He stated the cultural journey did not have an end point and was confident the Chief Fire Officer will ensure a clear plan is provided and progress is made before the HMICFRS inspection.

In response to a question from Councillor Smith, Fayth Rowe (DSL) confirmed the workshop dates again, and stated the dates would be going to the Fire Authority for approval later this month.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **73. STATUTORY POWERS**

Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS) reported the intention of this report was to help provide clarity for decision-makers involved in the planning and delivery of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Priority 4. He stated public safety will remain the primary priority for the Service and reassured members the report was not recommending the Service cease attending the incidents outlined in Appendix A. In addition, he stated the contents of the report provided the Service with a greater understanding in this area and could be used as a tool to support Members when lobbying central government for appropriate funding required to resource incidents. It was also recognition of the role the Fire and Rescue Service in public safety.

Tim Readings (Group Manager, CRMP) reported there was a lack of clarity in the exercise of statutory powers and statutory duties in the Fire and Rescues Service and the purpose of Appendix A (Statutory Powers) was to support the Authority's understanding of the work carried out by the Service and what the Service is funded to deliver.

Tim Readings reiterated the purpose of the report was not to propose that the Service cease attending certain incident types and explained that attendance at many incident types is based on public expectation. RBFRS attend non-statutory incidents on a discretionary basis and 17-20% made up (excluding automatic fire alarms) the overall incident demand in 2019-2022. These incidents include incident types such as lift rescues, or a persons locked in a bathroom and had always been classed as emergencies.

The recent CRMP consultation returned strong feedback indicating the public were keen for the Service to review their duties. Feedback also confirmed a

desire amongst stakeholders for the Service to use their statutory powers to support incidents such as animal and water rescue, amongst others.

Tim Readings reported CRMP Priority 3 will look at the Service's response model and Appendix A (Statutory Powers) will provide a better understanding of these incident types and will assist in building a more robust response model.

The Chair reassured Members that the Service were not proposing to cease attending certain incident types. In response to a question from the Chair, Tim Readings explained the purpose of the report was to clarify the Service's Statutory duties and powers which will in turn assist in the development of CRMP Priority 3 (response model).

In answer to a question from Councillor Mike Smith, Tim Readings reported the incident types in Appendix A represent a mean average of 19% of demand. He explained it was important to understand the Service's demand level and acknowledge that these types of incidents were not our statutory duties. Tim Readings stated that the Fire and Rescue Service National Framework for England is clear that the exercise of statutory powers should not be to the detriment of response to statutory duties. He advised Appendix A was not trying to make cuts to these incident types but was trying to understand the level of demand. He explained that, in particular, animal rescue was of public concern during the CRMP consultation.

Mark Arkwell (DCFO) confirmed fire and rescue authorities must have due regard to the Fire and Rescue National Framework in carrying out their duties, therefore it was prudent to understand the incidents attended. He clarified the purpose of Appendix A was addressing how the Service will attend to these incident types and was not saying that the Service would not attend these incident types. For example, sending a flexi duty officer, instead of a fire engine, to a person locked in a room.

Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO) confirmed that the report needs to be read in context of the CRMP document. We have a public commitment to respond to incident types.

The Vice-Chair reminded Members that the Authority had made a commitment to look at this issue, as many incidences were non-fire related. For example, how the Service respond to someone that was stuck in a lift. He stated CRMP was a revolving process. Councillors Shepherd-Dubey, McKenzie-Boyle and Shah echoed the above comments.

The Chair advised it would be helpful if the report wording was amended and further context applied.

In answer to Councillor Smith's question on RBFRS collaborative work with partners in licensing, building regulation and housing, Katie Mills stated this work was reported through corporate measures and performance data which were presented to Audit and Governance Committee. She stated she was happy to

provide further information to Councillor Smith. In answer to a supplementary question from Councillor Smith, Tim Readings reported there was a statutory duty to be consulted on and respond to building regulations planning applications and that the Service cannot enforce changes to planning applications.

The Chair moved the recommendation and requested Officers acknowledge the comments made by Members. This was seconded by Councillor Shepherd-DuBey.

**RESOLVED** that the Statutory Powers report be noted with comments.

#### **74. DISCIPLINE AND COMPLAINT EFFECTIVENESS ASSESSMENT**

Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D) stated the report detailed an overview and comparison on discipline and complaint cases in 2021/22 & 2022/23 which had been streamlined for confidentiality purposes.

The Human Resources (HR) team reviewed cases to determine trends and also examined sickness absence and leavers to identify where improvements could be made to processes.

The report detail types of cases, appeals, outcome, gender, ethnicity, and length of service. There has been an increase in discrimination, bullying and harassment cases, and a significant increase in complaints, which could be related to recent London Fire Brigade (LFB) cultural review in late 2022.

The report will be updated to include this year's performance and will be going to the next Audit and Governance meeting for scrutiny.

In referring to paragraph 3.3.3. Councillor Smith queried whether the increase in disciplinary cases relating to discrimination was due to an increase in reporting. Becci Jefferies advised there could be several factors, for example education and training within the service and the general awareness when onboarding new staff. Mark Arkwell (DCFO) stated he saw the data as positive as it had demonstrated staff were more comfortable coming forward than they were in the past.

Councillor McKenzie-Boyle commented it was good to see 'SaySo' being used and Councillor Helliard-Symons stated she was impressed there were only 29 complaints in 2022/23 in comparison to the number of employees. The Chair added he was pleased that exit interviews were conducted by a member of the HR team and not the Line Manager. Becci Jefferies reported there had been some additional work to review the leaver process and understand information related to reasons for leaving and the exit interview process.

Councillor Griffith commented that due to anonymity 'SaySo' was not always helpful. Becci Jefferies agreed and said that reporting an issue is important, but it was difficult to investigate an anonymous complaint and get sufficient detail.

The Chair and Councillors Shepherd-Dubey and Smith made positive comments about the report.

**RESOLVED** that the details of the Discipline and Complaint Effectiveness Assessment report be noted.

**75. FORWARD PLAN**

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan be noted.

Councillor Smith requested for the data on the forward plan to show information after the end of year, instead of municipal year.

DSL

**76. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 22 July 2024, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Pincent's Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

**77. 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 Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**78. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 6 FEBRUARY 2024**

**RESOLVED** that the Part II Minutes of the meeting on 6 February 2024, be approved as a true record to be signed the Chair.

**79. WHITLEY WOOD FIREHOUSE CONTRACT COST WAIVER**

**RESOLVED** that the aggregated costs waiver for the operationally critical works carried out on the Whitley Wood Training Centre firehouse facility be approved.

**80. RETROSPECTIVE REPORT ON A CONTRACT WAIVER FOR SAGE 1000 SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE**

**Action**

**RESOLVED** that the Retrospective Report on a Contract Waiver for Sage 1000 Support and Maintenance be noted.

*(The meeting concluded at 19:49)*

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**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT**



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>22 JULY 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>LED LIGHTING PRIORITY 2 PROJECT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>PAUL BROOKS, HEAD OF ASSETS</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SHEPHERD-DUBEY</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. The Authority is committed to reducing the impact of the organisation’s operations on the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. The estate contributes 65% of the Authority’s carbon output (1,524 tCO<sub>2</sub> per year) so, recognising there is a global climate emergency, investment is needed to reduce the negative impact our buildings have on the environment.
- 1.2. Estate strategic sustainability planning included the production of estate heat decarbonisation plans (HDP) using specialist consultants, which was funded by central government using the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) in 2023. The HDPs stimulated planning for investment in sustainability initiatives at 11 of the 17 sites in the RBFRS estate portfolio using building fabric upgrades and a range of modern technologies including, inter alia, heat pumps, solar photovoltaic (PV) and LED lighting. Planning crystallised with Authority approval on 22 April 2024 for the £1.77M RBFRS Sustainability Programme Phase 1 at five ‘priority 1’ sites using combined Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) and Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) capital (see background papers at paragraph 14).
- 1.3. This paper focusses on the remaining six sites (of the 11 introduced above and listed in paragraph 3.3), annotated as ‘priority 2’ sites in the phase 1 programme, which is further divided into LED lighting and solar PV requirements depending on building construction and viability to be meaningfully improved.

