

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

Held on Monday 25 January 2010

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



Those present: Councillor Dr Paul Bryant (Chairman, Fire Authority) (*Chairman*)
Councillor Jeff Brooks (Member, Fire Authority) (*part meeting*)
Councillor Colin Dudley (Vice-Chairman, Fire Authority)
Councillor Paul Gittings (Member, Fire Authority) (*part meeting*)
Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons (Member, Fire Authority) (*part meeting*)
Councillor Iain McCracken (Member, Fire Authority)
Councillor Angus Ross (Member, Fire Authority)

In Attendance: Gene Ashe (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection)
Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer)
Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager)
Andy Mancey (Area Manager, Response)
Caroline Redzikowska (Clerk and Monitoring Officer)
Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)
Andrew Vallance (Authority Treasurer)
David Wallace (Director of Human Resources)

Observers: Fire Brigades Union Representatives

Action

55. The Representative Bodies present did not wish to address the Management Committee on any Part I item.

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeff Brooks and Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons who would both be late to the meeting.

57. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Angus Ross declared a Personal non Prejudicial interest as the Fire Authority's representative and Board Member on the South East Fire and Rescue Service Control Centre Ltd (SEFRCCCL) in respect to Agenda Item 15 (South East Fire and Rescue Service Control Centre Ltd). There were no further declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest received from Officers.

**58. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
19 OCTOBER 2009**

Resolved:

a) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 19 October 2009 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed, in respect to Minute 43c), that all Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service staff had been advised that the Service had responded to the Audit Commission in respect to the Comprehensive Area Assessment Organisational Assessment.

The Area Manager (Response) confirmed, in respect to Minute 44, that the South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) data to support the number of times defibrillators had been used previously by operational personnel was still awaited, however he confirmed that the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service data was very low.

The Chairman noted that all the other actions had been discharged.

59. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The Chief Fire Officer conveyed his personal thanks to both the operational and non-uniformed personnel for their support and hard work during the recent adverse weather conditions. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that, during this period, the Service had not experienced any crewing problems through absenteeism, and that this was largely due to the efforts of the crews. The Management Committee also conveyed its thanks to the exceptional work of Service personnel during this time.
- b) The Chairman advised that the application by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) under the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 (SCA) had been refused by the Local Government Association (LGA) Selector Panel.
- c) The Chairman reported that he had attended a recent meeting of the Local Government Association Fire Management Committee and that the considerations had, in the main, been related to FiReControl.

60. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

61. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee reviewed its Terms of Reference.

Resolved:

- a) That the Terms of Reference were fit for purpose and, therefore, no changes were required to be recommended to the Fire Authority.

62. 2010/11 BUDGET

The Committee was advised of the work of the Budget Working Party which had considered the budget proposals; the precept levels for 2010/11, which had included precept increases of 0%, 0.5% and 1.0%, with Band D council taxes of £55.11, £55.39 and £55.66 respectively; the presented Revenue and Capital bids and the Revenue savings. The Chairman reported that the Budget Working Party's recommendation to the Management Committee was for a 1% increase in the precept.

The Authority Treasurer took Members through the presented three-year budget plans, and confirmed that the taxbase and collection fund figures were still provisional as the Authority was still awaiting figures from some Unitary Authorities, however he did not expect that any required amendments to the collection fund would impact on the overall presented funding. He stated that any minor adjustments would be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting in February 2010.

Councillor Colin Dudley **Moved** that the recommendation of the Budget Working Party, that being a 1% increase in the precept, be recommended to the Fire Authority.

In response to Councillor Angus Ross, the Officers present provided an overview of the proposals in respect to the presented revenue bids, revenue savings, and capital bids. **Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons and Councillor Jeff Brooks both joined the meeting during these presentations.**

In referring to the comparative average Band D Council Tax (2009/10) for Combined Fire Authorities, as shown at Appendix F of Agenda Item 8, Councillor Jeff Brooks felt that the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority was providing good value for money.

