

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



Held on Monday 26 March 2012

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

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

In Attendance: Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)
Carolyn Rowe (Committee Manager)
Fayth Rowe (Committee Officer)
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 Representative (FBU)
Unison Representative
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Officers

354. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Representative present, Maurice Whyte, advised that he wish to address the Management Committee on Agenda Items 4; (minutes of 23 January 2012); 7 (2012/13 Corporate Plan); 8 (Thames Valley Fire Control Consultation); and 16 (Crewing Level Monitoring Quarterly Report).

355. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeff Brooks, Councillor Paul Gittings and Councillor Iain McCracken (Members, Fire Authority), and Iain Cox (Chief Fire Officer).

356. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Olaf Baars) and Assistant Chief Fire Officer (Paul Southern) declared a Personal Interest as the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Principal Officers in respect to Agenda Items 13 (Principal Officer Arrangements), 23 (Annual Review of Pay Ranges) and 24 (Review of Car User Scheme and Allowance for Principal Officers). The Clerk and Monitoring Officer (Caroline Redzikowska) declared a personal interest in item 23.

357. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2012

Resolved:

- a) That subject to under minute 338 and minute 341 amending the name of the Fire Brigades Union Chair to Paul Watts, the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Action

CO

The Chairman noted that DHR would circulate the information this week on pay comparison, and that accordingly, the actions from the last meeting would be discharged. The vice chairman thanked the ACFO for information provided.

DHR

The chairman requested that the RBF&RS response to the National Framework Consultation be circulated to all members of the Authority.

CO

358. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a) The chairman thanked Councillor Bryant for attending the Fire Conference. Councillor Bryant advised the committee that he is preparing a short report, however, in summary, Councillor Brian Coleman had expressed his support for contracting out (as underway in London) and the abolition of the NJC. The message from the Minister reiterated that Fire Authorities are on their own with no central dictation or interference.
- b) The Chairman said members wished to mark the last meeting of the Director of HR, David Wallace, and made a presentation, thanking him for all his work during his 13 years with RBF&RS, and wishing him a well deserved happy retirement. The Director of HR, thanked the Committee for their thoughtfulness and kind words, saying it had been a great pleasure and he wished every success to the Authority.
- c) The Chairman announced he wished to mark the service of dear and loyal officer Lynda Kenyon, who has sadly died. A number of members and officers were able to wish her a fond farewell at a very well attended, moving and personalized service last week. She is missed and will remain in our memory, and with the CFO, some way to commemorate her is being planned.
- d) The Chairman wished to congratulate the Fire Crew who were responding to an incident outside Brigade Headquarters this evening. Their handling of the incident was excellent and the fire fighter who had directed his arrival had been exemplary in her approach.

Area
Manager
Response
(AMR)

359. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE

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

360. ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY CORPORATE PLAN 2012/13

Following an invitation to speak from the chairman, Maurice White (FBU) commented that in welcoming the corporate plan, he felt that how it is formulated this time lacks clarity for the purposes of comparison.

The DCFO advised that this year, it is aligning both the Corporate Plan for 2012/13 and the Annual Report 2011/12 and bringing together outcomes with what we said we would do.

The Strategic Policy and Programme Manager (SPPM) advised members that this document showed us what our the priorities are, how we will achieve them and how we will know this. Following the Fire Authority receiving the corporate plan on 11 April, the information will be updated and will include the full 2011/12 year data and then targets will be confirmed before being published on line.

Members provided some comments to be incorporated, and, explored what work was done to meet some of the targets, for example the target for increasing the numbers of female fire fighters. Any further comments, depending on when they are received will be incorporated either for the Fire Authority agenda, or tabled at the Fire Authority or before being published on line. Councillor Bryant agreed to send some comments direct to SPPM.

SPPM

The item was proposed by Councillor Bryant and seconded by Councillor Ross and it was

resolved:

- a) That the draft Corporate Plan and Annual Report for 2012-13 (subject to updating before publishing online) be **approved** ;
- b) That the draft Corporate Plan and Annual Report for 2012-13 be **recommended** to the Fire Authority meeting on 11 April 2012.

361. THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE CONSULTATION

The chairman invited Maurice White (FBU) to speak. Two points were raised - that the location should be more central, and also the concern regarding the crewing figures.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer introduced the report including the draft consultation document, and advised that the three month consultation start date is 6 April 2012, by when it would need to be on both the Oxfordshire and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) websites. The proposals contained in the document are to introduce a single joint Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service.