## Agenda Item 9

- 1.4. This report seeks approval for the release of £0.225M in core funding for the LED Lighting Priority 2 Project as set out in the SAIF as approved by the Authority in February 2024. Much preparatory work for delivery has been completed, with RBFRS commissioning Laser professional net zero consultants<sup>1</sup>, via a publicly compliant framework, to carry out comprehensive surveys of all sites. Laser is stood by to support procurement, project management and warranty aftercare.
- 1.5. Looking ahead, the Solar PV Priority 2 Project within the phase 1 sustainability programme will be the subject of a separate paper to the Management Committee in 2025.
- 1.6. Regular updates will be provided to Members and Officers via the Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group, Estates Development Group and the Service Programme Board.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** the capital expenditure budget of £0.225M for the delivery of the 'LED Lighting Priority 2 Project', as provided for in the SAIF.
- 2.2 **NOTE** that delivery of this project will be concurrent with the PSDS funded element of the RBFRS Sustainability Programme Phase 1 as approved by the Authority on 22 April 2024, but it is distinctly separate in respect of funding and governance.

## 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Authority is committed to reducing the impact of the organisation's operations on the environment and reducing its carbon footprint as confirmed in the signing of the Emergency Services Environment and Sustainability Group (EESG) Charter by the Fire Authority in February 2023.
- 3.2 Strategic planning in 2023 included the production of an estate HDP using specialist consultants Faithful + Gould (now Atkins Realis<sup>2</sup>). This work was funded by central Government using the LCSF administered by Salix. The outcome of the work was a roadmap to help the Authority achieve its 'Net Zero' (defined in paragraph 3.5) carbon ambitions by 2050, in line with the UK Government target, at 11 of the 17 sites in the portfolio. Notably, the 11 sites selected for the roadmap were prioritised on annual energy usage, fossil fuel utilisation for heating, building age and condition of the buildings (including the current and ongoing maintenance costs). Priority 1 sites were then selected and went forward to qualify for Salix PSDS funding which was the subject of the paper approved by the Fire Authority on 22 April 2024 (see paragraph 14).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lasereenergy.org.uk/our-solutions/net-zero-frameworks/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.atkinsrealis.com>

3.3 The remaining sites were to be assessed and picked up within other projects, and specifically, the subject of this paper, to deliver the LED Lighting Priority 2 Project. **The sites in scope for this project are:**

- RBFRS Headquarters
- Wokingham
- Bracknell (areas not previously redeveloped)
- Caversham Road (main station)
- Lambourn

3.4 Sites out of scope for this project, along with the reasons why, are as follows:

- Langley, Newbury, Reading Caversham Road (accommodation annexe), Reading Wokingham Road and Whitley Wood (fire station) are included in the 2024-26 PSDS / SAIF project
- Hungerford, Mortimer, Theale, Crowthorne, Maidenhead and Ascot are already fitted with LED
- Whitley Wood Training Centre is being redeveloped 2024/25
- Slough was redeveloped 2023/24
- Windsor is small in scope and being upgraded to LED under a separate SAIF project, but to the same specifications as this project

3.5 LED Lighting technology has developed rapidly in the last 10 years and will deliver significant energy savings with a good return on investment. Upgrading to LED lighting is considered a 'quick win' as the implementation is fast, and the consumption reduction is realised immediately. LEDs are highly efficient in their technology and typically have a longer life<sup>3</sup> than older lighting technologies and also emit less heat and reduce, thereby reducing requirements for cooling and maintenance. The expected benefits of delivering the project include reduction in carbon output and energy usage, along with lower bills.

3.6 Net Zero' for the Authority will be formally defined and globally agreed in the emerging RBFRS Sustainability Strategy, but for the purposes of this report and the programme, Net Zero Carbon has been defined as:

*“The carbon emissions associated with operational energy consumption across the estate are zero or negative on an annual basis. Most of the fuel and power is supplied from on-site and off-site renewable energy sources, with any remaining carbon balance offset.”*

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<sup>3</sup> 14-45 years depending on switching cycles and ambient temperature.

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### 4. REPORT

4.1 The Authority has made a commitment as a signatory to the ESESG Charter and by making provisions in the SAIF to make the estate more environmentally friendly by completing initiatives and upgrades to reduce our carbon output and realise potential revenue savings on utilities and maintenance as a result. The measures include improving building fabric and investing in modern technologies to provide efficient and appropriate workplaces for all site users.

4.2 As a mature technology with continuous control improvements, LED lighting is known to provide rapid and tangible benefits as they consume over 50% less energy than fluorescent bulbs. This energy saving is without detriment to the lighting output and has a reduced impact on the environment in terms of longevity and waste, making them a sensible and credible investment for the Authority. Table 1 below details the predicted benefits of this project.

Site / Detail	HQ	Lambourn	Caversham Road (main station)	Bracknell	Wokingham	Totals
Current No. of light fittings	685	41	111	62	82	981
New No. lighting fittings	686	42	94	64	85	971
Current usage (kWhrs)	132,660	11,930	26,743	16,071	14,346	201,750
New usage (kWhrs)	64,231	5,063	7,474	6,002	7,758	90,528
Annual carbon savings (kg CO <sub>2</sub> )	17,325	1,739	4,879	2,549	1,668	28,160
Total project costs	£116,370	£8,357	£25,671	£10,266	£15,193	£175,857
Existing annual lighting cost	£33,165	£2,982	£6,686	£4,018	£3,587	£50,438
New annual lighting cost	£16,058	£1,266	£1,868	£1,500	£1,939	£22,631
<b>Savings per annum</b>	<b>£17,107</b>	<b>£1,716</b>	<b>£4,818</b>	<b>£2,518</b>	<b>£1,648</b>	<b>£27,807</b>
Payback period (years)	6.8	4.9	5.3	4.1	9.2	6.06 average

**Table 1** – Predicted annual carbon, energy and cost savings, plus payback at RBFRS sites by installing LED lighting.

4.3 Replacement will be defined as ‘like for like’ and will not require the redesign and delivery of a new system. As verified in the stakeholder engagement process, there will be no dimmer switches in any areas on stations. Most of the lighting will be on passive infra-red (PIR) sensors to ensure lights are not left on, therefore reducing opportunity to waste energy. Where switches have already been installed (predominantly in sleeping areas), they will remain in place.

Emergency lighting has been included in the proposal and will be replaced from its present state to LED and will remain in line with the current regulations.

- 4.4 To support good governance and delivery consistency, the LED Lighting Priority 2 project will run concurrently with, and support the outcomes of, the joint PSDS/SAIF RBFRS Sustainability Programme Phase 1 projects.
- 4.5 Looking ahead, and in accordance with the phase 1 programme and SAIF, there is one more project to launch – solar photovoltaic – which will be the subject of a paper to the Management Committee in 2025. Beyond the current programme of work, it is intended to have a ‘RBFRS Sustainability Programme Phase 2’ in 2026-28 as per the SAIF, which will aim to upgrade remaining sites to reduce carbon and operating costs.
- 4.6 **Financial position.** The summary financial forecasting, position is in Table 2. The forecasted figures are the result of a detailed cost proposal from Laser consultants following their site surveys and data gathering exercises, but it is deemed prudent to include a reasonable contingency. The capital expenditure budget, which Members are being asked to approve, is in line with the provision in the SAIF for this programme of works.

Site	Total cost	Materials	Labour	Management	Best value supplier
Headquarters	£116,370.82	£42,350.09	£61,090.64	£12,930.09	Mears Group
Lambourn	£8,357.63	£2,907.18	£4,521.82	£928.63	Mears Group
Caversham Road	£25,671.07	£6,598.82	£14,357.16	£4,715.09	Delron Services Ltd
Bracknell	£10,266.21	£3,243.81	£5,683.33	£1,339.07	Mears Group
Wokingham	£15,193.84	£5,385.23	£7,826.80	£1,981.81	NCS Technology
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£175,859.57</b>	£63,485.13	£93,479.75	£21,894.69	
<b>Budget (rounded)</b>	<b>£225,000</b>				

Table 2 – LED lighting cost breakdown.

