



Agenda for the Meeting of the Management Committee

Monday, 7th December 2020

At

6.30 pm

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Management Committee meeting is being held online in accordance with the Local Authorities and the Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of the Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

The Authority supports the principles of openness and transparency. To enable members of the press and public to see or hear the meeting. This meeting will be livestreamed.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact:

Committee Team

0118 938 4611

E-Mail at committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

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



MEETING: Management Committee Meeting

DATE AND TIME: Monday, 7th December 2020, at 6.30 pm

REMOTE MEETING: <https://www.youtube.com/user/RoyalBerkshireFRS>

S U M M O N S

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Management Committee 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

To: Members of the Management Committee:

Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor Angus Ross
Councillor Tricia Brown	Councillor David Cannon
Councillor Colin Dudley	Councillor Jo Lovelock
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Dexter Smith
Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons	Councillor Rachelle Shepherd- DuBey
Councillor Graham Howe	

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

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AGENDA

1. Representative Bodies

Purpose:

The Chairman 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 Chairman at the commencement of the meeting of those Agenda items they wish to speak to.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. 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.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020 (Pages 7 - 16)

Purpose:

To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. Receipt of Announcements

Recommendation:

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

6. 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.

7. Fit for the Future: National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Consultation
(Pages 17 - 24)

Purpose:

To receive for note Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's (RBFA) response to NFCC Consultation.

8. 2020/21 Budget Monitoring - Quarter Two (Pages 25 - 36)

Purpose:

To receive for note the estimated revenue outturn, and to receive an update on Capital Projects as at the end of Quarter Two.

9. Appliance Availability by Crewing to Meet Corporate Measures 16 and 17
(Pages 37 - 44)

Purpose:

To note appliance availability for Quarter Two.

10. Forward Plan (Pages 45 - 46)

Purpose:

To note the Forward Plan.

11. Date of next meeting

Wednesday, 3 February 2021, 6.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

12. Exclusion of the Public (Pages 47 - 48)

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.

13. Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on 21 October 2020 (Pages 49 - 52)

Purpose:

To agree the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2020, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Held on Wednesday, 21st October 2020, at 6.30 pm
This meeting was held remotely.

Members:
(*present)

Councillor Jeff Brooks	* Councillor Angus Ross
* Councillor Tricia Brown	Councillor David Cannon
* Councillor Colin Dudley	* Councillor Jo Lovelock
* Councillor Paul Gittings	* Councillor Dexter Smith
Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons	* Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
* Councillor Graham Howe	

In Attendance: Paul Binyon (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Tom Carvell (Senior IT Technical Support Officer)
Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Steve Foye (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Sheikh Liaqat (IR35 Capital Projects Manager – Consultant)
Andrew McLenahan (Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment, HFF&E)
Katie Mills (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
James Pinchin (Business Support Officer, BSO)
Nikki Richards (Director of Support Services, DSS)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Hannah Sheehan (Democratic Support Assistant, DSA)
Tony Vincent (Head of Business and Information Systems, HBIS)

23. REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

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

24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pauline Helliar-Symons.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire

Action

Authority's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.

26. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2020

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020, be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services
COVID Inspection**

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has been inspecting the response of the fire and rescue sector in England to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HMICFRS Inspectors conducted a virtual inspection of our Service in the week beginning 12 October.

I would like to place on record my thanks to the inspection team and to all staff that assisted with the inspection, either by speaking to the inspectors or providing information.

I would like to also take the opportunity to more widely thank all our staff who have worked tirelessly, under extremely challenging circumstances since the beginning of the pandemic. We will be hearing more about this under Agenda Item 7 (The New Normal following Covid-19 – Presentation).

We have a Members briefing arranged for 6 November, during which I hope officers will be able to share initial feedback on the inspection, once received from HMICFRS.

The Service will be issued with an outcome letter for the inspection, which will be shared with Members in due course, and a national report will be issued early in 2021.

Update regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at RBFRS

In June, the Chief Fire Officer and myself wrote a letter setting out the commitments the Service has made in the wake of the death of George Floyd.

In the letter, we committed to a series of actions to remove racism and other prejudices from our society. We'd like to take this opportunity to provide an update on the actions we have taken in the months since.

We have now refreshed our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion pages on the Service's intranet, Siren, providing more links and resources to information and materials across a broad range of subjects.

We have also included an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion section in The Shout, which aims to raise awareness of history, celebrate diversity and share ways in which we can all be more inclusive.

A collaborative working group has been formed with other fire and rescue services, with the aim of working together to tackle racial prejudice and address inequalities in our services and communities. By working together with Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Services, we will embark on a programme of listening, learning and real action.

October is Black History Month and we recognise that our commitment to removing racism and other prejudices from our society and celebrating Black History needs to extend beyond a month, so we want to use this as a catalyst for our work moving forward.

The Service is on a continuous journey of growth with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion, and we believe that the best way to combat racism and prejudice is by listening and learning. If you have any feedback or suggestions for how we can grow and improve, questions, or ideas for additional resources, please contact ediresources@rbfrs.co.uk.

Workshops to find next Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive

As you are aware, the Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer will both be eligible to retire next year, in July and May respectively.

As an Authority, we are keen to build on the progress we have made in recent years and ensure that the Service has the right leadership for the next stage of our journey.

Therefore, we are holding a number of workshops to review our current and future challenges and the leadership approach and skills we will need to achieve our ambitions. Our intention is to use this feedback to shape the recruitment and selection process. This should enable us to attract and choose the best candidates to lead the Service in the coming years.

Thank you to everyone who has taken part, or will be taking part, for sharing their views as part of these workshops. Staff that were not able to make the workshops have been able to provide confidential feedback on this process.

As your Chairman, I believe that our collaborative working style and Member / Officer relationships, paired with the immense dedication and professionalism of our teams, will make these positions very attractive to potential candidates. We are committed to doing everything possible to ensure that we attract and select the calibre of leader that our Service deserves. Over the coming weeks and months I will continue to keep you updated on our ongoing work to select your next leader.

Military Veteran Hub Initiative

Following the Service's commitment to the armed forces community and receipt of the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award, we are proud to be hosting a Military Veteran Hub initiative in our fire stations.

The initiative will put fire stations and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service staff in the heart of the veteran community, providing a welcoming space for veterans and families to meet and talk, as well as providing vital advice around fire safety, support available, and the work of the Armed Forces Covenant.

It is hoped that, in line with COVID-19 measures, the first event will take place in November, ahead of Remembrance Day.

Charity Car Wash at Crowthorne Community Fire Station

Firefighters at Crowthorne held a car wash to help raise much needed funds for The Fire Fighters Charity on Saturday, 19 September.

With control measures in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, firefighters welcomed members of the public safely to the new community fire station for the first time, albeit that visitors had to remain inside their cars.

The crew exceeded their £750 target, raising an incredible total of £1,250. Well done to all involved.

Urgent Late Item

As Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, I have agreed to accept an urgent late item as part of the agenda this evening by virtue of section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The urgent item relates to the establishment of Task and Finish Group to respond to a consultation which has been received. I propose we take this item prior to Agenda Item 7.

