

MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Monday 25 October 2010

Council Chamber, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre,
Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7TD

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

In Attendance: Gene Ashe (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection)
Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager)
Andy Mancey (Area Manager, Response)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)
David Wallace (Director of Human Resources)
Andrew Vallance (Authority Treasurer)

Observers: Eddie Cardoso (FBU Representative)
Christopher Glenn (Unison Representative)
Mark Stollery (FBU Representative)
Paul Watts (FBU Representative)

146. At the invitation of the Chairman, the FBU representatives and the Unison representative present requested to address the Committee at Agenda Items 10 (Control Room Outsourcing Project Update) and 11 (Selection Criteria for Redundancies) respectively.

147. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from Officers were received from Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer), Caroline Redzikowska (Clerk and Monitoring Officer) and Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer).

148. 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 Control Centre Ltd (SEFRCCL) in respect to Agenda Item 14 (South East Fire and Rescue 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.

149. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JULY 2010

Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Action

150. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported that he had attended the recent meeting of the Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission held in London, the main discussion points being the Regional Control Centre, and relations between the Communities for Local Government (CLG) and Cassidian (previously known as EADS). The Chairman advised that a Working Group had been established to consider devolving powers from CLG to other bodies, and that their findings would be announced shortly.

151. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

The Chairman Agreed to take Agenda Item 7 (Demonstration of Heavy Rescue Unit and Animal Rescue Unit) later in the Agenda. Agenda Item 8 (Recommendations of Committees) was taken next.

152. RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

The Committee received and considered recommendations made by the Fire Authority's Committees from 27 July 2010 to the date of Management Committee.

Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons, as Chairman of the Strategic Asset Management Committee (SAMC), provided a brief background to the SAMC's Recommendation to the Committee.

Resolved:

- a) That the 2010/11 Water Tender Ladder Capital Project shortfall be funded from the Revenue underspend.

153. COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW UPDATE

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcement made on 20 October 2010. He reminded the Committee that the actual Government grant for the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service following the application of the funding formula would not be definitively known until December 2010.

In response to Councillor Jeff Brooks, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed that financial considerations in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review would be presented to the Budget Working Party at its meeting on 1 November 2010.

The Chairman advised that a meeting had been held with Berkshire MPs to seek their support in lobbying Ministers in the event that the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service was disadvantaged by the funding formula that determines its Government grant levels.

154. CONTROL ROOM OUTSOURCING PROJECT - UPDATE

The Committee was updated on the progress of the investigation into the viability and potential benefits of outsourcing the Berkshire mobilising and resource management function to Surrey County Council Fire and Rescue Service.

Members felt it was necessary that medium to long term projects, to include all available options for the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service mobilising function, should be considered.

Resolved:

- a) That the progress of the project so far be Noted.
- b) That Officers be Authorised to continue with the investigation, and explore all options, including medium to long term projects, prior to producing a full Business Case.
- c) That the Control Room Outsourcing Project be a Standing Agenda Item at future Management Committee meetings.
- d) That the report to the December 2010 meeting include an option for the upgrading of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Control Room.

**Committee
Manager**

DCFO
Agenda
20.12.10

155. DEMONSTRATION OF HEAVY RESCUE UNIT (HRU) AND ANIMAL RESCUE UNIT

The Committee was provided with a practical demonstration of the Heavy Rescue Unit and Animal Rescue Unit.

On behalf of the Committee, the Vice-Chairman formally thanked the operational personnel involved in the demonstration of the Heavy Rescue Unit and the Animal Rescue Unit.

Councillor Paul Gittings extended his apologies and retired from the meeting.

156. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR REDUNDANCY

The Committee was provided with an outline of the methodology for selecting employees for redundancy when alternative solutions have been exhausted. The report set out the proposed selection criteria to be used when selection from a staff pool was necessary, and it advised on the proposed approach to seeking voluntary redundancies.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Christopher Glenn (Unison representative) expressed his gratitude for Unison's involvement in the consultation, and he advised that Unison had no objections to the proposals.

In response to Christopher Glenn, the Director of Human Resources assured him that the selection criteria would be revisited and reviewed, as appropriate, in consultation with the Trade Unions, to ensure that they remained both fair and objective.

In response to Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliard-Symons, the Director of Human Resources stated that it would be difficult to quantify the actual costs of voluntary redundancies as this would be dependent on individual circumstances.

