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



Held on Tuesday 6 October 2009

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

Those present: Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson (Member, Fire Authority) Councillor Mrs Prue Bray (Member, Fire Authority). Councillor Adrian Edwards (Member, Fire Authority) Councillor Paul Gittings (Member, Fire Authority) Councillor Mrs Pauline Helliar-Symons (Member, Fire Authority) (Chairman) Councillor Fred Pugh (Member, Fire Authority)

In Attendance: Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager) Paul Southern (Assistant Chief Fire Officer)

Action

15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received from Members. Apologies were received from Olaf Baars (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), Caroline Redzikowska (Clerk and Monitoring Officer) and Andrew Vallance (Authority Treasurer).

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Adrian Edwards declared a Personal non Prejudicial Interest in relation to Agenda Item 8 (Estates Management Audit) as his son works for Babcock Infrastructure Services. There were no further Declarations of Interest made.

17. TOUR OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS

The Committee Agreed that this item should be considered as part of the Five Year Premises Strategy (Agenda Item 5).

18. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 AUGUST 2009

Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2009 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

19. FIVE YEAR PREMISES STRATEGY

A tour of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters was undertaken during the considerations of this item (Agenda Item 3).

The Committee was provided with a five year forward plan relating to the maintenance of the Fire Authority's premises assets. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer provided Members with examples of maintenance works underpinning the presented costs, and he referred to the works at Cookham Fire Station as an example.

In response to Councillor Paul Gittings, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer believed that by allowing Officers to plan the works programme against resources for the year would reduce delays through processes which could lessen budgetary

implications and inform better financial planning in future years. The Committee **Supported** this and welcomed the five year Premises Strategy.

In response to Councillor Adrian Edwards, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer stated that the Authority Treasurer would need to confirm what he believed a reasonable inflation projection might be in respect to the inflation figure contained within the presented maintenance programme.

In response to Councillor Mrs Prue Bray, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that further evidence of asbestos had been found following the comprehensive asbestos study previously undertaken, however risk control measures were being put in place where required to manage this issue.

The Chairman moved that:

- i) A freeze be put on non-essential works at Cookham, Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead Fire Stations until their future was known.
- ii) A surveyor should advise which works at these Stations were essential and which were non essential.
- iii) A surveyor should monitor the non-essential works at these Stations to ensure that they did not develop into essential works.
- iv) A surveyor should conduct a feasibility study on the future of the Dee Road Headquarters site to determine whether future investment on the existing buildings was viable, accounting for their current condition and longer term return following any refurbishments.

On being put to the vote, the **motion was carried** by 5 votes in favour to one against.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer then took the Committee on a general tour of some of the buildings at the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Headquarters to enable the Members to view the condition of the fabric of the buildings and gain a better understanding of the medium to long term viability of the site. He also referred to the outline proposals relating to office moves and electrical works required.

The Committee recognised that certain building works to some of the Headquarters' buildings would need to be carried out to ensure compliance of health and safety requirements, and that maintenance works should not be delayed in anticipation of the potential changes to the Control building.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.
- b) That the work conducted by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer to inform the Strategy be acknowledged.

20. TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Committee was provided with a forward plan relating to Transport assets.

In response to Councillor Adrian Edwards, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that manufacturers' warranties were provided with all new vehicles, and that a comprehensive, proactive vehicle maintenance programme was in place. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that options were available to the Brigade to dispose of vehicles/appliances as part of the replacement programme, which included, for example, donation of vehicles/appliances to the 'Young

Firefighters' initiative and to Third World countries, and the sale of vehicles/appliances to other Fire and Rescue Services, the latter having the potential to generate a small income for the Fire Authority.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer, in response to Councillor Mrs Christine Bateson, confirmed that the Engineering Support Manager could use his discretion to extend the standard seven year replacement programme for light vehicles.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

21. IT AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Committee was provided with a forward plan relating to the Information Technology (IT) assets.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer acknowledged the work and knowledge of the Information Systems Manager which informed the Strategy and the delivery of an excellent IT Department within the Brigade.