28. URGENT LATE ITEM

The Chairman stated, since the publication of the Management Committee Agenda, the Authority received an important consultation which requires a response in advance of the next meeting.

The consultation is from the National Fire Chiefs Council, the National Employers (England) and the Local Government Association and relates to Fit for the Future, a draft proposal for establishing a common vision for the future of fire and rescue services in England. This builds on the view of partners that a clear vision of the future is a key element in leading consistent change across all fire and rescue services. The consultation closes on 19 November.

The Chairman added that it was important that along with officers, Members

give this consultation due consideration and proposed the establishment of a Task and Finish Group drawn from all parties. He also advised that he would chair the Task and Finish Group, once established.

The Chairman proposed the membership be agreed by Group Leaders and the terms of reference be agreed at the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group.

In addition, following consideration by the Task and Finish Group, the Chairman further proposed that he be given authority to agree the final response on behalf of the Fire Authority for submission as the consultation deadline was before the next meeting of Management Committee. He confirmed the response submitted would be presented to the next Management Committee for note.

The Chairman advised the detail of this consultation will be discussed in the Task and Finish Group, and sought questions from the Committee. On there being no questions, Councillor Howe seconded the recommendation.

RESOLVED:

- That a cross-party Task and Finish Group be established and chaired by Councillor Colin Dudley (RBFA Chairman) to consider the Fit for the Future consultation, and authority be delegated to RBFA Chairman to agree the final consultation response on behalf of the Fire Authority;
- That the membership of this Group be confirmed by Group Leaders; and
- That the Terms of Reference of the Task and Finish Group be agreed at its first meeting.

29. THE NEW NORMAL - COVID-19 PRESENTATION

Steve Foye, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (DCFO), delivered a presentation on the New Normal for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) in a world with COVID-19, at the Chairman's request.

His presentation highlighted that RBFRS priorities, whilst adapting to Covid19 impacts, had been maintaining our core service, staff and their health, safety and well-being, and supporting partners in the wider COVID-19 response. To deliver this, clear leadership and management have been received from both officers and the Fire Authority. RBFRS has worked closely with Representative Bodies. Green and Grey Book staff have supported the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Business Continuity Plans have been maintained and adapted to meet the Service's priorities.

Steve Foye reported the predicated impact of COVID-19 for the Service was mitigated throughout spring and summer with the Service maintaining 100% Wholetime appliance availability and an increased On-Call availability. The increase in On-Call availability during this period was a reflection on the number of our On-Call staff that were furloughed or working from home.

In referring to the line chart in the presentation, he reported 999 calls received

from Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) were lower than the previous year. For Royal Berkshire, the overall incident number varied when compared to the overall volume of calls in 2019.

The call profile between March and August saw lower numbers of Special services, including Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), and lower numbers of False Alarms. Secondary Fires were higher in May and June with the warmer weather.

Safe and Well Visits reduced significantly and were only made to those in the high or very high risk category, as such, the use of targets were suspended. There was an increase in Threat of Arson referrals from Thames Valley Police (TVP) which was, in part, related to an increase in Domestic Violence reporting. Steve Foye reported this was 50% higher than the same quarter in the previous year.

Protection work was also impacted though RBFRS continued to visit high risk premises to undertake Fire Safety Audits, with appropriate measures for staff. In addition, a dedicated project team had been established to address the next phase of work stemming from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and eight new Fire Safety Inspecting Officers have joined the Service and were already underway with their Level 3 Fire Safety qualification.

As an organisation, RBFRS has continued to adjust working arrangements for operational staff and those teams that work outside fire stations. The Service has provided a balanced approach to support staff working remotely and in the office, ensuring that office working environment is COVID-19 secure.

In addition the Service offered advance pay loans (utilised by 14 staff), provided advice and support to mitigate staff isolation and anxiety; provided support for Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff who are at higher risk from COVID-19 and the delivery of staff training continued in a virtual environment.

Resilience planning by the Business Information System team meant the Service was prepared to deliver a wider remote operating environment, with standardised laptops and phones enabling rapid deployment in support of remote working. The use of Webex virtual meeting space have enabled the Fire Authority and staff groups to operate effectively across the Service.

Communications have continued to be a key element of the Services' on-going activity with regular updates and guidance on COVID-19, adjusted regularly in response to changing national guidance, as well communication from the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer. Calls between the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff groups, alongside calls and information for the Fire Authority Members have helped to maintain a connection through the whole organisation.

A video was shown on how the Service responded to COVID-19 to date, which can be found on RBFRS YouTube page.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IFJzH6Lfqs

For a copy of the above presentation please contact committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

In response to a question from the Chairman, Steve Foye reported the Service gave a full picture of the areas covered in the presentation as part of the recent HMICFRS COVID-19 Inspection and this included a range of case studies on some of the specific areas of activity.

Trevor Ferguson, Chief Fire Officer (CFO), advised that the Service was due to receive informal feedback from the inspection in November, and formal letter in the New Year. He added the letter would be a standard letter, however, he hoped it would highlight the Service's best practice and that it would be positive.

Trevor Ferguson also reported that HMICFRS would be invited to speak at a future Fire Authority meeting.

The Chairman requested for his thanks to be officially recorded on behalf of the Fire Authority to all staff across the Service.

30. 2020/21 BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1 AND 2019/20 RESERVES POSITION

Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (HF&P), presented the 2020/21 Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 and 2019/20 Reserves Position.

In starting with the Members decision to close Wargrave Fire Station, Conor Byrne reported the Station would generate an in-year saving.

The recent confirmation of the 2.75% pay settlement for Green Book (non-operational) staff was above the 2% estimated pay rise when setting the 2020/21 budget. The effect on the budget was £55,000 of additional costs, which explained the forecasted non-station overspread.

The income contribution of £30,000 from Wokingham Borough Council would not be realised, and as a result, the decision was subsequently made to close the Station.

In referring to the Reserves, the balance on the General Reserve remained at £2.3m during 2019/20. At the Fire Authority budget meeting held in February 2020, Members maintained the General Reserve.

Given the level of financial volatility, the Earmarked Reserves as at 31 March 2020, totalled £6.7m.

In response to a question from Cllr Lovelock, Trevor Ferguson reported Wokingham Borough Council did not provide the income contribution for Wargrave following in line with the finding of the 'blue light' community safety hub feasibility study and following Members decision to close Wargrave Fire Station.

Cllr Ross requested his thanks be recorded for the Capital Projects Team, especially in achieving the completion of Crowthorne Fire Station on time and to budget during this challenging time.

The Chairman concurred Cllr Ross' thanks to the Capital Projects Team and moved the recommendation in the report. Cllr Howe seconded the recommendation in the report.

RESOLVED that:

- The Quarter One Budget Monitoring Report be noted; and
- The Reserves Position as at 31 March 2020 be, agreed.

31. ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S RESPONSE TO FIRE SAFETY AND PENSION CONSULTATIONS

Councillor Shepherd–DuBey left the meeting at the beginning of this agenda item at 7.29pm.

