

## AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS, DEE ROAD, TILEHURST, READING, BERKSHIRE ON TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 1999 COMMENCING AT 6.15PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.06PM**

**Present:** J C G Brooks (Chairman), A B V P Hickley, B J S Patman

**Apologies:** Mrs C Bateson, J Morris, D A Veakins

### **5.01/99 PART I MINUTES: 5 AUGUST 1999**

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 5 August 1999, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **5.02/99 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY PANEL**

The Committee's views were sought (Agenda item 3 - not reproduced) on the benefits of direct Member involvement in the Brigade's community fire safety activities and approval was sought to the establishment of a Joint Member and Officer Community Fire Safety Panel through a recommendation to the Fire Authority meeting in December.

Members were reminded of the significant efforts made by the Brigade towards creating a safer community through raising awareness of the dangers of fire within the general public, with particular reference to those groups considered to be at risk. To date all measures to achieve this have relied on Officers initiatives with regular reports being presented to Fire Authority meetings.

Members were therefore asked to consider whether it was now appropriate for strategic direction to be given to those initiatives and to monitor their effectiveness. It was suggested that this could be achieved by the establishment of a Joint Member and Officer Community Fire Safety Panel (CFSP) comprising three elected Members and appropriate key Officers with meetings being held two or three times a year. One of its main activities would be the approval of the Annual Community Fire Safety Plan. In addition the Home Office/HM Inspectorate are to lead on a Thematic Review of Leadership within the Service and as the scope of the review was likely to include the role of elected Members, it was thought that this was an area where the Panel may also wish to become involved.

In supporting the establishment of the Panel, Members were of the opinion that it would be prudent if Members who were not already appointed to a Committee, Panel or Working Party were encouraged to become a member of the CFSP with the three Party Spokespersons being Ex-Officio Members as was the case with the Performance Review and Audit Panel.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the establishment of a Joint Member and Officer Community Safety Panel be approved.

**5.03/99 THEMATIC REVIEW: FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY -  
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BRIGADE**

The Committee received a report (Agenda item 4 - not reproduced) on the implications for the Brigade of Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate Thematic review on Equality and Fairness in the Fire Service and approval was sought to the specific recommendations set out in the report being actioned by the Authority.

On the invitation of the Chairman the Director of Human Resources took Members through the report highlighting the various recommendations together with the action proposed or already taken. One of the issues to be considered was whether the Committee widens its remit to specifically include equal opportunities in its title.

It was not however, felt to be necessary to change the name of the Committee to reflect it's new remit. It was therefore agreed that the Committee's Terms of Reference be widened to incorporate Equal Opportunity issues and that a report seeking Members approval to the necessary amendment be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting in December 1999.

It was reported that Corporate Communications Company (CCC) had conducted research into the ethnic minority views on the fire service as an employer. In the light of the work undertaken by CCC the Home Office had agreed to commission two further studies in West Yorkshire Fire and Civil Defence Authority and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Members would be kept fully informed of progress with the study.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 The contents of the report be noted.
- 2 The specific recommendation for action by the Fire Authority be approved.
- 3 No change be made to the name of the Committee
- 4 The Committee's Term of Reference be widened to include Equal Opportunity issues and that a report seeking Members approval to the

necessary amendment be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 15 December 1999.

**5.04/99            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That a further meeting of the Personnel Committee be arranged for Monday 17 January 2000 at Brigade Headquarters commencing at 6.45pm.

**5.05/99            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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated:

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Paragraph</b>
6	Part II Minutes - Thursday 5 August 1999	1 & 11
7	Review of Workshop Staffing	

*Note: The following is a summary of the Agenda items dealt with in Part Ii of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Tuesday 9 November 1999.*

**5.06/99            PART II MINUTES:            5 AUGUST 1999**

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting were received and approved as a correct record.

**5.07/99            REVIEW OF WORKSHOP STAFFING**

The Committee considered the outcome of a review of Workshop Staffing and agreed to declare a post in the Brigade's Workshop redundant subject to formal consultation.

Signed.....  
**Chairman**

**Date: 17 January 2000**