There were a number of amendments being incorporated following comments from both Oxfordshire and from RBFRS. There will be 3 public consultations and also staff engagement days. The Authority Treasurer confirmed that the funding from government has been received.

Councillor Paul Bryant has been elected as chairman of the consultation group, and the date of the next meeting is 5th April 2012. It was agreed that as the amendments are still being made, these and the final version should be shared with Councillor Bryant before publication.

The chairman proposed and Councillor Ross seconded, and it was

resolved:

- a) That, **subject to amendments being made in liaison with the chairman of the programme sponsoring group**, the draft document be **approved** for formal public consultation.

DCFO

362. WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS – UPGRADES AND INTEGRATION OF COMMAND SUPPORT SYSTEM SOFTWARE

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer outlined to the Committee that an upgrade to the Command Support System software including additional, optional modules was now available. Because it is proprietary software, a waiver of standing orders is required.

Members explored what challenge there had been and whether alternatives are on the market. They were advised that there are no other full systems available, and that a good discount has been received. The costs would be capitalized. The facility will be used in the new control room solution, and although Oxfordshire do not currently use it may be that they opt to do so in future, in which case there would be some payment. .

It was confirmed that the process would be completed within a month, and the recommendations were accordingly proposed by Councillor Bryant, seconded by Councillor Ross, and it was

resolved:

- a) That Contract Standing Order CSO21 be waived on the grounds set out in CSO 24 (a) and (b), for the reasons set out in this report be Agreed; and
- b) That the purchase sum of £92,700 be funded from within the existing 2011/12 operational equipment budget be Agreed; and
- c) That an order be placed with Vector Command Ltd for the equipment and software detailed in this report be Agreed.

363. UPGRADE OF INCIDENT COMMAND UNIT

The Committee considered the proposal to upgrade the Incident Command Unit (ICU) based upon user feedback and the outcomes of the Swinley Forest Fire debrief, and in the light of a prospective under spend this year. The work if approved, would be put out to tender.

Members queried how significant an issue the upgrade would address, and were advised that, although much of the design has worked well, there is an unforeseen problem of accessing the server racks. This means work has to stop when access is required.

Members asked if it could be a joint facility in future. This was confirmed with some fire authorities and emergency services showing interest, and they would be charged.

The chairman sought confirmation of how long the ICU would be off the run, and reminded members that this was a capital spend. On the condition that **members received confirmation of how long the ICU would be off the run**, the chairman proposed and Councillor Ross seconded the motion which was unanimously

resolved:

- a) that, the ICU should be upgraded in accordance with the Business Case set out in the Appendix to the report subject to a tender exercise being carried out and the cost not exceeding £29,000 excluding VAT be **agreed**; and
- b) that the ICU IT infrastructure should be rationalised in accordance with the Business Case set out in the Appendix to the report subject to compliance with Contract Standing Orders and the cost not exceeding £10,000 excluding VAT be **agreed**.

DCFO

364. PROPOSED RISK MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer informed the Committee that the proposed revisions to the risk management arrangements are aimed at making it more cross cutting in approach. The Contingency Planning Officer, Simon Smith confirmed that the new arrangements would bring the management of risk closer to where the risk was and it would be an integral part of other meetings. This would bring the approach closer to BS31100.2011.

Risks would be escalated as required, and top level (greatest) risks would be raised to the Senior Management Team and the Fire Authority as necessary.

The chairman proposed and Councillor Bryant seconded, and it was unanimously **resolved:**

- a) that the proposed changes to the Risk Management Process contained in this report be **approved**.

(the chairman left the room briefly at this point, and the vice chairman took the next two items)

365. 2012/13 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Authority Treasurer introduced the report, reminding members that at their Fire Authority meeting on 15 February 2012 it was agreed that the Management Committee should review and approve the 2012/13 Capital Programme, as details of the fire capital grant had not been announced in time for inclusion in the 2012/13 Budget Report.

The Authority Treasurer presented the report stating that the main items were the sale of Cookham and the proposed new Headquarters. The Government have deferred the bid process for capital monies until 2013/14, and members were reminded that RBFRS responded in favour of this approach when consulted. Councillor Bryant advised that the Fire Conference he recently attended had expressed some concern that it would be a time hungry process.

The arrangements for 2013/14 capital bids have just been announced and the deadline for submissions is 2 July 2012. The Authority Treasurer advised members that the bidding process means all 2013/14 capital grant is under threat, but equally there is an opportunity to increase from the 2012/13 capital allocation of £1.286 million, if bids are successful. The vice chairman proposed the item which was unanimously supported.

resolved:

- a) That the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix A to this report be **approved**.