- 4.7 **Procurement strategy.** The procurement approach for the project has been to utilise the public sector framework professional Net Zero provider Laser, who can manage the project delivery from inception to completion. The Laser framework is a publicly compliant route to market that helpfully packages the professional services and main contractor fees into a single element, along with facilitating early planning work at no cost to RBFRS. The service is inclusive of:
- Site surveys
  - Project specification with energy saving calculations
  - All design packages

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- Management of the procurement process for suppliers and materials
  - Comprehensive project management service, including health and safety requirements
- 4.8 This approach reduces delivery risk and ensures there is a professional project management thread throughout the project, including procurement, post contract administration, defect liability periods and warranties.
- 4.9 **Project governance and scheduling.** The project will be governed under normal RBFRS arrangements – see **Appendix 1** for details. The detailed programme with phasing for each site will be completed following the award of respective contracts, but estimated timings and nominated suppliers are in Table 3 and Table 4.

Site	Number of fittings	Timings	Supplier
HQ	686	6 weeks	Mears
Bracknell	64	1 week	Mears
Lambourn	42	1 Week	Mears
Wokingham Rd	85	1 week	NCS Technology
Caversham Rd	94	1 week	Delron Services

**Table 3:** Estimated timescales for project delivery.

Date	RIBA Stage
March 2024	RIBA Stage 1: Preparation and brief
April 2024	RIBA stage 2: Design and specification to be developed based off stakeholder feedback
April 2024	RIBA stage 3: Co-ordination
May 2024	Draft paper to go to SLT
July 2024	Paper to go to management committee
August 2024	RIBA 4: Pre-project planning and mobilization
September 2024	RIBA 5: Works to commence on site
November 2024	RIBA 6: Handover
December 2024	RIBA 7: Post-project activities

**Table 4:** Estimated timescales of RIBA plan of work stages<sup>4</sup>.

- 4.10 **Disruption to sites.** As appliance bays will be affected for short periods of time, a phasing plan will be developed for each site to minimise disruption wherever possible. The stations in scope have sufficient space for crews to maintain business as usual while the works are carried out. The phasing plan will detail specific work times that RBFRS crews need access to areas and contractors will work around those routines. If there is any unresolvable conflict, then contractors can work out of hours by mutual agreement and additional cost that would be absorbed by budget contingency. In all cases, the key to understanding the operational impact for each site will be through stakeholder

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/riba-plan-of-work>

engagement with the primary users. To facilitate this, there will be a formal project group stood up to determine the requirements and de-risk delivery.

**5. NEXT STEPS**

- 5.1 Once funds are approved, the project team will formally stand up with a start-up meeting held with key stakeholders to establish the project delivery structure, detailed programme/ phasing and key milestones.
- 5.2 Key stakeholders will be updated on progress and milestones via the RBFRS Estates Development Group and other communications channels as required. Key actions and discussions will be discussed in this group, while the member non-executive Estate Development and Sustainability Working Group will be kept apprised when they meet.
- 5.3 Looking further ahead to the next project in the RBFRS Sustainability Programme Phase 1, there will be a Management Committee paper on the provision of solar PV at priority 2 sites in 2025.

**6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

- 6.1 **Commitment 5: Sustainability.** We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.
- 6.2 **Commitment 6: People.** We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

**7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The capital expenditure budget, which Members are being asked to approve, is in line with the provision in the SAIF for this project.
- 7.2 The payback period is 6.06 years.

**8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 This is a low-risk re-provision of lighting and lamps project, but appropriate legal advice will be sought on procurement, planning and delivery aspects if required.

**9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the project process. The key benefits of installing LED are as follows:

- **Reducing headaches and eye strain** – Light sensitivity can be a common cause of headaches and eyestrain. Flickering fluorescent bulbs and a lack of appropriate lighting can cause negative side effects which are mitigated by the implementation of sufficient LED lighting.

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- **Reduction in seasonal affective disorder (SAD)<sup>5</sup>** – Lack of sunlight can cause behaviour and mood changes which can lead to increased stress, anxiety and can contribute to SAD. LEDs have the ability mimic natural light and have therefore been associated with decreased levels of stress and anxiety in indoor environments.
- **Improved productivity and learning** – Old fluorescent lights can be associated with unpleasant flickering and insufficient brightness, causing lack of focus. Modern LED lighting technology provides more effective brightness, reducing the amount of lighting required and creating a more pleasant environment for staff. As a result, this can improve overall productivity and performance.

### 10. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 This is a relatively low-risk lifecycle replacement project, with all risks assessed as low or fully mitigated. There is a high degree of confidence in Laser's surveying and cost proposal work to date and an appropriate amount of contingency has been included for the delivery of the project.
- 10.2 Although highly unlikely, there is always a possibility that risks could mature leading to increased costs when considering the age and condition of our buildings. This has been mitigated in the current plan by Laser's internal cost control processes, with internal contingency built-in should their surveys not have picked up all requirements. Cost control will remain a feature of project management throughout the delivery phase.

### 11. **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Sustainability implications are seen as wholly positive with the use of modern LED technology contributing to our sustainability agenda and helping us reduce our carbon footprint and our energy bills. An additional benefit is that fluorescent and incandescent light bulbs generally contain mercury and other harmful chemicals, whereas LED lighting does not, so this environmental risk is fully mitigated.

### 12. **CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

- 12.1 As an RBFRS site-specific refurbishment initiative, opportunities to collaborate with partners, including other FRS Neighbours have been discounted for this project.

### 13. **PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/seasonal-affective-disorder-sad/overview/>

- 13.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Head of Finance and Procurement were consulted during the preparation of this report.
- 13.2 The Lead Member for Strategic Assets and Sustainability, and the Monitoring Officer were consulted during the preparation of this report.

**14. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 14.1. [RBFRS Sustainability Programme: Phase 1](#) (Fire Authority Paper April 24)
- 14.2. [Strategic Asset Investment Framework \(rbfrs.co.uk\)](#)
- 14.3. [RBFRS Heat Decarbonisation Plan 2023](#)

**15. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – RBFRS Project Organogram and Governance Structure.

**16. CONTACT DETAILS**

Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (Estates, Fleet and Equipment) [brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk)

Corey Gilbert, Estates Manager [gilbertc@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:gilbertc@rbfrs.co.uk)

Sophie Fox, Capital Projects Sustainability Co-Ordinator [foxs@rbfrs.o.uk](mailto:foxs@rbfrs.o.uk)

Appendix 1 – RBFRS LED Priority 2 Project Organogram and Governance Structure

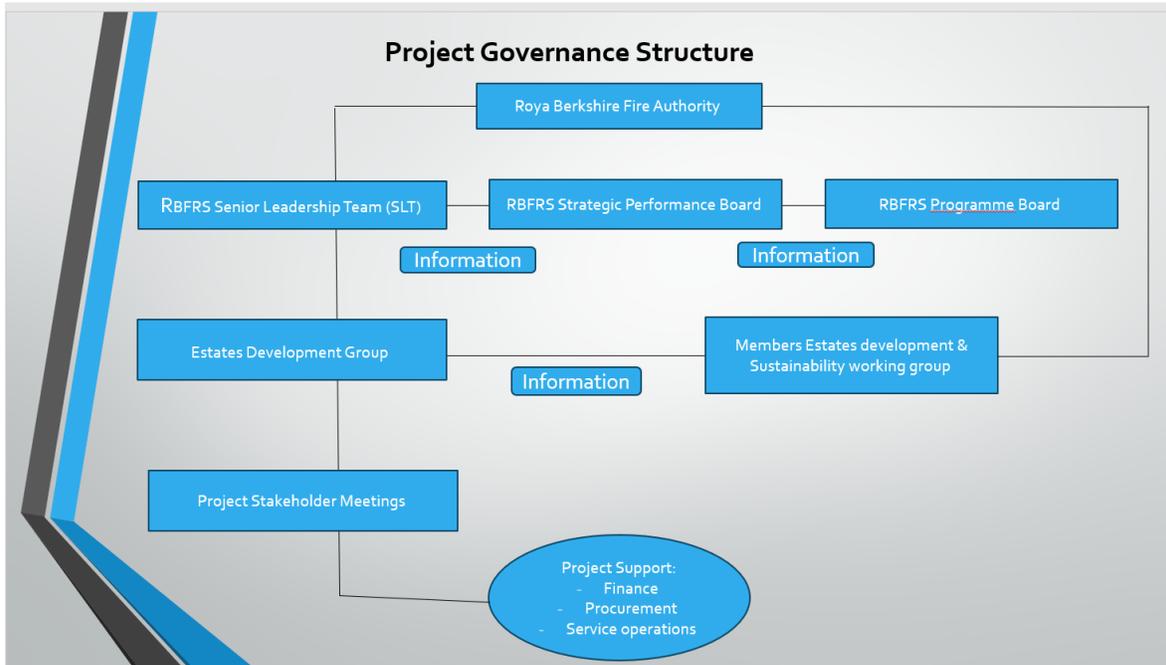


Figure A1 – Project governance structure.