Councillor Smith introduced this report as the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) Lead Member. He thanked the Members of the cross-party Task and Finish Group and officers that supported discussions in the response to the Fire Safety Consultation.

Mark Arkwell, Assistant Chief Fire Officer (ACFO), outlined the report and covered the Fire Authority's response to three consultations; Two pension related, outlined in Appendix B and C, and the fire safety response detailed in a letter in Appendix A. He reported that a technical response to the consultation (Appendix A) had also been submitted.

Councillor Howe thanked Conor Byrne and Becci Jefferies, Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development (HHR&L&D), for explaining a complicated subject in a way that was understood.

Councillor Lovelock echoed Cllr Howe's thanks for the officers briefing on the complex pension consultations and added that it was clear that additional funding would be required.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

32. APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURE 16 AND 17

Steve Foye, DCFO, advised the report provided information on Quarter One performance in line with Corporate Measure 16 and 17. In referring to paragraphs 3.4 – 3.8, he reported the Fire Authority created an efficient and lean

operational model of 324 station-based personnel delivering 14 Whole-Time appliances.

At the last Management Committee meeting on 21 July 2020, a request was made to provide further information to better understand appliance availability. Steve Foye outlined the process of when a crew member calls in sick, another crew member from a different fire station covers the shortfall. This was called Critical Standby.

In referring to paragraph 3.14 of the report, Steve Foye listed additional challenges COVID-19 presented in the Quarter in relation to the restriction of movement of operational personnel across Service Delivery Hubs, social distancing and limited access to stations.

He reported the overall availability for On-Call appliances in Q1 was 62.2%, an increase from 34.7% in the previous Quarter.

The Chairman stated that he was pleased the Service managed to provide 100% availability during the pandemic. Steve Foye responded to the comment by stating the measures taken in putting additional controls outlined in the report was primarily why we have managed through the additional pressures stemming from COVID-19.

In response to a question from Cllr Gittings in relation to whether there would be a budget implication if availability remained high, Conor Byrne reported that activity varied between On-Call stations. The DCFO confirmed that monitoring of the overall spend would be maintained to confirm it remained in line with the planned budget.

Steve Foye reported that there was healthy competition between On-Call stations, in response to a question from Cllr Brown.

The Chairman congratulated the 100% Whole-Time availability during COVID-19 and asked for this thanks to be recorded to the crews. In addition, he acknowledged the On-Call stations that had increased availability during Q1 in particular Hungerford, Maidenhead and Crowthorne. He also thanked officers for their coordination and ensuring that fire appliances were available. The Chairman proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Cllr Ross.

RESOLVED that:

- The 2020/21 Quarter One performance of 100% appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-Time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16 be noted; and
- The 2020/21 Quarter One performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of 62.6% against the Service's target of 60% in Corporate Measure 17 be noted.

33. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday, 7 December 2020, at 6.30pm. The meeting will be held remotely. The press and public will be able to watch this meeting on RBFRS YouTube page.

35. 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 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 disclosing the information.

36. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2020

RESOLVED that the Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020, be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

37. FUNDING SCENARIOS - PRESENTATION

Conor Byrne, HF&P delivered a presentation on 2021/22 Funding Scenarios. The purpose of the presentation was to set out the potential impact of various funding scenarios on the revenue budget and seek Members assistance about the assumptions being made in Berkshire unitary authorities to aid the Service's own planning.

38. THAMES VALLEY FIRE APPLIANCE CONTRACT

Andrew McLenahan, Head of Facilities, Fleet and Equipment (HFF&E) presented a report on Thames Valley Fire Services collaborative contract and was seeking Members approval.

RESOLVED that the Thames Valley Fire Services collaborative contract be agreed.

(The meeting concluded at 8.35pm)

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	7 DECEMBER 2020
SUBJECT	FIT FOR THE FUTURE: NATIONAL FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL (NFCC) CONSULTATION
LEAD OFFICER	TREVOR FERGUSON, CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR COLIN DUDLEY
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's response to Fit for the Future: National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the report be **NOTED**.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 The Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA), Cllr Colin Dudley accepted an urgent late item at Management Committee on 21 October 2020, seeking to establish a cross party Task and Finish Group to respond to a consultation received from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), National Employers (England) and the Local Government Association.
- 3.2 The consultation, called Fit for the Future, was a draft proposal for establishing a common vision for the future of fire and rescue services in England. This builds on the view of partners that a clear vision of the future is a key element in leading consistent change across all fire and rescue services. The consultation closed on 19 November.
- 3.3 Management Committee approved the establishment of the Task and Finish Group and gave authority to the Chairman to agree the final response on behalf of the Fire Authority.

Agenda Item 7

- 3.4 The Task and Finish Group, which consisted of Councillors Colin Dudley, Jane Stanford-Beale, Tina McKenzie-Boyle and Paul Gittings, met on 11 November.
- 3.5 The consultation document set out a number of improvement objectives and asked the respondent to rank, in priority order, what the perceived barriers were in achieving these objectives. The ten objectives covered:
- Evidence & Risk Planning
 - Focus on Improving Competence
 - National Standards & Guidance
 - Innovative Approaches to Prevention
 - Evolved Role of Protection
 - Measuring Benefits & Evaluating Activity
 - Attracting Employees
 - Effective Leadership
 - Meaningful collaboration
 - Organisational Learning
- 3.6 The consultation response methodology did not allow for comment or evidence to be provided with each improvement objective. The Task and Finish Group agreed for a letter to be submitted alongside the consultation response to ensure it was able to convey its considered response.
- 3.7 The letter submitted in response to the consultation is attached at **Appendix A**.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 1 – We will provide advice on how to prevent fires and other emergencies.
- 4.2 Commitment 2 – We will ensure a swift and appropriate response when called to emergencies.
- 4.3 Commitment 3 – We will provide advice, consultation and enforcement in relation to fire safety standards in buildings.
- 4.4 Commitment 4 – We will seek opportunities to contribute to a broader safety, health and wellbeing agenda, whilst delivering our core functions.
- 4.5 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.
- 4.6 Commitment 6 – We will work with Central Government and key stakeholders in the interests of the people of Royal Berkshire.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There could be a potential funding impact, subject to whether Fire Authorities were given greater financial flexibility on local funding and proportionate grant funding linked to risk.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None identified.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 See 5.1

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

9.1 Fire and rescue services consultation responses will be collated into a consultation report.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

10.1 The Senior Leadership Team and Statutory Officers were consulted during the preparation of this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Fit for the Future: NFCC Consultation.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix A - Response letter to NFCC Fit for the Future Consultation

13. CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Trevor Ferguson, Chief Fire Officer
0118 938 4616

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Fit for the Future Consultation

Sent by email to:

Nick Collins

Nick.Collins@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk

Date: 19 November 2020

Dear Nick,

Ref: Fit for the Future Consultation

Firstly, we would like to place on record our thanks for all the hard work that has gone into the development of "Fit for the Future". We believe it is a comprehensive and well-constructed document. We also welcome the opportunity to participate in the consultation on this highly important piece of work.