In response to Members' points of clarity, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer confirmed that:

- i) Security - work was currently being undertaken to ensure that ISO27001 status would be achieved by 2012, and that work was progressing to ensure that the carbon footprint would be captured.
- ii) Security - currently, there was not a dedicated IT Security Manager, however the Data Protection Audit, to be conducted in October 2009, might identify this as a requirement.
- iii) Equality and Diversity (ISO 27001) - additional resources might be required to deliver this aspect.
- iv) Adult and Children Social Care - through the use of Mosaic data and a mapping system, risk streets and the categorisation of population areas could be identified, with information being shared with Local Authorities and Agencies, and through the Local Strategic Partnerships, as required.
- v) Hydra Steering Group - at the current time, it was not deemed necessary to convene such a Group, and that work was being undertaken to consider 60 different types of interface to capture information in respect to the Regional Control Centre.
- vi) Access Control - there was no requirement to upgrade the system at the current time.
- vii) IT Trainer - currently, it was believed that this post was sufficient to meet the required training needs.
- viii) Personal Computers - encryption security was in place.

In response to Councillor Fred Pugh, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer suggested that, in his capacity as the Fire Authority's Community Safety Champion, he should liaise with Gene Ashe (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection) to discuss any IT issues in terms of resources and work being conducted within the community.

Councillor Paul Gittings had some concerns regarding the depth of population detail recorded within specific buildings as part of the risk mapping. The Assistant

Chief Fire Officer confirmed that a mapping system was used to identify risk streets and how population areas were categorised. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer agreed to ask the Auditors who would be conducting the Data Protection Audit to consider whether they deemed it reasonable to record such information.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

22. ESTATES MANAGEMENT AUDIT

The Committee was advised of the outcomes of the Estates Management Audit, and **Noted** that the Audit's findings and recommendations had now been addressed.

Resolved:

- a) That the report be Noted.

23. CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee was advised of the progress against the Capital Programme 2009/10.

The Chairman, in referring to the presented Capital Programme 2009/10, and the progress made since the submission of the Committee paper, advised of the following updated figures to those presented:

- Rescue Support Vehicle - should now read "78" (£78k).
- Water Tenders x 7 - should now read "451" (£451k).
- Light Vehicles - should now read "55" (£55k).
- Total - should now read "815" (£815k).

In response to Councillor Fred Pugh, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer reported that those Managers responsible for Transport, IT and Premises had been directed to ensure that there was no carry forward of their respective capital schemes into 2010/11.

The Chairman congratulated the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service personnel for the work undertaken to ensure that targets were being met.

Resolved:

- a) That the succinct report be Noted.

24. COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (CLG) ASSET MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2009 REGARDING THE CLG'S FUTURE EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSET MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICE

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer provided an overview from the Asset Management Workshop, which had included:

- i) The launch of BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) rating system for the Construction of Fire and Rescue Buildings, a copy of the Communities and Local Government Fire and Rescue Service Circular 51/2009 being made available to Members (*copy available from the Committee Manager*). He stated that this would be taken into consideration, particularly in respect to the Wokingham Fire Station build, and within the environmental agenda. Councillor Adrian Edwards noted that the standards might differ between Local Authorities. Councillor Paul Gittings fully supported this launch.

- ii) Local Authority Asset Management - in referring to the Local Authority Guidance and Best Practice documents recently issued, the Chairman asked the Assistant Chief Fire Officer to consider these documents and to advise the Committee at its next meeting of any identified recommendations.
- iii) The presentations given by other Fire and Rescue Services on how they manage their respective assets, and the presentations given by Property Specialists, and Asset Rationalisation experts.

The Chairman conveyed her thanks to the Assistant Chief Fire Officer for attending the Asset Management Workshop.

The Committee **Noted** the work being undertaken to take forward the Strategies.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S)

- a) **Monday 11 January 2010 at 5.30pm**
Recreation Room, Newbury Fire Station, Hawthorn Road, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 1LD.
- b) **Thursday 29 April 2010 at 5.30pm**
Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that this venue might change as it would be dependent on the Committee's Work Programme at that time. The Committee **Supported** the need to hold its meetings in varying locations.

ACFO
Agenda
11.01.10

Minutes signed by Chairman as a correct record:

Signature P.E. Helliar-Symons

Print Name P.HELLIAR-SYMONS

Date signed: 29th April 2010.