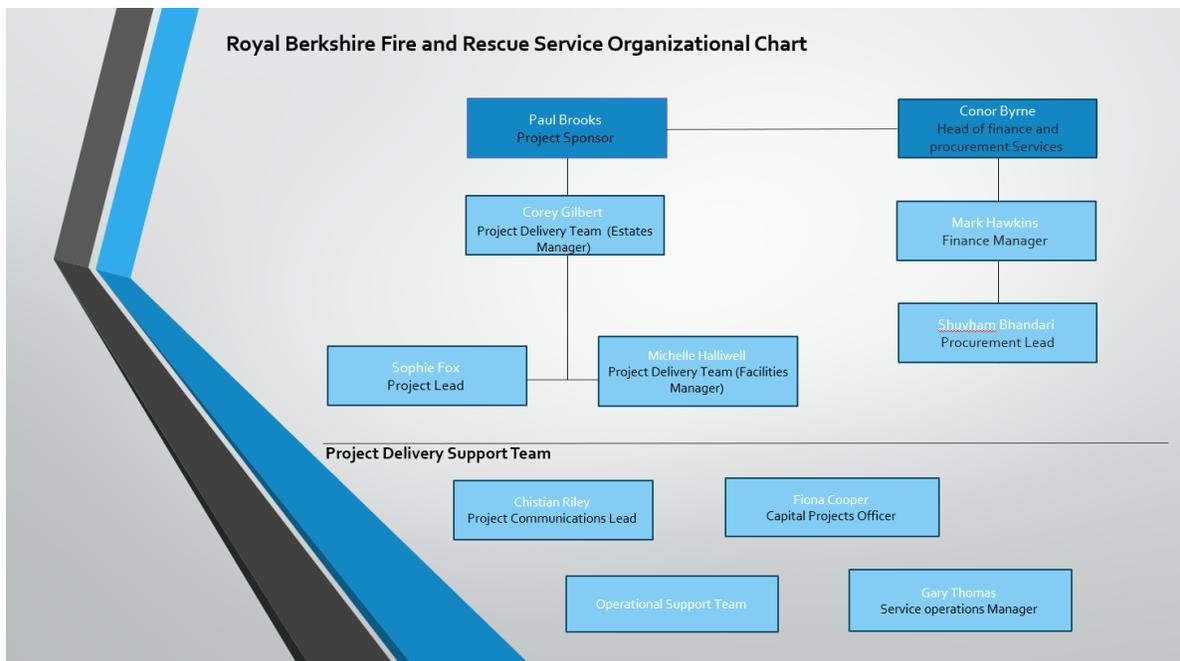


Table A2 – RBFRS Project organisation chart.

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT**



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>22 JULY 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ESTATES MINOR NEW WORKS CAPITAL SPEND APPROVAL</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>PAUL BROOKS, HEAD OF ASSETS</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SHEPHERD-DUBEY</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Minor capital projects on the estate are identified within the Fire Authority’s 10-year Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) to cover essential lifecycle works and/or minor new works upgrades or improvements. For 2024, four sites have been identified for projects covering Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and contaminants focussed improvements and life safety systems upgrades which aligns to the Estate Development Programme’s priority objectives. Notably, because of this investment the Estate will meet the EDI and contaminants minimum standards set by the Service. This achieves the challenging and ambitious target set in the accelerated programmed approach adopted.
- 1.2 The SAIF 2024 has provision for an investment of £200,000 for financial year 2024/5 which is sufficient to cover the proposed programme of works, including adequate contingency provision.
- 1.3 The projects will not impact on the Authority’s response standard performance.
- 1.4 The total budget for the combined projects of £171,350 is within the provision in the SAIF meaning the full cost of the project can be funded from internal resources that have been set aside to fund these types of minor capital projects. The projects represent good value for money, delivering better working environments for current staff and investing in estate infrastructure.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** the release of £171,350 from the SAIF to meet all costs for estate related minor capital projects, as defined in 3.4, to cover professional services,

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design, planning, contractor costs and construction costs along with ancillary works and other fees.

### 3. **REPORT**

#### **Background**

- 3.1 Minor capital projects are identified within the Fire Authority's 10-year SAIF as a critical and prudent aspect of estate management to cover essential lifecycle works and / or priority minor new works upgrades.
- 3.2 Four sites have been identified as the focus for this activity during financial year 2024/25, as follows in priority order.
- Windsor – EDI, LED lighting and fixed fire alarm upgrades
  - Wokingham – EDI and contamination control upgrades
  - Lambourn – fixed fire alarm installation
  - Mortimer – fixed fire alarm installation
- 3.3 The investments proposed in the programme builds on other, larger, recent estates development projects at Slough, Bracknell and Maidenhead, seeking to refresh working environments and supporting the strategic intent of extending the life and utility of existing buildings through refurbishment where appropriate.

#### **Scope of improvements**

- 3.4 The scope of works at each site is as follows:
- 3.4.1 **Windsor.** The size and configuration of Windsor station means it is not possible to achieve the minimum standards for EDI without significant alterations to the building. A costed plan to deliver the minimum EDI standard has been prepared by our professional consultants with an upper limit estimate of £100,000, which includes a provisional allowance for alterations to the fire alarm system, the mechanical and electrical (M&E) installation, and LED lighting.
- 3.4.2 **Wokingham.** To achieve the minimum standard for EDI, a partition wall is required to convert the existing dormitory into one male dormitory and one female-priority dormitory. To facilitate this change, minor alterations to the lighting system, fire detection and sprinkler system, and the M&E installation is also required. Further, to facilitate the creation of a new contamination control amber area near the breathing apparatus room, a partition wall needs to be erected. The costed plan has been prepared by our building fabric facilities contractor and is estimated to cost £30,000.
- 3.4.3 **Lambourn and Mortimer.** These stations have been grouped together as the scope of works for each are similar. Both stations currently rely on domestic smoke detectors to protect the buildings from fire, which is not deemed acceptable or tolerable. The existing fire protection configuration does not support remote monitoring, so it is not possible to know whether a smoke detector has been activated when the buildings are unoccupied. In the past, passing pedestrians hearing an alarm sounding have contacted RBFRS to raise the issue, which is not

acceptable for a professional organisation such as ours. The latest fire risk assessments for both stations have also flagged these as risks, with remedial action recommended. The budget has been derived from estimates previously obtained, and the work will cost £19,000.

- 3.5 Once the projects are funded, the Estates team will expedite design and planning to ensure completion of all works by March 2025. In all cases, the final designs will be aligned to all of the Authority’s four estates development priority objectives as described in the SAIF, which are:
  - 3.5.1 **Improving equality, diversity and inclusion.** Creating facilities that support, encourage and promote a more diverse workforce now and into the future.
  - 3.5.2 **Improving contamination control.** Addressing the growing risk of contaminants by providing better facilities for decontamination and contamination control.
  - 3.5.3 **Sustainability.** making the estate more environmentally friendly by carrying out upgrades and initiatives to reduce our carbon output and realise potential revenue savings by doing so.
  - 3.5.4 **Improving building infrastructure.** Investing in the infrastructure of the buildings to ensure longevity of our current estate and to provide fit-for-purpose workplaces for our staff.

**Procurement and anticipated costs**

- 3.6 The SAIF made an original provision for an anticipated investment of £200,000. The total project costs are expected to be £149,000 plus a contingency of £22,350 resulting in a total budget of £171,350.
- 3.7 The anticipated project costs are further clarified in **Table 1**.

