



# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday 01 December 2015 at 5.30pm

RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading,  
Berkshire RG31 7DS

**Members:** Councillor David Absolom  
 (\* present) \* Councillor Christine Bateson  
 \* Councillor Paul Bryant  
 \* Councillor Adrian Edwards (*Vice-Chairman*)  
 \* Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons  
 \* Councillor Chris Maskell  
 Councillor Tom McCann  
 \* Councillor Angus Ross (*Chairman*)

**In Attendance:** Trevor Ferguson (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)  
 Moira Fraser (Clerk)  
 Simon Jefferies (Interim Head of Risk Management, IHRM)  
 Andy Parsons (Interim Head of Estates, IHE)  
 Nikki Richards (Head of business, Information and System, HBIS)  
 Simon Yardley (Technical Project Manager)

## Action

### 30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting had been received from Councillors David Absolom and Tom McCann.

### 31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct there were no declarations of interest received from Members.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

### 32. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 06<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015 AND MATTERS ARISING

#### *Matters Arising*

Item 22, White Fleet Task and Finish Group Report, Page 2 Fleet Review – work was ongoing.

Item 23, Review of Buying Processes and Controls, Page 5, The Action Plan would be reviewed at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on the 03<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 and would also be brought to the next SAMC meeting for further review.

Item 24, 2015/16 Capital Programme, Page 6, purchase of replacement vehicles would come back to the January 2016 meeting.

Item 24, 2015/16 Capital Programme, Page 6, decision as to whether vehicles should be leased or purchased would be included in the fleet review paper coming to the next meeting.

**Resolved that:**

The Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 06<sup>TH</sup> October 2015 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**33. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND CHANGE OF USE FOR CAPITAL FUNDING FOR IT PROJECTS TO BE SPENT WITHIN THE 2015/16 FINANCIAL YEAR**

Nikki Richards (HBIS) introduced the report which set out a request for the change of use of capital funding and additional funding to be spent within the 15/16 Financial Year.

The HBIS explained that the RBFRS would like to develop a new virtualisation infrastructure that would provide greatly increased capacity, faster processing with a shared storage (SAN) environment that offered business continuity and resilience options on key components. This would also improve system management and early system failure warnings.

The HBIS explained that there had not been a specific capital project bid approved to deliver this but officers believe by re-allocating a portion of the existing bids, they could generate £250K for the Virtualisation proposal. Officers were also requesting approval of an in-year bid for an additional £40K to top up the £250K from the other bids. A detailed justification of the request was set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

£494k had originally been allocated for IT project during the original bidding process but by reducing the number of physical assets through the virtualisation process maintenance costs and licensing costs etc could be reduced. Therefore the underspend of £250k be reallocated.

Councillor Angus Ross queried whether the money could be spent within the existing financial year should Members be minded to approve the proposal. Simon Yardley explained that Officers had been working on the options already to ensure that the tender process was deliverable and that it could be taken forward in January and February 2016 and a further two to three weeks work would then follow. He was therefore confident that the money could be spent during the current financial year.

Councillor Adrian Edwards asked for reassurance that this was the correct approach. Simon Yardley explained that this was the best way forward and would utilise resources more effectively. It would also be easier to manage. Most organisations already utilised virtual environments. It was not a unique situation and the technology had been in place for at least 10 years now. Five years ago the systems had been very basic but technology had moved on significantly since then.

Councillor Paul Bryant asked how this project would fit in with existing schemes.

Councillor Bryant also queried whether a joint project with other services (e.g. Buckinghamshire FRS) had been considered. The DCFO explained that he had recently met with colleagues from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Anne Marie-Scott was leading on a project around operational alignment which would assist with future synergies. The HBIS explained that there were very few overlapping systems in place at this point in time. Simon Yardley commented that although it was a good idea measures would have to be in place to ensure the required segregation of data.

Councillor Paul Bryant commented that at some point in the future he would like to see how the control room's software was linked together. Councillor Ross felt that this was something that could be considered by the TVFCS Joint Committee.

Councillor Christine Bateson stated that it appeared as if the £250k would stabilise the project and she queried whether Officers would come back in three or four years to ask for more funding. Officers stated that the virtualisation would last for five years.

Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons noted that Officers had stated that there would be fewer physical assets. She asked if there would be a commensurate reduction in other costs. Simon Yardley explained that there would be a reduction in costs such as a reduction in power and cooling costs.

Councillor Chris Maskell queried what risks would be posed to the authority should Members not be minded to support the proposal. Officers explained that the current system did not have a lot of resilience. In addition, the recovery process could result in systems being down for significant periods of time. It also made it more difficult to create new environments quickly.

Councillor Adrian Edwards therefore proposed accepting the Officer's recommendation subject to the inclusion of a provision that it had to be funded from within the existing capital budget.

Councillor Ross commented that a first look at the next Five Year Capital Programme would be considered at the January 2016 meeting. The DCFO reassured the Chairman that work on the fleet and IT etc was being undertaken and that a significant refresh of the programme would be required.

**Resolved that:**

1. the reallocation of the £250K from existing bids be agreed;
2. the in-year bid for an additional £40K from the existing overall capital budget be agreed.

**34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 5.30pm at Bracknell Fire Station. The meeting after that to take place at Whitley Wood Fire Station if the accommodation was available.

**35. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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 Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**36. PART II MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 06<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015**

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 06<sup>th</sup> October 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**37. REDEVELOPMENT OF HUNGERFORD FIRE STATION - PRESENTATION**

The Committee considered an exempt report.

**Resolved that:**

- That the recommendations as set out in the exempt report be agreed.

*(The meeting concluded at 8.55pm)*

**Minutes signed by Chairman as a correct record:**

Signature



Print Name

A. J. Ross

Date signed

19.1.2016