

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE JOINT COMMITTEE



Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting

Monday 15 December 2025 at 2.00 pm

BFRS Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1BD

AGENDA

	Item	Page No.
1.	Apologies	
2.	Introductions	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
4.	Minutes and recorded actions of the last meeting held on 22 September 2025	(Pages 5 - 12)
5.	To deal with business remaining from the last meeting, if any	
6.	Questions from Members (written questions under Standing Order 26.1)	
7.	Questions submitted under Standing Order 9.5 (questions from members of the public)	
8.	TVFCS Budget 2026/27	(Pages 13 - 24)
9.	TVFCS Performance Monitoring Report Q2 2025/26	(Pages 25 - 38)

	Item	Page No.
10.	<p>Exclusion of Public and Press:</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION:</p> <p>To consider excluding the public and press representatives from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the appendices contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the Thames Valley fire and rescue authorities); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p>	
11.	TVFCS Technology Replacement Initial Business Case	(Pages 39 - 48)
12.	Forward Plan – to note	(Page 49)
13.	<p>Date of Next Meetings (hosted at BFRS HQ at 2pm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 16 March 2026 - Meeting 	

Joint Committee Terms of Reference

1. REMIT AND OBJECTIVES OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE

- 1.1. The Joint Committee is constituted to provide overall strategic direction and oversight for the TVFCS.
- 1.2. The Joint Committee shall have the following functions:
 - 1.2.1. champion the TVFCS;
 - 1.2.2. act as the link between the TVFCS and the Fire Authorities ;
 - 1.2.3. guide recommendations from the TVFCS, that may affect the operational functions of the Fire Authorities, through the governance processes of the Fire Authorities;
 - 1.2.4. assist with the management of the relationships between the Fire Authorities;
 - 1.2.5. monitor the steady state operational benefits and performance of the TVFCS, against the agreed measures and targets;
 - 1.2.6. monitor steady state risks relevant to the TVFCS;
 - 1.2.7. monitor the financial performance of the TVFCS against required and available budget, benefits and efficiencies, and to contribute to the financial processes of the Fire Authorities;
 - 1.2.8. discuss, and contribute to, proposals on future developments for the TVFCS;
 - 1.2.9. provide strategic direction on the future of the TVFCS;
 - 1.2.10. consider and recommend to the Fire Authorities proposals in relation to Fire Authority Decisions including but not limited to:
 - (b) discuss and recommend proposals for additional full partners into the TVFCS;
 - (c) discuss and recommend proposals for the supply of TVFCS services to other fire and rescue services or other clients;
 - 1.2.11. decide upon and determine all matters which are Joint Committee Decisions, any matters referred to the Joint Committee for decision pursuant to the TVFCS decision making process in clause 11 (Decision Making by TVFCS) and any matters reserved by law or otherwise to the Joint Committee.

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Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting

Monday, 22 September 2025, 14:00hrs

Minutes

Present: Councillor Llew Monger, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority
Councillor Jenny Hannaby, Oxfordshire County Council
Councillor Peter Frewer, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

In Attendance: Louise Harrison, Chief Fire Officer (BFRS)
Graham Britten, Director of Legal and Governance (BFRS)
Paul Scanes, Head of Response and Resilience (BFRS)
Karen Bennett, Executive Assistant to CFO & SLT (BFRS)
Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS)
Tim Readings, Area Manager Policy and Assurance (RBFRS)
Mike Swadling, Area Manager Response, Resilience & Collaboration (OFRS)
Martin Hall, ICT Category Manager
Simon Harris, Group Manager (TVFCS)

Remotely:

Asif Hussain, Head of Finance and Assets (BFRS)
Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS)
Mike Adcock, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (OFRS)
Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement (RBFRS)
Lukasz Wrona, Head of Business Information & Systems (RBFRS)

Action

1. APOLOGIES

Councillor Duncan Banks (Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority)
Councillor Neil Fawcett (Oxfordshire County Council)
Councillor Simon Werner (Royal Berkshire Fire Authority)

Rob McDougall – Chief Fire Officer (Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service)

2. INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Jenny Hannaby (Vice Chair presided in the absence of the Chair). All other Members and Officers present and online gave a brief introduction.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

4. MINUTES AND RECORDED ACTIONS OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2025

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2025, be approved as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

5. TO DEAL WITH BUSINESS REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING, IF ANY

None.

6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (WRITTEN QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 26.1)

None received.

7. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER 9.5 (QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC)

None received.

8. FUTURE OF LEGAL AGREEMENT RELATING TO STEADY STATE OPERATION OF THE THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE

Area Manager Tim Readings advised the Committee that the Thames Valley Fire Control Service had been established for a number of years. He expressed concern that the current legal agreement governing the Thames Valley Fire Control Service no longer reflected its operational realities. The agreement, based on historic working relationships, now posed challenges to the smooth running of the organisation and did not align with the high levels of trust and cooperation currently shared across the Thames Valley.