Project Title	Estimate	Contingency (15%)	Total
Windsor EDI, LED lighting and fire alarm upgrades	£100,000	£15,000	£115,000
Wokingham EDI and contaminants upgrades	£30,000	£4,500	£34,500
Lambourn and Mortimer fixed fire alarm upgrades	£19,000	£2,850	£21,850
<b>Total</b>	<b>£149,000</b>	<b>£22,350</b>	<b>£171,350</b>

Table 1 – Anticipated project costs.

**Project timelines**

3.8 Subject to Authority approval, it is anticipated that all projects will be completed by December 2024, with key milestones in **Table 2**.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Estimated start date</b>	<b>Estimated completion date</b>
Windsor EDI, LED lighting and fire alarm upgrades	16 September 2024	31 March 2025
Wokingham EDI and contaminants upgrades	19 August 2024	31 December 2024
Lambourn and Mortimer fixed fire alarm upgrades	30 September 2024	30 October 2024

**Table 2** – Anticipated project milestones.

**4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

4.1 **Commitment 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.

4.2 **Commitment 5: Sustainability.** We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

4.3 **Commitment 6: People.** We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The total budget for the combined projects of £171,350, which is in line with the provision in the SAIF of £200,000.

5.2 The full cost of the project can be funded from internal resources that have been set aside to fund capital projects. The Authority will therefore not need to increase its debt levels or call on reserves to fund this project.

5.3 The projects represent good value for money, delivering both a better working environment for current staff as well as investing in estate infrastructure.

5.4 The Windsor landlord has given permission for the building alterations but has indicated that they are not willing to contribute any funds to the proposed work in their property.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no legal implications of note, but appropriate legal advice will be sought on procurement, planning and construction aspects if required.

- 6.2 As indicated above, the Windsor landlord has given formal written consent to make alterations to their property.

**7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 One of the key project outcomes for Windsor is to improve the equality of facilities for current and future staff groups making a positive and enduring impact at that site. Notably, the completion of these two EDI projects will mean the entire estate will meet the minimum standards set by the Service.

**8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There is a high degree of confidence of project costs based on preparatory work to date and budget overruns are not considered probable, but the risk always remains, particularly when considering the age of the buildings and limited investment on the sites over several years. The multi-project approach and proposed contingency provision of 15% will offset this risk.

**9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

- 9.1 Not applicable.

**10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Head of Finance and Procurement were consulted during the preparation of this report.
- 10.2 The Monitoring Officer and Lead Member for Strategic Assets and Sustainability were consulted during the preparation of this report.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 [Strategic Asset Investment Framework \(rbfrs.co.uk\)](http://rbfrs.co.uk)

**12. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 Not applicable.

**13. CONTACT DETAILS**

- 13.1 Paul Brooks, Head of Assets (Estates, Fleet & Equipment) [brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk)
- 13.2 Corey Gilbert, Estate Manager [gilbertc@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:gilbertc@rbfrs.co.uk)
- 13.3 Fiona Cooper, Capital Projects Officer [cooperf@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:cooperf@rbfrs.co.uk)

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**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT**



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>22 JULY 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>FLEET REPLACEMENT CAPITAL SPEND APPROVAL</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>PAUL BROOKS, HEAD OF ASSETS</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SHEPHERD-DUBEY</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) has a proactive planned fleet and equipment replacement programme which seeks to renew vehicles and operational equipment and ancillaries that are at the end of their expected life.
- 1.2 In July 2023, the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) approved the intention to invest in appliances as part of its 10-year Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) and £2.87M was identified for this critical activity.
- 1.3 The ongoing fleet replacement programme is a steady state programme. RBFRS has aligned the front-line appliance replacement profile to a 12-year cycle as recommended by the National Fire Chiefs Council. Other fleet assets will be life cycled based on several factors, including emerging operational needs, reliability, condition and sustainability. The replacement programme will be reviewed regularly opportunities are sought to build a more environmentally sustainable fleet where operationally and financially viable.
- 1.4 This paper and attached summary appendix seeks to update the Management Committee (MC) on fleet replacement progress and to gain approval to draw down on capital funds of up to £220,000 for the prudent replacement of fleet assets, in line with the SAIF provisions.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Management Committee is requested to:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** capital expenditure of up to £220,000 over one year for the fleet assets as identified in Appendix A.
- 2.2 **NOTE** that the budget request for the fleet requirements represents a 20% reduction on the forecasted SAIF 2024 provision (see paragraph 6.2).

## **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In 2015, a review of the RBFRS fleet was completed which identified that RBFRS had the second oldest fire appliance fleet amongst English fire and rescue services. It also initiated the development of the RBFRS Fleet Strategy, which sets out the medium to long-term replacement profile for all vehicles within RBFRS. This strategy aims to ensure the whole fleet is effective and flexible to meet the Prevention, Protection and Response aspirations of RBFRS.
- 3.2 Since 2017, 19 new frontline pumping appliances have been delivered into service. The Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services (Royal Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services) have worked together to design and procure a standard fire appliance to enhance the operational response of the three services when deployed by Thames Valley Fire Control Service.
- 3.3 The Management Committee endorsed a budget of £2,874,000 in July 2023 to commit to the purchase of 8 new frontline appliances and orders were placed to initiate that replacement programme.
- 3.4 In addition to the transformation of the fire appliance fleet, the Service acquired a new Aerial Ladder Platform (ALP) in 2021 and a new off-road capable pumping appliance in 2022. The service has also invested in off-road light vehicles adapted to better deal with wildfires.
- 3.5 Besides the 'red fleet' appliances and large special vehicles covered above, the Assets service is responsible for smaller specials like water rescue vans along with 'white fleet' cars and light vans and myriad operational equipment assets. This paper focuses on white fleet assets only.
- 3.6 Sustainability and reducing our environmental impact is important and hybrid vehicles are routinely being incorporated into the fleet and five fully electric vehicles are now in service enabling the impact to be reduced even further.

## **4. REPORT**

- 4.1 The three-year fire appliance replacement programme as endorsed by the RBFRA Management Committee on 11 Jul 23 is progressing and the first three appliances are scheduled for delivery between November 2024 and October 2025.

- 4.2 The latest position and detailed requirements for the white fleet replacement/upgrade programme is detailed at **Appendix A**. In summary:
  - 4.2.1 The profile for the next 12 months calls for the replacement of six light support vans.
  - 4.2.2 In the interests of efficiency and sustainability, three existing Flexi Duty Officer (FDO) emergency response cars that were planned for replacement in 2024 are to be retained for at least another 12 months realising a saving of £60,000. The vehicles have efficient, environmentally compliant engines, are in excellent condition and their retention will not affect operational capability.
- 4.3 A fleet review will be carried out in 2024/25 to assess options for further rationalising assets to ensure investment decisions are appropriately informed and matched to Service requirements and risks.
- 4.4 There have been extraordinary pressures within the vehicle and equipment segment caused by global supply chain pressures, continuing conflict in the Ukraine and Middle East, emerging threats to global maritime trade in the Red Sea and the surging costs of living. Price increases greater than 10% have been common in the last 12 months and are unlikely to subside substantially, but every effort will be made to achieve value for money.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

- 5.1 **Commitment 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.
- 5.2 **Commitment 5: Sustainability.** We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial details are contained in the appendix to this report. In summary, RBFRS is seeking approval to spend up to £220,000 on its fleet over the next year on assets that have been identified for replacement or upgrading.
- 6.2 The budget request is £50,000 less than the provisions contained in the SAIF 2024 representing a c20% saving over the forecasted amount of £275,000.
- 6.3 Every effort will be made to value engineer requirements and balance out risk to ensure that best value for money is achieved. To support this, and to improve governance and reporting, a Fleet and Equipment Delivery Group will be formed by the Head of Assets.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

**8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Equality impact assessments have previously been included in the contract for the replacement of appliances and assessments will be completed for other assets as / if required.

**9. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 If RFBRs does not replace or upgrade its fleet in a timely manner, there is risk of increased failures, increased running costs and technological fade.