Having received your consultation request, a Member Task and Finish Group met with Officers to consider the content of "Fit for the Future" and also prepare our response. We understand the rationale behind the response methodology but felt that it didn't enable us to convey our considered opinion on each of the improvement objectives. Therefore, we would appreciate if the following points could be considered as part of the consultation response.

Evidence based risk planning

Fire and rescue services have evidence based, high quality and consistent risk management plans that encompass all aspects of service deployment and delivery, ensuring issues of local risk and ensuring they are resilient to national risks and threats including terrorism.

We are fully supportive of the NFCC Community Risk Programme and believe that a more consistent, transparent approach to risk management will benefit communities greatly. In recent years we have committed considerable time, resource and effort to improving the evidence base and transparency of our risk planning. We also believe that an integrated approach across prevention, protection and response should underpin the services we deliver for our communities.

It is essential that Fire Authorities are given the financial flexibility to ensure that the service delivery models they deploy are appropriately funded. Therefore, greater flexibility on local funding and proportionate grant funding, linked to risk, must be made available.

Focus on improving competence

Fire and rescue services refocus their investment in the selection, training and development of employees to maintain, support and improve their skills and knowledge throughout their careers.

We agree that this objective should be an area of focus. However, we also believe that this improvement objective could be widened to recommend a model for fire similar to policing, where a well-resourced College of Policing, ensures consistent resourcing and standards of competency.

Agenda Item 7

Appendix A

National standards and guidance

Fire and rescue services have access to a comprehensive national infrastructure and repository of standards, guidance and tools that are embedded in their own local service delivery.

As with the previous improvement objective we believe this is a critical area of focus for all Services. Again, here we believe that the objective should be widened to recommend a model for fire, similar to policing, where a well-resourced College of Policing ensures consistent standards and guidance.

Innovative approaches to prevention

Fire and rescue services support new and innovative ways to prevent fires and other emergencies. Firefighters work with people who are at risk in local communities to make them safer in all aspects of their lives, not only from fire.

As an Authority, and through our IRMP, we are committed to utilising our resources to ensure the safety of our communities from fires and other emergencies. In targeting those most at risk we believe Safe and Well Visits are a valuable and effective tool to protect our communities. We believe that it is right, that when we target someone who is at risk of fire, that we maximising any synergy in linking up with other key partners such a local authorities.

However, to ensure that our limited resources are focused on our statutory responsibilities, we should ensure that any additional work undertaken is done so whilst delivering our core business. We are fully supportive of the drive to access, use and share high quality data to make all public services more effective.

Evolved role of protection

Fire protection activity carried out by fire and rescue services is redefined and expanded by using new professional standards, competence requirements and training for firefighters and specialist protection staff assisted by a significant reallocation of resources through increases in productivity.

We fully agree that Fire & Rescue Services have a greater role to play in protecting the built environment going forward. We are extremely concerned that the well documented flaws in our building design and approval processes, highlighted by the Grenfell Inquiry, have left a legacy of poorly built and potentially unsafe buildings. We believe that this will require significant additional resourcing and are not convinced that these resources can be found from increases in productivity, particularly in very lean services like Royal Berkshire.

Measuring benefits, evaluating activity

The benefits of all fire and rescue service activity are measured and evaluated so that decision making about resource allocation can be improved.

We are fully supportive of this objective and have been working hard in recent years to ensure that our data and evaluation ensure that we are delivering the most effective and efficient services possible for our communities.

Attracting employees

Prospective employees are attracted to fire and rescue services as an employer of choice where inclusive recruitment practices and the available diverse roles and responsibilities help the service manage risk in the local community.

We are fully supportive of this objective and believe it presents an opportunity to support and showcase the great work, of the amazing professionals, employed by Fire & Rescue Services.

Retaining employees

An inclusive culture is at the heart of every fire and rescue service. They are a welcoming and supportive place to work for the widest variety of people from all backgrounds.

Again we are fully supportive of this objective and believe it should have a significant focus on the diverse group of Fire & Rescue Service employees who do not join the Service via the traditional operational route.

Effective leadership

Political leaders, governments and fire and rescue service managers use a single leadership framework that sets out clearly a suite of service values, expectations and behaviours which all can promote and support. It is the basis on which fire and rescue services and all their employees operate.

We are also fully supportive of this objective and believe it fully aligns to the collaborative leadership style of Royal Berkshire. The importance of highly effective Officer/Member leadership can only be enhanced by such an improvement objective.

Meaningful collaboration

Working with others in all aspects of fire and rescue activity is core business, based on solid evidence and data that determines the most efficient and effective use of resources to ensure firefighter and public safety.

Royal Berkshire has a proud history of successful collaboration which we continue to this day. We actively support effective collaboration on the incident ground and through the LRF. In addition, through our collaboration programme, which has produced successful projects such as the Joint Thames Valley Control Service and several tri-service community fire stations, we continue to deliver for our communities. We believe that the objective should be widened to seek transformation funding to support and drive innovative collaboration projects.

Organisational learning

The National Employers (England), the LGA and the NFCC jointly own and maintain an organisational learning system that will promote continuous improvement at a strategic level.

We are fully supportive of this objective, particularly the desire to ensure that it is underpinned by a sustainable and realistic funding model.

We hope that the comments we have provided are helpful in the further refinement of this very important strategic document. We thank you again for the opportunity to comment and all of the hard work which has been undertaken to date.

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Appendix A

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin Dudley', with a horizontal line underneath.

Councillor Colin Dudley
Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	7 DECEMBER 2020
SUBJECT	2020/21 BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER TWO
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR GRAHAM HOWE
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To inform Members of the estimated revenue outturn and to provide an update on capital projects as at the end of Quarter Two 2020/21.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the Quarter Two Budget Monitoring report.

3. REPORT

Commentary on Revenue Outturn

- 3.1 The detailed Revenue outturn for Quarter Two 2020/21 is shown in **Appendix A**. Net costs of Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) for Quarter Two are shown in **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The 2020/21 Revenue Budget was set at £35.263m, with expenditure anticipated to exceed income by £284,000, meaning that the Fire Authority is reliant on its reserves to balance the budget.
- 3.3 Since the budget was approved by Members at Fire Authority in February 2020, the Authority has experienced significant financial volatility due to the impact of COVID-19. Through close working with the Budget Lead Member, Cllr Graham Howe and robust budget monitoring, RBFRA have minimised the impact of the emerging pressures and maximised the use of the financial resources available to meet the Authority's priorities.