Area Manager Tim Readings noted that the existing agreement was due to expire in 2030, and a new legal framework must be in place prior to that date. He recommended initiating negotiations and discussions well ahead of the expiry to ensure sufficient time for drafting and implementation. This was particularly important to support the forthcoming Fire Control Technology

Replacement Programme, as the current legal agreement restricts the ability to enter into contracts that extend beyond its term.

He proposed a pragmatic approach to revising the agreement, suggesting that while its core principles remained sound, certain provisions required updating to better support day-to-day operations. The intention was to leverage internal expertise, particularly from Heads of Service to review and amend relevant sections of the agreement. This work would begin using in-house resources, with the aim of delivering a revised legal agreement in Q1 of the next financial year.

Area Manager Tim Readings acknowledged that formal legal advice would be necessary at a later stage but emphasised the importance of commencing the process now. He concluded by updating the Committee on the current position and the intention to move forward with the review.

Councillor Hannaby acknowledged that the issues raised by Area Manager Tim Readings had been discussed at the previous meeting and confirmed that the current update reflected those earlier concerns. She invited further comments from the Committee.

Councillor Monger expressed agreement with the earlier points raised, noting that they closely reflected his own observations, whilst acknowledging that the structure of the existing legal agreement remained fundamentally sound. He highlighted the need for refinement in certain areas. In particular, it referenced Clause 6.2 and Schedule 5, which stipulated that any variations to the agreement must be approved by each individual Fire Authority. These decisions were not within the remit of the Joint Coordination Group or Joint Committee alone and must instead be processed through each Authority's respective governance structures.

Councillor Monger raised a concern regarding the potential risk of delays or complications arising from differing governance arrangements across the three Fire Authorities and queried whether disagreement within one or more Authority could jeopardise progress on the revised agreement.

In response, Members acknowledged the importance of unanimity in any future decisions and agreed that consensus across all three Authorities would be essential.

The Director of Legal and Governance confirmed that legal consensus would indeed be required for any amendments to proceed.

The Committee collectively recognised the Thames Valley Fire Control Service as a significant success story and emphasised the importance of preserving its operational effectiveness. Members agreed that the foundations of the current agreement were workable but cautioned against overcomplicating the process. It was noted that a pragmatic and focused approach to revising the agreement would be essential to avoid unnecessary complications.

On being put to the vote, it was **RESOLVED** –

- 1) That the progression of building a business case for the future replacement of the TVFCS Command and Control systems and associated technologies be agreed.
- 2) That this will support an intent to deliver an Outline Business Case to the Joint Committee in July 2025 be noted.

9. TVFCS PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT Q1 2025/26

The Head of Response and Resilience Paul Scanes presented a comprehensive update to the Committee on the outcomes of the performance measures review and the Q1 Performance Monitoring Report for 2025/26. He explained that the Joint Coordination Group (JCG) had developed a new suite of key performance measures during 2022/23 to enhance service monitoring and following discussions at the meeting on 10 July 2025, several measures were refined to ensure they provided meaningful data to support management decisions.

The report highlighted increased call volumes in April and June due to prolonged dry weather, with May's data affected by technical issues requiring fallback systems that lacked full logging functionality. Despite this, performance against call answering targets remained strong, particularly for building fire incidents, while improvements were noted in handling vehicle and open fires due to better use of geolocation tools and mobile apps. Challenges persist in responding to road traffic collisions involving trapped persons, largely due to initial call routing through other emergency services.

Staff retention remained high, with no departures since February 2024. Efforts to improve mandatory training compliance had identified system notification issues, which would be addressed through a new development platform expected in Q4. Technical difficulties with core control systems prompted a six-point improvement plan agreed with the supplier and the Fire Brigades Union, with progress already improving the operating environment.

The Head of Response and Resilience Paul Scanes confirmed that future reports would include narrative boxes for each key performance measure to streamline commentary, and adjustments made in section 4 were expected to enhance the quality of quarterly reporting, with remaining measures contributing to the Chairman's annual report.

Councillor Monger raised a question in relation to item 3.6 of the report, which noted that calls to road traffic collisions involving persons trapped remained challenging due to the majority of such calls being initially placed with the police or ambulance service before being passed to TVFCS. This process prevented TVFCS call handlers from utilising the BT EISEC/AML geolocation service.

Councillor Monger queried whether there was any technical capability available that could enable the use of geolocation data in these circumstances, suggesting that such a solution ought to be feasible. He asked whether any work was being undertaken to explore this possibility and whether anyone present could provide an update or response.

The Group Manager, TVFCS Simon Harris responded to Councillor Monger's question by explaining that the BT EISEC/AML geolocation service was activated when a 999 call was placed, automatically enabling location services on the caller's device and transmitting that data to the emergency authority handling the call. TVFCS were early adopters of this technology and benefited from receiving geolocation data when calls were placed directly to the fire service. However, police and ambulance services had not adopted the technology to the same extent, particularly for mobile calls, and instead rely on third-party applications such as What3Words.