**10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

- 10.1 As previously reported, and out of the scope of this paper, the contract for the replacement of fire appliances is common to the three Thames Valley Services and is managed in a collaborative manner.
- 10.2 Opportunities using collaboration with partners and other FRS to improve efficiency and/or effectiveness to procure fleet will always be explored and exploited if beneficial. In the context of this paper, collaboration is being carried out with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service under the Fleet Joint Working Agreement.
- 10.3 Where possible, existing framework agreements are utilised for procurement to enable collaborative benefits to be realised.

**11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

- 11.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Head of Finance and Procurement were consulted during the preparation of this report.
- 11.2 The Lead Member for Strategic Assets and Sustainability and the Monitoring Officer were consulted during the preparation of this report.

**12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 [Strategic Asset Investment Framework \(rbfrs.co.uk\)](http://rbfrs.co.uk)

**13. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 Appendix A – Fleet Replacement Summary Plan July 2024.

**14. CONTACT DETAILS**

- 13.1 Paul Brooks – Head of Assets (Estates, Fleet & Equipment), [brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:brooksp@rbfrs.co.uk)
- 13.2 Rob Read – Group Manager Fleet & Equipment, [readr@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:readr@rbfrs.co.uk)

**APPENDIX A to Management Committee Fleet Report July 2024**

**FLEET REPLACEMENT CAPITAL BUDGET SUMMARY PLAN JULY 2024**

**Introduction**

- A1. White fleet requirements are constantly shifting depending on accurately predicting operational needs and due to in-year unforeseen dilapidation because of wear and tear or damage. The white fleet replacement profile for the next 12 months calls for the replacement of six support vans. In the interests of efficiency and sustainability, three existing Flexi Duty Officer (FDO) emergency response cars that were planned for replacement are to be retained for at least another 12 months realising a saving of c£100,000.
- A2. The current RBFRS fleet strategy recommends replacement of Service-owned cars when 6 years old and vans when 8 years old. However, in the interests of sustainability and best value for the Authority, and where vehicles are in good condition and their retention will not affect operational capability, a pragmatic approach will be taken in respect of replacement planning. FDO lease scheme vehicles are treated differently, as best value is currently achieved on 3-year deals with an option to extend by one year.
- A2. To further add value to asset management, and due to the rate of change in the light vehicle market, only one year of replacements is being considered currently. Work will include continuing to look at further fleet rationalisation, operational requirements, and improvements around sustainability.

**White fleet replacement plan 2024**

- A3. The one-year fleet plan as far as can be practicably forecast is as laid out in **Table A1**. As indicated above, in all cases, sustainability is always a consideration with hybrid engines specified in the first instance. Electric vehicles (EV) will be considered in more volume once the RBFRS EV infrastructure project is rolled out in 2025 as part of the SAIF.

TYPE	VEHICLE	COSTS	FIT OUT	TOTAL	BUDGET REQUEST	REMARKS
<b>White fleet</b>						
GPV	Light van	£27,196	£3,000	£30,196		Home Fire Safety Vehicles (HFSV).
GPV	Light van	£27,196	£3,000	£30,196		HFSV.
GPV	Light van	£27,196	£3,000	£30,196		HFSV.
GPV	Light van	£29,456	£8,000	£37,456		Hydrants.
GPV	Light van	£29,456	£8,000	£37,456		Hydrants.
GPV	Light van – crew cab	£29,372	£1,500	£30,872		Training Centre.
	<b>White fleet total</b>	<b>£169,872</b>	<b>£26,500</b>	<b>£196,372</b>	<b>£220,000</b>	<b>c20% reduction on SAIF 2024 forecast.</b>

**Table A1 – July 2024 RBFRS one-year white fleet plan.**

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**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT**



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>22 JULY 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>ICT HARDWARE REPLACEMENT</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>LUKASZ WRONA, HEAD OF BUSINESS INFORMATION SYSTEMS</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR SHEPHERD-DUBEY, LEAD MEMBER STRATEGIC ASSETS AND SUSTAINABILITY</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) has a planned client device replacement programme which seeks to renew end user devices that are at the end of their expected reliable life.
- 1.2 As part of the Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) approved by the Fire Authority on 15 February 2024 (minute reference 46), a provision of £552,900 was shown to cover necessary investment in ICT hardware as well as services required to deliver transformational projects, including deployment system and systems cloud migration. In order to spend against this provision, the Authority’s governance arrangements require a paper to Management Committee to set out the rationale for the expenditure.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That Management Committee:

- 2.1 **APPROVE** the expenditure of £360,900 on end-user equipment listed in this report.
- 2.2 **APPROVE** the expenditure of 192,000 on services required to deliver improvements to deployment system and migration of systems to the cloud.

**3. REPORT**

- 3.1 The following equipment is due replacement:

## Agenda Item 12

- Staff Laptops.
  - Fixed desktops PCs predominantly station based.
  - Docking stations to ensure compatibility with the new laptops, including both office based and home workers.
  - Mobile phone replacement – in line with replacement cycle.
- 3.2 RBFRS ICT strategy included simplification and collaboration pillars intended to standardise the IT estate and improve the use of collaborative tools, resulting in an increased efficiency.
- 3.3 RBFRS Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF), reviewed and approved by the Authority in February 2024, outlines equipment replacement plans appropriate to the type of device and its use. This request fully complies with these replacement plans.
- 3.4 The predominant use of laptop computers continues to be deemed appropriate within RBFRS, underpinning the Service's flexible working arrangements vital to attracting its diverse workforce, as well as its business continuity arrangements.
- 3.5 The service Mobile Phone purchasing strategy continues to be set around the Android operating system. Purchasing a specification suitable for the next 2 years use ensures affordability whilst maintaining a consistent level of functionality suitable for integrated mobile working.
- 3.6 The standardisation of good quality affordable equipment paired with continual adoption of collaborative tools significantly improved confidence of end-users in reliability and utility of equipment leading to a marked change in behaviours and attitudes towards new technologies.
- 3.7 As part of mitigating risks posed by ageing server hardware, and in support of the sustainability and scalability requirements of the Authority, the Cloud Migration project seeks to align RBFRS systems with the Home Office cloud-first strategy leveraging cloud computing for hosting service systems.
- 3.8 This project will see a transition away from localised server hardware towards cloud-hosting of RBFRS systems, new IT disaster recovery and business continuity arrangements being implemented leveraging tiered data centres, as well as a shift away from large periodic capital expenditure on server hardware and maintenance towards operational spend, already discussed and approved by The Authority in relevant budgets and incorporated in the medium to long term budgetary planning.
- 3.9 New laptop deployment system will provide the service with an ability to deploy and configure laptops minimising a need for handling them at RBFRS HQ. This will streamline the process, improve the efficiency within the ICT team, as well as provide an improved way of managing and

resolving issues with laptop equipment while physically away from the Service Desk.

**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 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.
- 4.3 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The spending falls within the envelope already allocated to hardware refresh, deployment system, and cloud migration by the Fire Authority.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The procurement will be undertaken in line with the Authority's contract regulations; and, dependent on timing, the Procurement Act 2023 which replaces the regime established by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The transparency requirements within the legislation will require the Authority to publish the subject matter of the proposed contract(s) and the estimated value(s) as part of the procurement exercise.

**7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None specifically identified.

**8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 If we do not maintain our end-user equipment there will be an increased risk of disruption to operations and adversely impacting service's ability to maintain its effectiveness in dealing with incidents, caused by potential inability to access relevant information.
- 8.2 Disrupting operations can have a negative impact on users' confidence in technology and adversely impact Service's ability to increase the use of technology in order to improve productivity.
- 8.3 If we do not improve the deployment system for our laptop equipment, the efficiency opportunities will be missed which will have a negative effect on the growing demand for our ICT department.
- 8.4 If we do not migrate our systems away from ageing hardware, their reliability cannot be guaranteed which can have a significant impact on all operations of RBFRS.

**9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

- 9.1 Appropriately working ICT equipment is a necessary enabler to effective communication with partner organisations. Collaboration on common functions is always considered as part of any replacement device or function.

**10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 Councillor Shepherd-DuBey, Lead Member Strategic Assets and Sustainability
- 10.2 Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer, Chief Executive Officer
- 10.3 Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer
- 10.4 Connor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Strategic Asset Investment Programme (SAIF).
- 11.2 ICT Strategy.