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- 3.4 The forecast year-end outturn shows a deficit of £66,000 which is an improvement of £218,000 on the budgeted position.
- 3.5 The decision to close Wargrave Fire Station will generate an in-year saving. However, this is partly offset by good availability at other On-Call stations and the deployment of some Wargrave staff to other stations (including Wholetime stations).
- 3.6 When setting the 2020/21 budget an estimated pay rise for non-operational staff (from 1 April 2020) of 2% was included. The effect on the budget of the agreed 2.75% pay award is £55,000 of additional costs which explains the forecasted non-station overspend.
- 3.7 Whilst the full impact of COVID-19 is still to be seen, the financial impact is becoming visible, with the following variances to budget:
- Community Fire Safety supplies (safe & well) £30,000
 - Printing & stationery £18,000
 - Catering & conferences, £38,000 (under 'Supplies Other')
 - Travel & subsistence £62,000
- 3.8 TVFCS is showing anticipated in year savings of £61,000 (detailed in Appendix B). Berkshire's share of this is £23,000, which is shown in Appendix A.
- 3.9 Elsewhere within Contracts, the proposed increase in external auditor fees previously outlined to Members is the main contributing factor to the projected overspend. The budget allocation made for the year reflected the scale fees set out in advance by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA).
- 3.10 Prior to the agreed closure of Wargrave Fire Station agreement was reached with the Wokingham Borough Council to undertake a feasibility study looking at options. The Council was due to contribute £30,000 to this, but following the agreed closure this income will now not be realised.
- 3.11 Additional grant funding have been received in 2020/21 in respect of COVID-19 and prevention activities. These allocations have now been incorporated into the budget and forecast spend, on both an income and associated expenditure basis.
- 3.12 Government grants and precept income is £78,000 higher than budget due to NNDR section 31 Grants. The budgets on these are based on estimates provided by the local authorities within Berkshire prior to the year commencing, with in-year variances reflecting the adjustments made to reflect actual data.

Capital

- 3.13 Capital expenditure in Quarter Two 2020/21 and supporting commentary for each respective scheme is shown in **Appendix C**.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The forecast outturn position on the Revenue Account is expected to reduce the call on reserves to £66,000 by the end of the financial year.

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 The revenue and capital outturns together with the reserves position are consistent with the assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 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: 14 February 2020.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A – Revenue Position at Quarter Two 2020/21
- 12.2 Appendix B - Net costs of TVFCS Quarter Two 2020/21
- 12.3 Appendix C – Capital Position at Quarter Two 2020/21

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement
07585 991602

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	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to 01/09/2020 £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES				
STATIONS	17,065	8,265	16,930	(135)
NON-STATIONS	10,698	5,347	10,722	24
TRAINING	570	154	571	1
OTHER	236	112	252	16
	28,569	13,878	28,475	(94)
PREMISES				
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	727	308	736	9
RATES	904	473	921	17
CLEANING	263	113	265	2
UTILITIES	449	188	441	(8)
	2,343	1,082	2,363	20
SUPPLIES				
INSURANCE	335	188	335	0
EQUIPMENT	647	292	647	0
IS EQUIPMENT & LICENCES	709	531	724	15
CLOTHING/PPE	374	157	377	3
COMMUNICATIONS	952	321	948	(4)
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH	180	109	185	5
PRINT/STATIONERY/PUBLICATIONS/SUBSCRIPTIONS	154	94	143	(11)
COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY SUPPLIES	180	7	150	(30)
SUPPLIES OTHER	196	59	169	(27)
	3,727	1,758	3,678	(49)
CONTRACTS				
CONTRIBUTION TO TVFCS & COLLABORATION	892	373	869	(23)
LEGAL	50	5	50	0
CONTRACTS OTHER (incl Professional Services)	773	194	807	34
	1,715	572	1,726	11
TRANSPORT				
VEHICLE RUNNING COSTS	743	365	727	(16)
TRAVEL	295	142	233	(62)
	1,038	507	960	(78)
PENSIONS				
PENSIONS	430	208	448	18
	430	208	448	18
INCOME				
GRANTS	(2,962)	(2,884)	(2,962)	0
RENTAL INCOME	(183)	(108)	(192)	(9)
TVFCS RECHARGE INCOME	(308)	(154)	(308)	0
INCOME OTHER	(351)	(30)	(315)	36
	(3,804)	(3,176)	(3,777)	27
NET COST OF SERVICES	34,016	14,829	33,873	(143)
DEBT CHARGES INTEREST	392	196	392	(0)
INVESTMENT INTEREST	(25)	(9)	(22)	3
REVENUE FUNDING OF CAPITAL	600	0	600	0
APPROPRIATION TO/(FROM) RESERVES	(52)	0	(52)	0
FINANCING COSTS	616	0	616	0
NET EXPENDITURE	35,547	15,016	35,407	(140)
GOV GRANTS/PRECEPTS	(35,263)	(21,482)	(35,341)	(78)
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT BEFORE USE OF RESERVES	284	(6,466)	66	(218)

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring Report 2020/21

Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS)

	Annual Budget £'000	Outturn to Sept 20 £'000	Forecast to YE £'000	Fcast - Budget Variance £'000
EMPLOYEES	1,764	837	1,730	(34)
CORPORATE RECHARGES TO TVFCS FROM RBFRS	308	154	308	0
SUPPLIES	36	1	36	0
TECHNOLOGY	247	(6)	220	(27)
NET COST OF TVFCS	2,355	986	2,294	(61)
RBFRS Share of Costs (37.8%)	892	373	869	(23)

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Active Capital Projects		Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1 & Q2 20-21 £000's	TOTAL Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	Commentary
New tri-service community fire station - Theale		9,220	1,665	1,681	5,874	9,220	The project is now 38 weeks into the 75 week build process and works are continuing at pace and to programme despite the restrictions imposed due to the Covid19 global pandemic. The impressive steel structure has been completed one week ahead of schedule and the concrete floor slabs have been created at first and second floor levels. As well as completing the drainage works, the ground levels are being brought up in order to lay the ground concrete slab. The internal blockwork is due to commence w/c Monday 2 nd November and the bespoke training tower work will follow w/c Monday 9 th November. Throughout October, key stakeholder site visits have occurred to introduce the crews from Dee Road to their new station. The Chairman of the Fire Authority, along with the Lead Member for Strategic Assets have also enjoyed a site visit to see progress. The project is still on target for build completion in October 2021 and to deliver a fully operational tri-service community fire station by Spring 2022.
Major redevelopment - Crowthorne (capital and decant costs)		2,056	1,760	261	54	2,075	Despite the unforeseeable impacts of the Covid-19 global pandemic, this project was delivered ahead of schedule with crews able to respond from a fully operational facility in early May 2020. Only a couple of minor snagging items remain that have been delayed due to accessing specialist sub-contractors. Members of Management Committee approved a total budget of £2,056m in April 2019. We reported an anticipated variance of circa +1% in the last capital report. The final spend to completion as shown here, is £2,075 which equates to an improved position, with a variance of only +0.9%. The successful completion of this project in terms of quality, time and cost is a further demonstration of the sound strategic planning of the Authority.
Fire stations - Minor Capital Works Programme		1,250	0	0	1,248	1,248	Following a very detailed engagement process with all end users based at the six identified priority stations (Bracknell, Caversham Road, Maidenhead, Newbury, Slough and Wokingham Road), a draft programme of works was prepared based on station feedback, building condition surveys, structural surveys and input from the Facilities Department. After approval at SLT, this was then shared with Fire Authority Members at the Property Development Working Group for their consideration. A positive response to that early draft programme of works from all presentation recipients has enabled further detailed project development plans to be discussed with key stakeholders, further revising the programme of works. The initial feasibility work is budgeted against revenue, hence the capital spend is currently showing as zero. In terms of timeframes, it is anticipated that following an appropriate procurement process, works will commence in spring 2021, with anticipated completion by end of March 2022. The actual construction programme has been deliberately pushed back to the spring to attempt to mitigate any potential interruptions to normal construction working patterns that could be caused by the Covid19 global pandemic, however key surveys to inform the works are continuing now.