366. PRINCIPAL OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS

The Committee was informed of the arrangements being put in place during the Chief Fire Officer's break in service. The Clerk and Monitoring Officer advised members that whilst appointments of this seniority would be a Fire Authority decision, these are acting up arrangements for note.

The Fire Authority at their meeting on the 15 February 2012 had tacitly agreed the matter as part of their consideration of the future employment arrangements of the CFO. A break in service by the CFO of one month and a day is required, and these arrangements are to cover this period. Members were in agreement.

resolved:

- a) That the report be **duly** noted.

(The chairman had returned during this item and resumed the chair for the remaining agenda items)

367. BRACKNELL FOREST AREA PARTNERSHIP FIRE TRIALS

The Area Manager Response (AMR) introduced the report and, following questions from members of the Committee confirmed that the partnership approach was not for high risk or large incidents, and the training provided underlined this with the message "if in doubt call us out". In response to the vice chairman, the AMR said that no concerns had been raised by the Forestry Commission at Crowthorne

It was confirmed that key benefits were also the community education and information contributing to prevention.

Councillor Ross hoped that it would be extended to smaller woods and asked whether Gorrick Wood would be included. The AMR advised that he believed it to be included and would confirm this.

The chairman thanked the AMR for his comprehensive report to the Committee, and members unanimously

resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

368. 2011/12 BUDGET MONITORING

The Committee considered the report presented to them, and following a question from the chairman were informed that the due funds had still not been received from Government. The chairman asked that a letter be drafted this week for him to send on this matter.

It was confirmed that the under spend shown was indicative of the anticipated outturn position. A report including a good indication of final outturn position was requested for the 21st May Management Committee.

resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

369. CREWING LEVEL MONITORING

At the invitation of the chairman Maurice White (FBU) commented that he was concerned at the fall in the level of crews.

The chairman asked that retained crew (RDS) availability be included in the next monitoring report.

In introducing the report the DCFO advised members that some of the graph lines were in the wrong place. These will be corrected for future reports. The structural changes taking affect from April and from June will also start to be reflected.

Following a question from the chairman about contingency planning where we were below the minimum 2, the DCFO advised that backfilling arrangements are being looked at.

Members unanimously

resolved:

AMR

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- a) That the report be Noted.

370. FORWARD PLAN

Members considered the excerpt from the working document and unanimously **resolved:**

- a) That the amendments to the Forward Plan be Noted.

371. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

resolved:

- a) That the next meeting will be held on Monday 21 May 2012 at 6.30 pm in the Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 4FS.

372. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

resolved:

- a) That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following Agenda Items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

373. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2012

resolved:

- a) That the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

374. PART II MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2012

resolved:

- a) That the Part II Minutes of the Budget Working Party held on 23 January 2012 be **noted** and signed by the Chairman.

375. PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

The Director for Human Resources advised the Committee of the potential implications for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFPS) of new legislation. There are Additional Paternity Leave Regulations 2010 and members were advised that in considering the options, there is an assessment of the risk in each case. The recommendation was for option one.

The chairman observed that Government were undertaking a review into this area, and in the light of that also, he proposed option one. This was seconded by the vice chairman, and with the agreement of all members it was

resolved:

- a) That **option one be agreed.**

376. URGENT VERBAL REPORT ON RESILIENCE

With the Chairman's agreement the DCFO brought an urgent verbal report to members of the Committee regarding assuring future resilience. Members considered the options as a result of the update and the verbal request for decision presented to them.

It was

resolved:

- a) **That a part II report for decision be brought to the Fire Authority at their meeting on 11 April 2012 and**
- b) **That if a decision is required before that date, the report be brought to an urgent meeting of the Management Committee for decision.**

DCFO

DCFO

377. ANNUAL REVIEW OF LOCAL PAY RANGES

The Director for Human Resources outlined the pay proposals for 2012/13, which members considered.

Resolved:

- a) That the officer recommendations be approved subject to an additional recommendation **that any proposals should be within the approved salary budget.**

378. REVIEW OF CAR USER SCHEME AND ALLOWANCES FOR PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

The Director of Human Resources reported the outcome of the Review of Car User Scheme and Allowances for Principal Officers Working Party and make recommendations for changes to the Car User Scheme and Allowances for Principal Officers.

resolved:

- a) That the outcome of the Review of Car User Scheme and Allowances for Principal Officers Working Party be Noted.