**12. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 None.

**13. CONTACT DETAILS**

- 13.1 Lee Arslett ICT Service Delivery Manager [arslettl@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:arslettl@rbfrs.co.uk)

## ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>22 JULY 2024</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER FOUR</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>NONE</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>FOR NOTE AND DECISION</b>

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform members of the revenue and capital outturns as well as the reserves and treasury positions at the end of quarter four 2023/24.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the report; and  
 2.2 **AGREE** the reserves position as set out in **Appendix D**.

### 3. REPORT

#### Commentary on Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 The detailed revenue outturn for quarter 4, 2023/24 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of TVFCS for quarter 4 are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2023/24 Revenue Budget agreed by Fire Authority in February 2023 was set at £41.975m. Income was set to exceed expenditure by £573,000 to allow for the replenishment of the Budget Contingency Reserve.
- 3.3 The Revenue Outturn for 2023/24 is shown in **Appendix A** and shows a surplus of £113,000 compared to budget. Variances against individual revenue lines are explained below.

## Agenda Item 13

- 3.4 *Employee costs* – The Service was under establishment at various times during the year leading to a saving on wholetime station salary costs of £279,000. The overtime cost for wholetime stations was £260,000 over budget, which was due to factors including cover for firefighter vacancies as well as additional training needs relating to water rescue. It is pleasing to report that the new Operational Support Team has proved effective in monitoring and managing overtime expenditure. On-call stations show a net saving against budget of £163,000.
- 3.5 The Green book pay award was finalised and paid (including back pay from 1 April 2023) and came out as an average of 5.4%, against the original budget of 4% resulting in an additional £77,000 of costs, although this has been offset by vacancies.
- 3.6 The cost of 18 new trainee firefighters was an additional budgetary pressure of £103,000. This is shown on the non-stations line, which is where recruit costs are posted whilst in training and before they are deployed to stations. The training costs of the additional trainee firefighters are reflected in the higher costs in the training line.
- 3.7 *Repairs and Maintenance* – The total variance of £355,000 includes repairs to the firehouse at Whitley Wood, which resulted in additional costs of £155,000, including corrective repair works on the roof and floor. There have also been specific project costs related to EDI, Contaminants, LED lighting and the provision of electric charging points.
- 3.8 *Rates* – The Authority continues to work with a third party to challenge business rate charges for stations. Since budget setting, an appeal for Newbury Fire Station was successful resulting in a refund of £11,000 and a 6.5% decrease in future bills. The final historical refunds in respect of Dee Road were received in Q1 2023/24, totalling £24,000. A refund was received for Langley Fire Station totalling £62,000 and for Caversham Road a net refund of £30,000 has been notified as due.
- 3.9 *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 expired in September 2023 to allow a re-tendering exercise to be undertaken. Both of these factors led to an overall pressure of £27,000 compared to the budgeted amount.
- 3.10 *Utilities* – The price of Gas has come down and this is reflected in a reduction in the spend compared to the budget.
- 3.11 *Equipment* – Expenditure is £34,000 higher than budget due to above inflation price rises, additional water rescue equipment and the purchase of additional scrap cars needed for increased training.
- 3.12 *Communication* – The WAN (Wide Area Network) project has been delayed leading to reduced revenue costs of £81,000, as the new WAN costs are not

yet realised. Continued use of the legacy system results in a reduced performance within the MS 365 environment. Separately, the charge for Firelink by the Home Office was £28,000 lower.

- 3.13 *Occupational Health* – Costs were £33,000 lower than budgeted due to various factors including lower numbers of specialist referrals.
- 3.14 *Community Fire Safety Supplies* – Costs were lower than budget by £47,000. This has been factored into the 2024/25 Budget based on current levels of consumption.
- 3.15 *Contribution to TVFCS* – The 2023/24 Budget for TVFCS was set before pay rises were finalised. This has resulted in higher employment costs compared to Budget, as shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.16 *Interest receivable* – Increased interest rates has resulted in additional investment income of £275,000 compared to the budgeted figure.
- 3.17 Delays in obtaining planning permission for the new Training Centre resulted in reduced revenue funding of capital compared to the budget. The underspend of £335,000 has been used to fund an increase to the Authority's voluntary revenue provision to ensure that overall revenue resources devoted to funding capital expenditure remained in line with the budget.
- 3.18 *Gov Grants/Precepts*. As part of budget setting, unitary authorities within Berkshire have to estimate income in relation to business rates relief payments. The actual amount due the Authority is calculated at the end of the financial year and is £56,000 less than budget.

### **Capital**

- 3.19 Capital expenditure for the year and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

### **Usable Reserves**

- 3.20 Balances and movements on the Reserves for 2023/24 are shown in **Appendix D**.

### **Treasury**

- 3.21 Treasury management activity for quarter 4 is shown in **Appendix E**. All treasury management operations have been conducted in full compliance with the Authority's Treasury Management Practices.

## **4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

- 4.1 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

## Agenda Item 13

- 5.1 The total surplus of £686,000 on the Revenue Account will be used to replenish reserves by being taken to the Budget Contingency Reserve.

### **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 Budget setting assumptions that feed into the Medium-Term Financial Plan were reviewed and approved by Fire Authority.

- 8.2 Regular monitoring of expenditure against budgets helps ensure that resources are matched to need.

### **9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

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

### **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 4 2023/24

- 12.2 Appendix B – Net costs of TVFCS quarter 4 2023/24

- 12.3 Appendix C – Capital position at quarter 4 2023/24

- 12.4 Appendix D – Usable Reserves at quarter 4 2023/24

- 12.5 Appendix E – Treasury position at quarter 4 2023/24

### **13. CONTACT DETAILS**

- 13.1 Mark Hawkins  
Finance Manager  
[hawkinsm@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:hawkinsm@rbfrs.co.uk)

13.2 Conor Byrne  
Head of Finance and Procurement  
[byrnek@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:byrnek@rbfrs.co.uk)

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	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Actual Q4 Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>			
STATIONS	18,847	18,666	(181)
NON-STATIONS	12,563	12,629	66
TRAINING	539	661	122
OTHER	279	281	2
	<b>32,228</b>	<b>32,237</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>PREMISES</b>			
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	990	1,343	353
RATES	888	761	(127)
CLEANING	276	303	27
UTILITIES	880	821	(59)
	<b>3,034</b>	<b>3,228</b>	<b>194</b>
<b>SUPPLIES</b>			
INSURANCE	418	427	9
EQUIPMENT	569	603	34
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	1,126	1,143	17
CLOTHING/PPE	367	386	19
COMMUNICATIONS	786	669	(117)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	263	230	(33)
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	144	133	(11)
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	133	86	(47)
SUPPLIES OTHER	212	226	14
	<b>4,018</b>	<b>3,903</b>	<b>(115)</b>
<b>CONTRACTS</b>			
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	977	998	21
LEGAL	40	39	(1)
CONTRACTS OTHER (incl Professional Services)	1,201	1,219	18
	<b>2,218</b>	<b>2,256</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>TRANSPORT</b>			
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	821	823	2
TRAVEL	203	201	(2)
	<b>1,024</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PENSIONS</b>			
PENSIONS	455	445	(10)
	<b>455</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>(10)</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
GRANTS	(2,196)	(2,209)	(13)
RENTAL INCOME	(249)	(249)	0
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(394)	(394)	0
INCOME OTHER	(784)	(781)	3
	<b>(3,623)</b>	<b>(3,633)</b>	<b>(10)</b>
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>	<b>39,354</b>	<b>39,460</b>	<b>106</b>
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	333	333	0
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(511)	(786)	(275)
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	1,379	1,044	(335)
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	799	799	0
FINANCING COSTS	684	1,019	335
REVERSAL OF ACCRUED HOLIDAY PAY	(63)	(63)	0
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>41,975</b>	<b>41,806</b>	<b>(169)</b>
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(41,975)	(41,919)	56
<b>(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(113)</b>	<b>(113)</b>

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
 Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn Year to March 24 £'000	Variance to Budget £'000
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	1,923	1,996	73
<b>CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFMS</b>	394	394	0
<b>SUPPLIES/ OTHER</b>	47	43	(4)
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	275	264	(11)
<b>NET COST OF TVFCS</b>	<b>2,639</b>	<b>2,697</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>RBFMS Share of Costs</b>	977	998	21