Active Capital Projects		Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1 & Q2 20-21 £000's	TOTAL Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Total Estimated Project Spend £000's	Commentary
Fleet & equipment	New Fire Appliances	4,860	2,691	58	2,111	4,860	A collaborative exercise with Thames Valley partners delivered 7 new appliances by the end of 2018/19. A further 4 vehicles were then delivered (2 in July and 2 in December 2019). It was then planned for a further 4 vehicles to be delivered in Autumn 2020, however, due to the impacts of Covid-19, these are now expected to be delivered in January 2021. Once these vehicles are in service, it will mean that all whole-time pumps will have been renewed. At Fire Authority in February 2020, approval was given to purchase another four main pumping appliances. Orders have been placed, however due to the impacts of COVID-19, delivery of these vehicles is now expected in Autumn 2021. Budget allocation shown covers the expected requirements for the period April 2019 - March 2024.
	Aerial Ladder Platform	740	579	1	168	748	The Aerial Ladder Platform is currently in the final stages of build. Acceptance and Delivery of the new vehicle has been subject to testing which has been significantly impacted by Covid-19. Members of the fleet and equipment team, along with end users from Whitley Wood, are due to attend the manufacturer's in early January 2021 to continue and finalise the acceptance testing. Once the acceptance testing has been satisfactorily concluded, the vehicle will be brought into Service for commissioning and user training. It is anticipated the vehicle will arrive in Service in late January 2021 for the commissioning and training to commence.
	4x4 Fire Appliance at Maidenhead	175	0	0	175	175	At Fire Authority in February 2020 approval was given to replace the 4x4 fire appliance at Maidenhead and renew the Water Rescue vehicle. Following engagement with end users, the fleet and equipment team have finalised specifications for the replacement 4x4 fire appliance at Maidenhead and a direct award has been concluded. Taking account of Covid-19 impacts on suppliers it is anticipated that this appliance will be in service by Summer 2021. Initial end user engagement has been undertaken regarding the replacement of the Water Rescue vehicle however progression of this work (alongside the Water Rescue IRMP review) have been impacted by staff being redirect to Covid-19 related activity. Completion of requirements and procurement is now anticipated in 2021/22.
	Water Rescue Vehicle	110	0	0	110	110	
	8x 4x4 Utility Crew-cab Vehicles	160	0	0	160	160	Other Ancillary Vehicles – Due to the impact of COVID-19 and manufacturers temporary shutdowns, there was a delay in being able to place orders for 4x4 Pick-up vehicles. Having reviewed our requirements we have now placed an order for 6 vehicles, using existing frameworks to procure these. We expect these vehicles will be delivered in February 2021 and to be operational for April 2021. Accessing additional used Volvo pumping appliances has not yet been possible with other services delaying auctioining of used appliances. This is likely due to delays in receiving new vehicles from suppliers or internal prioirtisation of activity, with both these factors being a consequence of Covid-19. We continue to monitor the situation and will consider any opportunities through the remainder of the 2020/21 year.
	6x Used Volvo Pumping Appliances	120	0	0	120	120	

Active Capital Projects	Total Project Budget £000's	Actual Spend in Prior Years £000's	Actual Spend in Q1 & Q2 20-21 £000's	TOTAL	Total	Commentary
				Estimated Project Spend to Completion £000's	Estimated Project Spend £000's	
ICT - helpdesk system	45	29	0	10	39	Upgrade to version 10 & Starter, leaver, movers workflows work will commence in Q4.
ICT - Sage 1000 upgrade	65	17	0	48	65	Phase 1 of the upgrade to Sage 1000 has been successfully implemented. Phase 2 of the project has commenced and will complete by the end of 2021/22.
ICT - Learning Management System	7	0	5	2	7	The new system has now gone live with some final functionality amendments imminent. The original capital budget agreed for this project was £45k, but only the initial design and user acceptance testing elements have been capitalised. Ongoing annual hosting and support costs are being met from revenue budget. Possible additional work to develop an integration between the new system and Firewatch and other system refinements linked to amendments to National Operational Guidance (NOG) are currently being reviewed, which may lead to further costs which will be funded from the initial project allocation amount.
Prevention - New Ways of Working	106	0	11	95	106	As per SLT and Programme board approval, costs associated with procurement of the hardware and associated licensing for the solution, as well as the resources (1 x C# Developer) required to deliver the overall solution. Based on the successful delivery of phase 1, it is expected that these resources will be retained until at least the end of 21/22 to support additional feature and functionality enhancements to the overall system in identified subsequent phases.
ICT - asset replacement / licences	1,070	210	113	747	1,070	The client hardware refresh has been completed ahead of schedule and will not require additional capital investment until 2022/23 financial year. Focus therefore will shift to investment in foundation network connectivity and equipment to ensure that RBFRS' environment is fit to support increased use of cloud based services (e.g. Microsoft 365) in line with the ICT strategic action plan. A comprehensive network update is expected to be put in place by the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Subsequently, the intention is to capitalise a single position within the ICT department to provide support for migration to Microsoft 365 for the organisation.
TOTAL	19,984	6,951	2,130	10,922	20,003	

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT

COMMITTEE	MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	7 DECEMBER 2020
SUBJECT	APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY BY CREWING TO MEET CORPORATE MEASURES 16 AND 17
LEAD OFFICER	STEVE FOYE, DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	TO NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides information on Quarter Two (Q2) performance with supporting narrative on the Whole-Time Duty System and the On-Call (previously referred to as the Retained Duty System) appliance availability.
- 1.2 The data within this report is consistent with the Service's quarterly performance reporting.
- 1.3 The content of this report provides an insight for the Management Committee on the Service's work and progress in managing availability for both Whole-Time and On-Call appliances.
- 1.4 Whole-Time appliance availability through crewing for Q2 averaged **99%** across the Service as set through Corporate Measure 16.
- 1.5 On-Call appliance availability through crewing for Q2 averaged **52.2%** across the Service against the target of 60% as set through Corporate Measure 17.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Management Committee:

- 2.1 **NOTE** the 2020/21 Q2 performance of **99%** appliance availability of the Service's 14 Whole-Time appliances in line with Corporate Measure 16¹
- 2.2 **NOTE** the 2020/21 Q2 performance of overall On-Call appliance availability of **52.2%** against the Service target of 60% in Corporate Measure 17².