The Chief Fire Officer, in noting the concerns raised by Councillor Jeff Brooks regarding the public's perception of the management of the total budget and recent year-end budgetary underspends, reminded the Committee that the consequential decisions to be taken as a result of the Retained Review could eradicate any potential underspends. Councillor Jeff Brooks suggested that within the presented budget, reference be made to a contingent reserve to defend any anticipated financial risk resulting from the recommendation outcomes of the Retained Review, and that a footnote to this effect be added to the precept leaflet which should also reference the need for a prudent budget. The Committee **Supported** this.

In response to Councillor Angus Ross, the Authority Treasurer confirmed that the Authority had previously undertaken two zero based budget exercises in recent years.

Councillor Iain McCracken **Seconded** Councillor Colin Dudley's earlier Motion, and, on being put to the vote, was **unanimously carried**.

Resolved:

- a) That the budgets considered by the Budget Working Party be Noted.
- b) That a budget, based on a precept increase of 1%, be recommended to the full Fire Authority.

Councillor Paul Gittings conveyed his apologies and he left the meeting.

63. INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT 5-YEAR PLAN - CONSULTATION REPORT FOR 2010-2015 5-YEAR PLAN

The Committee was advised of the results of the Consultation process for the 2010/11 Action Plan and the 5-Year Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2010/11-2015/16, and consideration was given to whether any changes were required to the Action Plan.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer referred specifically to the comments received to the Action Plan 2010/11 that might impact on its publication, as presented within Appendix B of the report. The Committee **Accepted** the Assistant Chief Fire Officer's proposed amended text to page 8 regarding the Environmental and Chemical Incident Response. In respect to the consultation response received from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that he would be further considering the FBU's document.

Resolved:

- a) That the report and the responses to the Consultation be Noted.
- b) That the 5-Year Integrated Risk Management Plan for 2010/11-2015/16, which incorporated the 2010/11 Action Plan, be recommended to the Fire Authority in February 2010 for final approval, subject to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) making minor amendments to the text, as advised.

AT

ACFO

64. WAIVER OF CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS - URGENT REMOVAL OF ASBESTOS FROM FIRE AUTHORITY PREMISES

The Committee's approval was sought for the award of an order under Single Tender Action to immediately remove asbestos containing materials at seven fire stations.

In response to Councillor Angus Ross, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO) agreed to ascertain whether any asbestos had been found in the two residential properties on the Wokingham Fire Station site.

ACFO

Resolved:

- a) That the award of a Contract to Shield Environmental Services Ltd under Single Tender Action be Noted.
- b) That the waiver of Contract Standing Orders in compliance with Authority Standing Order CSO 24(d) be Agreed.

65. TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF NEW DIMENSION ASSETS AND CONTRACT FOR MAINTENANCE

The Committee was advised of the Fire and Rescue Service Circular 59/2009 issued by Communities and Local Government (CLG).

The Chief Fire Officer commended, with certain caveats, the transfer of ownership of the New Dimensions Assets and contract for maintenance to the Fire Authority, and advised that the Authority Treasurer had informed the Communities and Local Government (CLG), subject to the Fire Authority's approval, that the actual date for enactment of the transfer would be 1 April 2010.

Resolved:

- a) That, on the basis of, and in reliance on CLG's and Ministers' explicit statements that Government is committed to paying the fixed costs under the National Maintenance Contract for the New Dimension Assets, the Authority should confirm to CLG that it would be willing to sign the draft transfer of assets agreement provided by CLG and to enter into the associated agreement as to the National Maintenance Contract.
- b) That the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to enter into the respective agreements, following receipt of the agreement from CLG, to include the relevant information as to the individual values of each of the assets, anticipated to be in early 2010.

66. SOUTH EAST REGIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUPPLY OF FIRE SERVICE WORKWEAR UNIFORM

The Committee was advised of the work undertaken to achieve a South East Fire and Rescue Service Procurement Framework Agreement for Fire Service Uniform.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

67. 2009/10 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was advised of the revenue and capital expenditure against budgets up to the end of December 2009.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that he expected there would be some financial implications as a result of the recent adverse weather conditions.

Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliard-Symons, as Chairman of the Fire Authority's

Strategic Asset Management Committee (SAMC), was pleased to report that the SAMC reviewed, at each of its meetings, the progress made against the Capital Programme, and that through more timely allocations of budgetary estimations and specifications this could realise improvements to project tendering processes.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

68. INSURANCE - CONSORTIUM AND FRAML (FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES MUTUAL LIMITED) UPDATE

The Authority Treasurer reported that recent Government legislation change now allowed for Mutuals, and that the nine Fire and Rescue Services that joined FRAML would be meeting to wind up FRAML 1 and to commence FRAML 2.

The Authority Treasurer (AT) agreed, in response to a request from Councillor Iain McCracken, to provide a written report to the next meeting.

69. SOUTH EAST FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE CONTROL CENTRE LTD (SEFRCCCL)

Councillor Angus Ross, in his capacity as the Fire Authority's representative and Board Member on the South East Fire and Rescue Service Control Centre Ltd (SEFRCCCL), advised that he would be providing an update report at the Fire Authority meeting in February 2010 following the next meeting of the SEFRCCCL on 5 February 2010 which had replaced the postponed SEFRCCCL meeting in January 2010. Councillor Angus Ross did not have any further updates.

70. TRANSLATION SERVICES

Councillor Colin Dudley declared a Personal non Prejudicial Interest as he works for Prestige Network, a Translation Company.

The Committee was advised of the Translation Services requested over the preceding twelve months.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

71. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION RESPONSES

The Committee received an update on the responses made under Freedom of Information (FOI) for the period January to December 2009.

In response to Councillor Jeff Brooks, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer agreed to include within future reporting any approximate hidden costs to the Service associated with providing responses to Freedom of Information requests.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

72. FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBER CHAMPIONS' 6-MONTHLY REPORTS

The Committee received 6-monthly reports from the Member Champions for Equality and Diversity, Environment, Community and Partnerships, and Communications.

Councillor Colin Dudley conveyed his thanks to Bryan Morgan (Area Manager, Support Services) and Michael Cox (Environmental System Adviser) for their contribution to the presented Member Champion/Environmental report.

AT
Agenda
22.03.10

ACFO

Councillor Angus Ross suggested that consideration be given to the Committee receiving a presentation at a future meeting on the achieved successes in areas where arsons have occurred.

Resolved:

- a) That the Fire Authority Member Champions' 6-monthly update reports be Noted.
- b) That it be Noted that the Member Development Champion's report would be deferred to the next meeting.
- c) That it be Agreed that the frequency and timing of the Environment Champion 6-monthly reporting to the Management Committee and Fire Authority should be aligned to provide combined 6-monthly updates to the Fire Authority, commencing September 2010.

73. NEWBURY SHOW 2009 UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the outcome of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) attendance at the 2009 Royal County of Berkshire Show (Newbury Show).

The Chairman advised that, following liaison with the Police and West Berkshire Council, it had now been mutually agreed that the Services would have a shared stand at future shows. The Committee felt that attendance by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service still provided good value for money.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.
- b) That the Fire Authority should continue to support the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's attendance at future Royal County of Berkshire Shows (Newbury Show).

74. FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the business to be conducted at the Fire Authority's meeting in April 2010.

Resolved:

- a) That the Forward Plan be Noted.
- b) That it be Recommended to the Fire Authority that consideration be given to the cancellation of its meeting in April 2010 in the absence of sufficient business; that the Arms Length Trading Company's annual report, in this instance, be referred to the Management Committee to consider at its meeting in May 2010; and that the other items of business be deferred to the next meeting of the Fire Authority in June 2010.

75. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 22 March 2010 at 6.30pm in the Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

76. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved:

- a) That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 5 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.

77. PART II MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2009

Resolved:

- a) That the Part II Minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 19 October 2009 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

78. WOKINGHAM FIRE STATION PROJECT REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the recommendations and decisions made by both the Property and Property Resources Committee and the Executive Committee regarding the Wokingham Fire Station Project.

Councillor Angus Ross felt that consideration must also be given to capital receipt from other areas.

Resolved, with one abstention:

- a) That the report be Noted.
- b) That the previous decisions made by the Property and Property Resources Committee and the Executive Committee be Supported.