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Project Owner	Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's A	Spend in Prior Years £000's B	Spend in 2023/24 £000's C	Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's D	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's B+C+D	Overall variance on Project	Estimated Project Completion Date	Commentary
Estates Development Programme	Training Centre	3,860	0	349	3,511	3,860	0	Q4 24/25	The main station upgrades for the decant have been completed. Planning permission was granted in June 2024 from the Local Authority and the construction contract awarded to Premier Modular. Phase 2 (demolition work, enabling work, new build, etc) will start in July 2024.
	Slough refurbishment	780	0	415	365	780	0	Q2 24/25	Ground floor works (EDI and contaminants improvements) were handed over to the Station in May. First floor works (communal and mess facilities) are estimated to be completed in July 2024.
	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>4,640</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>3,876</b>	<b>4,640</b>	<b>0</b>		
Fleet & equipment	White Fleet (including EV vehicle)	711	280	253	178	711	0	Q2 24/25	Vehicles on order via RBFRS / Hants & IOW FRS agreement. A Fiat Ducato was received in May 2024. Other vehicles expected are a Ford Ranger (expected July 2024) and 3 x Skoda Kodiaq's (expected in August 2024).
	Appliances	2,664	0	0	2,664	2,664	0	Q1 26/27	Vehicles on order via RBFRS / Hants & IOW FRS agreement. The first 3 appliances are anticipated to be delivered in December 2024, with chassis delivery in July 2024, and the first build stage due to be completed by the end of September 2024.
	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>3,375</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>2,842</b>	<b>3,375</b>	<b>0</b>		
ICT	Network Refresh (WAN)	394	0	0	404	404	10	Q2 24/25	Contract discussions with BT regarding project implementation are progressing.
	DCS Implementation (SanH)	47	0	66	0	66	19	Q4 23/24	Project completed March 2024.
	Software - Firewatch Development	50	0	12	38	50	0	Q4 24/25	This is an ongoing project. In 23/24 expenditure was on the asset management system within Firewatch.
	MDT Refresh	141	0	175	0	175	34	Q3 23/24	Project completed March 2024.
	Fireground Radio Replacement	136	0	0	136	136	0	Q1 24/25	Timetable and testing procedure is progressing, with some delivery in June 2024. Completion is expected in Q2 24/25
	Station End Refresh	67	0	0	68	68	1	Q1 24/25	This project was completed in Q1 24/25
	Hardware - Laptops	107	0	0	107	107	0	Q1 24/25	This project was completed in Q1 24/25
	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>1,006</b>	<b>64</b>		
TVFCS	Vision system Hardware and UPS replacement	176	88	95	0	183	7	Q3 23/24	This project is now complete
	Video monitoring	24	0	24	0	24	0	Q4 23/24	This project is now complete
	<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>7</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9,157</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>7,471</b>	<b>9,228</b>	<b>71</b>		

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**USABLE RESERVES**

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £000	Movements in year £000	Balance at 31 March 2024 £000	Purpose
Budget Carry Forward Reserve	596	196	792	To roll forward specific budget lines where commitments have been made but expenditure has not yet been incurred by the close of the financial year
Detectors Reserve	62	9	71	To provide on-going support to the Fire Prevention Programme
TVFCS Renewals Fund	617	(32)	585	To replace IT assets
Grants Received in Advance	899	65	964	The unspent balance of grants
COVID-19	12	(12)	0	Funding received to help meet additional costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic
Vacancy Reserve	65		65	To offset fluctuations in employee numbers
Budget Contingency Reserve	456	686	1,142	To offset future cuts in Government funding. Replenished this year after being used in 22.23
Transition Fund	901		901	To support new ways of working
Development Fund	3,195		3,195	To fund capital projects
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>6,803</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>7,715</b>	
<b>GENERAL FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,267</b>	
<b>CAPITAL RECEIPTS RESERVE</b>	<b>6,138</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>6,248</b>	
<b>TOTAL USABLE RESERVES</b>	<b>15,208</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>16,230</b>	

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# Treasury Management Update – Q4 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 Q4 2023/24, total debt remaining at £8,922k.

	<b>2023/24 Original Estimate (£000's)</b>	<b>Position as at 31 March 2024 (£000's)</b>
Debt	8,922	8,922

## Investment Portfolio

The Authority held investments totalling £11.23m as at 31 March 2024.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted to maintain Bank Rate at 5.25% in March 2024.

Two fixed term deposits totalling £4m that matured on the 5 of January 2024 were re-invested in line with our investment strategy, for the duration of three months based on cash flow needs. A sum of £7.23m was held in a call Account with a UK bank at 31 March 2024.

The Authority continues to closely monitor liquidity needs and invests to provide flexibility where needed. The added advantage of this approach is that if the current

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### Appendix E

bank rate is maintained in the future, the Authority will be able to benefit from this when placing further investments.

The budgeted investment return for 2023/24 was £511,000. With the investments placed, as outlined above, the actual return in 2023/24 was £786,000.

## 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 31 March 2024, 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.

<b>Treasury Indicators</b>	<b>2023/24 Budget (£000's)</b>	<b>31 March 2024 Actual (£000's)</b>
Authorised Limit for external debt	14,422	14,422
Operational boundary for external debt	9,022	9,022
Gross external debt	8,922	8,922
Investments – 31 March 2024		11,229
Net borrowing – 31 March 2024		(2,307)

<b>Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing</b>	<b>31 Mar 2024 Actual (£000's)</b>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,922</b>

<b>Prudential Indicators</b>	<b>2023/24 Projection (£000's)</b>	<b>31 Mar 2024 Actual (£000's)</b>
Capital expenditure	4,672	1,079
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	10,085	9,750
Annual change in CFR	(684)	(1,019)
In-year borrowing requirement	0	0
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	1.95%	1.96%

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ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Culture Development Update	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Note	CFO	Chair	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q1	Management Committee	08.10.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q1	Management Committee	08.10.24	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Workwear Project	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part I
Property Asset Management Strategy	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	Strategic Assests and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Fleet and Equipment Strategy	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part I
Property Asset Management Strategy	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part I
Langley Refurbishment	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part I
Sustainability Strategy	Management Committee	08.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	N/A	Part I
External Audit report	A&GC	21.10.24	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	21.10.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Internal assessment of effectiveness within discipline	A&GC	21.10.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	21.10.24	Annual	Agree	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Contract Regulations	A&GC	21.10.24	Ad-hoc	Note and recommend	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Lease changes	A&GC	21.10.24	Ad-hoc	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance 22/23	A&GC	21.10.24	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Q1 Performance Report	A&GC	21.10.24	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Constitutional update	A&GC	21.10.24	Ad-hoc	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Treasury Report and Mid-year report	Fire Authority	13.11.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Contract Regulations	Fire Authority	13.11.24	Ad-hoc	Agree	HF&P	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Joint Committee Annual Report 2023/24	Fire Authority	13.11.24	Annual	Note	AM (C&P)	Collaboration Lead	Part I
Annual Report on Governance - to include Member attendance, allowances and expenses	Fire Authority	13.11.24	Annual	Note	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Constitutional update	Fire Authority	13.11.24	Ad-hoc	Approve	MO	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q2	Management Committee	04.12.24	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q2	Management Committee	04.12.24	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	TVFCS Joint Committee	12.12.24	Bi annual	Note	AM C&P and HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance 23/24	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Annual Governance Statement 22/23	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Gender, Ethnicity and Equality Pay Gap	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	30.01.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	30.01.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	10.02.25	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	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	10.02.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	10.02.25	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Approve	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 24/25, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Annual Plan	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	19.02.25	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Quarterly Performance Report/Budget Monitoring	TVFCS Joint Committee	17.03.25	Bi annual	Note	AM C&P and HF&P	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	24.03.25	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	24.03.25	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	24.03.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	Member Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances / Code of Conduct annual consultation results	A&GC	24.03.25	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	24.03.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
	Management Committee	07.04.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Corporate Calendar 2025/26	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Member and Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	17.04.25	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I

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

	<b>Category</b>
	[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).

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