¹ Corporate Measure 16: Achieving the sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters (4 personnel) on all Whole-Time appliances (fire engines) through Q2 2020-21

² Corporate Measure 17: Percentage of hours per month where there is adequate crewing on all On-Call appliances (fire engines) through Q2 2020-21

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3. REPORT

- 3.1 This report provides the 2020/21 Q2 update of performance against Corporate Measure 16; to ensure 100% of full shifts where there is adequate crewing on all Whole-Time frontline pumping appliances.
- 3.2 The report also details performance against Corporate Measure 17, which sets a target of 60% of hours where there is adequate crewing on On-Call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing). This measure being applied across the individual and overall availability of the Service's six On-Call appliances.
- 3.3 Both Corporate Measures were presented to and approved at the Fire Authority meeting of 25th June 2020 and are consistent with the measures applied in the previous year.
- 3.4 The provision of sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters, for both Whole-Time and On-Call appliances, and therefore appliance availability is actively monitored and managed by Service Delivery managers. Performance is reported through the Service's Strategic Performance Board (SPB) and the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis, in addition to this report to Management Committee.
- 3.5 A report was presented to Management Committee on the 6th February 2018 providing a more detailed background to Corporate Measure 16. To remind the Committee, this report explained that crewing was managed within a lean operating model of 328 station based personnel delivering 14 Whole-Time appliances. This was in comparison to a previous position of an operating model of 13 Whole-Time appliances with a station establishment of 354 personnel.
- 3.6 In the 2019-20 Q1 Appliance Availability report, presented to Management Committee on 14 October 2019, it was highlighted that the station-based establishment levels had further reduced to 324 in line with the Fire Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and the successful delivery of the Flexi Duty Officer/Remotely Managed Stations project.
- 3.7 The additional capacity that may have existed in previous crewing models no longer exists and, with station-based crewing levels influenced by a number of factors, (e.g. temporary promotions, secondments, annual leave, sickness absence, maternity/paternity leave, career breaks, etc), Service Delivery Managers continually monitor and manage station-based crewing levels, intervening where necessary to address deficiencies. This effective management combined with good support, commitment and flexibility from operational personnel contributes to successfully delivering consistently good appliance availability by ensuring the sufficient minimum qualified firefighters are available.

**Whole-Time Duty System Appliance Availability – Q2 2020-21
(Corporate Measure 16)**

- 3.8 The availability of the Service's 14 Whole-Time appliances is measured by the percentage of shifts (day and night) that appliances are available with appropriately qualified firefighters. There were 92 days in Q2; the total number of day and night shifts for Q2 therefore equates to 184.
- 3.9 Performance of appliance availability across the Service's 14 Whole-Time appliances for Q2 was 99%, minimally less than the 100% performance level achieved Q1.
- 3.10 The measure allows for a two-hour period for any moves of operational personnel between stations (normally at start of shifts), utilising a buffer of two personnel which is maintained to facilitate optimum crewing. For instance, where a member of staff books sick just before a shift starts, arrangements will be made for another member of staff to attend and make up the crew. This is known as a Critical Stand-By and the intent is for this to be achieved within two hours.
- 3.11 There were sixteen occasions when Critical Stand-By moves were utilised in Q2. Of these, there were two occasions where the Critical Stand-by move fell outside Corporate Measure 16:
- 2nd September 2020
Two firefighters booked 'sick' immediately prior to start of shift causing a crewing deficiency: one critical standby arrived within the prescribed timeframe, the second critical standby arrived outside the two-hour critical standby timeframe. The appliance was available for operational deployment from 11:21hrs.
 - 28th September 2020
Sickness absence on day watch immediately prior to start of the shift. One firefighter from previous night watch remained on duty for two hours before having to depart; there was a 19-minute period where the Whole-Time appliance was unavailable due to insufficient crewing whilst awaiting the arrival of the critical standby.
- 3.12 The remaining fourteen occasions were resolved within the two-hour time period set out within Corporate Measure 16. Generally, a firefighter from the previous shift was able to cover the crewing deficiency, thereby ensuring the appliance actually remained available for full operational response.
- 3.13 COVID-19 Coronavirus has presented additional challenges throughout the quarter with members of operational personnel required to 'self-isolate' due to COVID-19 symptoms and/or shielding. Service Delivery Managers, supported by the positive attitude of station-based personnel, continued to actively manage and address crewing level. Additional measures included:
- Restrictions of movement of operational personnel across service delivery hubs.

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- Social distancing and limited access to stations.
- Increased operational buffer.
- Access to Coronavirus testing for all personnel with personnel taking the tests being able to return to work significantly quicker.
- On-Call personnel, 'furloughed' or home working, supplementing Whole-Time establishment

3.14 Throughout Q2, Service Delivery teams have continued to remain responsive to amendments to national guidance with the end goal of maintaining 100% crewing levels for appliance availability.

On-Call Duty System Appliance Availability – Q2 2020-21 (Corporate Measure 17)

3.15 The overall availability for On-Call appliances in Q2 was **52.2%**; a decrease from 62.6% in the previous quarter and a considerable improvement from 28.2% in the same quarter last year. The table below provides a breakdown of appliance availability based on station and month with an averaged quarterly total.

3.16 It is of note that, as we look forward to realising the benefits of the Fire Authorities IRMP decisions and significant investment in our new community fire station at Theale, our overall average availability for Q2 would be 60.8%. Of course, this in no way diminishes the current contribution of the Pangbourne team in positively supporting appliance availability.

3.17 The table below provides a breakdown of appliance availability based on station and month with an averaged quarterly total:

Station	Availability target	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Q2 average
Hungerford	70%	70.6%	60.8%	64.7%	65.4%
Lambourn	40%	2.6%	6.6%	21.3%	10.0%
Pangbourne	30%	9.5%	6.5%	10.8%	8.9%
Mortimer	70%	86.7%	67.2%	89.2%	80.9%
Crowthorne	85%	84.1%	84.0%	67.5%	78.7%
Maidenhead	70%	72.3%	70.7%	65.1%	69.4%

The variations between stations are indicative of their differing establishment profiles (the number of individuals at each station, the qualifications and skillsets held, and the amount of operational cover each individual can provide).

- 3.18 The On-Call teams at Mortimer and Crowthorne fire stations continue to perform most strongly in terms of appliance availability with Maidenhead and Hungerford also performing well given the pressures of the summer period.
- 3.19 At the end of Q2, the On-Call establishment numbered 75 (includes 25 individuals with dual-contracts), a decrease of nine firefighters from the establishment figure of 84 recorded in the previous Quarter. This will include 5 staff from Wargarve most of whom moved onto Whole-Time contracts
- 3.20 The COVID-19 pandemic continues to exert a positive impact upon appliance availability; On-Call team members may continue to be furloughed due to its extension or to work from home placing them in a position where they can increase their On-Call availability and, by default, enhancing appliance availability.
- 3.21 Looking to Q3, the performance will be affected by the second national COVID-19 'lock-down' throughout November and into December 2020.
- 3.22 Hub-based management teams continue to provide support to all On-Call station-based teams to promote and increase the availability of On-Call fire appliances across the Service. A more detailed synopsis of progress on recruitment, training and skills uplift for each station follows:

3.23 Hungerford

Appliance availability for this quarter has dropped from 85% to 65%. The recent lower percentage demonstrates the more realistic availability, with the majority of the On Call firefighters back in their primary employment. Hungerford is reliant on two junior officers' and work is being carried out to develop at least one more firefighter to Crew Manager to enhance this skill level. The establishment at Hungerford remains at 15.