In response to Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliard-Symons' concerns regarding individuals who are aged 55 years and their entitlement to immediate release of accrued benefits without actuarial reduction should they made redundant, the Director of Human Resources confirmed that these were entitlements within the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Director of Human Resources, in response to Mark Stollery's reference to the criteria for measuring sickness, advised that in recognition of the FBU's views that the sickness period should be counted as 5 years and not 2 years as originally proposed, the number of years had been adjusted and was now proposed as 3 years. Christopher Glenn (Unison representative) stated that

Unison had also asked for an increase in the number of years for sickness recording within the Policy to be considered.

The Director of Human Resources confirmed, following a question put by Mark Stollery (FBU Representative) at the invitation of the Chairman, that Compensation Policy applied to those staff under the Local Government Pension Scheme but did not apply to staff under the Firefighters Pension Scheme.

Resolved:

- a) That the proposed methodology for seeking voluntary redundancies and selection criteria be Adopted;
- b) That no enhancement be made to the compensation for those volunteering for redundancy;
- c) That voluntary redundancies be sought from the pool of individuals at risk of redundancy before undertaking to select individuals for compulsory redundancy;
- d) That transferred redundancies may be considered where appropriate and where skills are transferrable between departments;
- e) That the points system and common criteria for redundancy selection be Adopted.

157. 2010/11 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee was informed of revenue and capital expenditure against budgets up to the end of September 2010.

In response to Councillor Iain McCracken, the Authority Treasurer advised that the Capital programme for Wokingham Fire Station was expected to slip into 2011/12, but that the remaining capital schemes would be delivered by year end.

The Chairman advised of the Official Commencement of Works for Wokingham Fire Station which would be held on Monday 8 November 2010 at 11am at Wokingham Fire Station, and he urged Members to attend this event.

Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliard-Symons paid tribute to Members and Officers involved in the budgetary process for the Wokingham Fire Station project.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

158. REPORT FROM RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Committee was advised of the latest assessment of the risks affecting the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, as assessed by the Risk Management Group at its last meeting on 14 September 2010.

Councillor Jeff Brooks felt that a number of the amber reporting risks needed revisiting, and suggested that the Risk Management Group re-look at these as a matter of urgency. He also suggested that the next report to the Committee include additional narrative to enable the Committee to consider the amber reporting direction of travel. The Chairman suggested that future reports also include an impact column.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

- b) That the next report to the Committee in March 2011 include additional narrative for the amber reporting risks, the inclusion of an impact column, and any mitigation issues.

159. SOUTH EAST FIRE AND RESCUE CONTROL CENTRE LTD (SEFRCCL)

The Committee received a brief verbal update report from the Fire Authority's SEFRCCL Board Representative, Councillor Angus Ross, who advised that new lifts were being installed in South East Regional Control Centre.

160. CREWING LEVEL MONITORING

The Committee was advised of the crewing levels for Wholetime appliances from 1 April 2010 to 30 June 2010.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

161. PROGRESS ON HEALTH AND SAFETY OBJECTIVES 2010-2012 (PERIOD: 1 APRIL 2010 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2010)

The Committee received an update on the progress on Health and Safety Objectives 2010-2012 for the period 1 April 2010 - 30 September 2010.

Resolved:

- a) That the progress on Health and Safety Objectives be Noted.

162. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Monday 8 November 2010 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7TD.
- Monday 20 December 2010 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7TD.

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

164. PREVENTION RESTRUCTURE

The Committee was advised of the proposed restructure of the Prevention Department and the current position.

Resolved:

- a) That the proposed draft restructure of the Prevention Team be Noted, but that a further report be presented to the next meetings of the Integrated Risk Management Plan Working Party (IRMP WP) and the Management Committee, to include the rationale underpinning the restructure, how its direction of travel was expected to be delivered, and an augmented

understanding of how current posts would be integrated into the proposed restructure.

165. FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME - INJURY PENSIONS

The Committee was advised of the outcome of a review of injury pension awards paid in accordance with the rules of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, and approval was sought for a recommended approach to the recovery of overpayments.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted;
- b) That, in principle, the Fire Authority should seek to investigate the overpayments, subject to a review of each individual case on its merits, and that the implications of progressing recovery of overpayments be subject to a further detailed explanatory report to the Management Committee.

166. ANNUAL REVIEW OF LOCAL PAY RANGES

The Committee was presented with a further report to enable it to conclude its consideration of the 2010 review of Local Pay Ranges.

Resolved:

- a) That Local Pay Ranges not be increased in 2010;
- b) That contractual pay increases be honoured, but that there be no individual performance related pay reviews for 2010/11 for members of the Information Services and Accountancy Local Pay Groups be made;
- c) That, for members of the Senior Managers Local Pay Group in 2010, individual performance reviews continue to be conducted, but that related pay reviews should not be undertaken.