One firefighter has returned from a long term absence and is making good progress in regaining their Breathing Apparatus (BA) qualification. Thirteen of the station establishment are competent to wear BA, five are qualified Emergency Response Driving (ERD) drivers and two have Level One (L1) Incident Command qualifications. One Firefighter is working actively towards completing a 'Safe to Ride' assessment and Incident Command assessment.

Increasing daytime crewing is a primary focus area and includes increasing the number of supervisory managers from two to at least three to enhance appliance availability. The station establishment remains healthy meaning recruitment activity is reduced.

3.24 Lambourn

Availability in Q2 has increased to 10% from 2.3% in Q1. Further increases in appliance availability is expected through Q3 with the imminent return of a supervisory manager raising the number of L1 Incident Commanders to two and the station establishment level to eight.

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Other positives include two firefighters successfully completing ERD qualifications. This means there will be four ERD drivers and seven out of eight firefighters being fully qualified for wearing Breathing Apparatus; this eighth firefighter is a trainee who is booked on the next available (BA) course next year.

One potential recruit is waiting to start on the next initial recruits course (subject to timeframe-based selection criteria) and this should support the continued increase in availability through Q3 and into Q4.

3.25 Pangbourne

Pangbourne continues to provide a level of availability achieving 9% in Q2. The establishment remains stable at five.

All five firefighters at the station are BA qualified with two ERD drivers and one L1 Incident Command qualified – the second supervisory manager will be attending an L1 Incident Command course in October; successful completion will improve appliance availability further.

Other positive factors include one firefighter recently completing a fixed-term Whole-Time contract and now able to increase their availability.

3.26 Mortimer

Availability for Q2 was 80.9%, the highest of the On-Call stations although this is a reduction from the previous high of 95% in Q1.

All personnel are now either development or competent firefighters – recruitment of two new firefighters is under way; one is a dual-contract firefighter with interviews for the second position due within the next month. This should support the increase the availability for Q3 and Q4.

3.27 Crowthorne

There has been a drop in appliance availability over the last quarter; July and August saw availability at 84% each month, minimally below the 85% corporate target but still excellent performance during these months where a number of staff returned to their primary employment.

The reduction in appliance availability in September is attributed to a member of staff having a period of annual leave followed a period of 'self-isolation'.

A supervisory manager is anticipated to leave on a career break in Q3; this post has already been backfilled on a temporary basis. The anticipated return of a firefighter during Q3 from long-term sickness absence will further support crewing levels during this period.

Additionally, a new recruit may join the On-Call team following a review of hours of availability and will, in due course, support in maintaining the high level of appliance availability.

3.28 Maidenhead

On-Call availability has reduced from the 85.7% the last quarter to 69.4% in Q2. This attributed to the relaxation in various COVID-19 rules enabling On-Call personnel to return to their primary employment and reducing the level in operational cover provided at Maidenhead.

There was a number of dual contract personnel that have taken periods of summer annual leave which has also contributed to reducing appliance availability. During Q2, there has been one leaver with several personnel on restricted duties.

In line with the Organisational Change policy, two ex-Wargrave operational crew (dual contract) have been redeployed to an alternative role at Maidenhead On-Call. They have joined the team on a shared temporary trial contract. The trial is on-going and completes during the next quarter. Results of this will be made available to assess its suitability and if successful could be considered at other On-Call stations to increase availability and flexible working opportunities.

Availability is expected to stabilise in the 60-70% range as the summer leave period ends and the workplace returns to a more normal state.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 2 – We will ensure a swift and appropriate response when called to emergencies.
- 4.2 Commitment 5 – We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The use of pre-arranged overtime (PAOT) continues to be an effective way of maintaining the sufficient minimum number of qualified firefighters and therefore appliance availability whilst also maintaining flexibility in other areas, eg: annual leave, thereby demonstrating efficient and effective use of the Fire Authority's financial resources.
- 5.2 The use of PAOT through Q2 continues to enable the Service to maintain full operational availability, capability and operational effectiveness throughout the ongoing COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None identified.

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8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The provision of sufficient minimum qualified firefighters and therefore appliance availability is listed as a corporate risk under risk number 681. It is monitored by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and, as necessary, treatments are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 None identified.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 21 June 2020 – Fire Authority Paper, Annual Plan 20/21.
- 10.2 14 October 2019 – Management Committee Paper, 2019-20 Q1 Appliance Availability Report
- 10.3 06 February 2018 – Management Committee Paper, Review of Underpinning Assumptions of 2015 Crewing Strategy and Quarter 3 Appliance Availability Update.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None.

12. CONTACT DETAILS

- 12.1 Steve Foye – Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Service Delivery
- 12.2 Paul Binyon – Area Manager, Response and Resilience: 07884 425419

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Statement of Assurance	A&GC	28.01.21	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	28.01.21	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England)	A&GC	28.01.21	Ad-hoc	Note and Recomemnd	DSS	N/A	Part I
Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Assumptions	A&GC	28.01.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Pension Board Six Month Update	A&GC	28.01.21	Bi-annual	Note	Pension Board Chair	N/A	Part I
Complaints Policy	A&GC	28.01.21	Ad-hoc	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	28.01.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	28.01.21	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit report	A&GC	28.01.21	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	28.01.21	Quarterly	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Safeguarding Presentation	Management Committee	03.02.21	Ad-hoc	Note	AM C&P	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	03.02.21	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Review	Management Committee	03.02.21	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	03.02.21	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Built Environment Presentation	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Ad-hoc	Note	ACFO	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Allowances Annual Review 21/22	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	MO	N/A	Part I
Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services (England)	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Ad-hoc	Agree	DSS	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 21/22, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation/ Collaboration and Strategic Assets Lead	Part I
Statement of Assurance	Fire Authority	17.02.21	Annual	Agree	HCS	RBFA Chairman and A&GC Chairman	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Appointment Task and Finish Group's advice on the appointment of New Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive	Management Committee	15.03.21	ad hoc	Recommend to the Fire Authority	CFO	N/A	Part I
Appointment of New Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive	Fire Authority	24.03.21	ad hoc	Agree	CFO	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	31.03.21	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	31.03.21	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Gender Pay Gap	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	Organisational Development Champion	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme	A&GC	31.03.21	Bi-annual	Note	DCFO	N/A	Part I
Annual Plan 2021/22	A&GC	31.03.21	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	N/A	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	31.03.21	Quarterly	Note	HCS	N/A	Part I
Capital Project Update	Management Committee	19.04.21	Ad-hoc	Note	HCP&E	Strategic Assets Lead	Part II
Annual Plan 2021/22	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Corporate Calendar 2021/22	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Agree	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Members Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Member Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	28.04.21	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Member Champions	Part I

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

	Category
	[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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