When such data is passed to TVFCS verbally, it must be manually validated, which introduces delays. The Group Manager, TVFCs Simon Harris noted that TVFCS had recently adopted a Home Office provided system called Multi-Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT), which allowed electronic log details to be shared and validated between emergency services. While currently limited to fire services, the system was intended to expand to other blue light organisations over time. TVFCS continued to engage with control managers in police and ambulance services to promote the benefits of EISEC/AML and MAIT and confirmed that feedback would be provided to the BT999 Liaison Committee to support a more joined-up national approach.

RESOLVED - That the TVFCS Q1 Performance Monitoring Report for 2025/26 and the review and development of the new 2025/26 Performance Measures be noted.

10. TVFCS EISE / AML SERVER REPLACEMENT AND CONTRACT

Area Manager Tim Readings advised the Committee that the legacy phone network was being decommissioned, which necessitated the replacement of the ISEC AML servers currently integrated with that infrastructure. These servers were essential to the operational effectiveness of the control room, particularly in responding to incidents at non-addressable locations such as rural areas and the road network. It was noted that the absence of functioning ISEC AML services had coincided with a decline in attendance times to such incidents.

The required replacement technology was only available from British Telecom, who were the sole supplier. The existing contract governing these services predates the establishment of the 10S Value Fire Control Services and was originally managed by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS). Due to the urgency of the upgrade and BT's national rollout schedule, RBFRS issued a waiver to expedite procurement and secure installation within a limited availability window.

A new five-year contract had now been signed with BT to ensure continuity of service. As the contract meets the definition of a terms-valid agreement, it required formal notification to the Joint Committee. It was confirmed that the financial commitment had already been accounted for in both capital and revenue budgets as of December, and no additional funding was being requested. The Committee was therefore asked to formally note the signing of the new contract, acknowledging that while the standard governance route was not followed due to time constraints, the action was necessary to maintain critical public safety infrastructure.

RESOLVED – That the contract established to replace the critical EISEC/AML Servers and the entry into a five-year contract with BT for the provision of the associated service be noted.

11. TVFCS TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

The ICT Category Manager Martin Hall from Oxfordshire County Council updated the Committee on the procurement programme, confirming that all documentation was available in a shared repository. Phase one pre-market engagement had begun, with consultation and route-to-market research completed. A commercial strategy had been circulated and would evolve throughout the process. The programme now entered the 'define' stage, with further market engagement and governance steps underway, including approvals from within Oxford County Council and their established governance processes. Existing contracts were being reviewed, including the recently signed five-year BT agreement, to assess strategic alignment and scope.

Procurement and implementation was expected to take two years, with at least one year required for delivery. Supplier feedback favoured a cloud-based solution, consistent with internal recommendations. Framework options were limited, and under the new Procurement Act, a flexible competitive approach was preferred. Stakeholder engagement was continuing, and a new team member would join in October to support delivery.

Approval had been granted for external recruitment for the new team member, with the contract duration corrected to October 2026. Internal governance was being established, supported by experienced personnel.

Templates were in development and would be shared to ensure transparency. The commercial strategy outlined the rationale and would be updated for Committee review in December. The procurement scope covered the core control system 'Vision' and related sub-systems 'ICCS' and EISEC, with integration requirements to be reflected in specifications.

The ICT Category Manager advised the Committee that projected annual cost was approximately £1,000,000, but this was subject to increase as scope and feedback from suppliers regarding costs were clarified. This reflected modern

infrastructure demands and supplier pricing trends. Risks including delays, contract performance, innovation gaps, financial pressures, and LGR had been rated amber, with mitigation strategies in place. The new contract was expected to span 7–10 years with supplier-led maintenance, potentially stabilising long-term costs. Upfront infrastructure costs for an ‘on-premise’ solution may be significant and unaffordable. Efforts would be made to secure favourable pricing for any hybrid offering where capital was still required. Likewise, any capital and revenue costs for the preferred ‘Cloud’ based solution would be focused to get the optimum outcome. Budget estimates were proposed last year, and current projections sit at the higher end. Reference was made to a comparable £25 million contract over ten years awarded by NFS in the southwest, which had informed planning.

The Vice-Chair emphasised the importance of developing a clear and beneficial plan for the programme to be circulated promptly for consultation. Early engagement would allow timely feedback and necessary revisions, helping to avoid prolonged delays. Drawing on experience within County Council governance, the Vice-Chair stressed the need to ensure the plan was as robust and accurate as possible before progressing further.

12. FORWARD PLAN – TO NOTE

A clarification was provided regarding the forward plan: the item scheduled for Committee review in December would be an initial or outline business case, not a full business case. This aligned with earlier discussions and ensured expectations were appropriately set for the scope of the submission.

13. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - It was moved and resolved that the public and press representatives be removed from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the minutes contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the participating Authorities); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

14. EXEMPT MINUTES AND RECORDED ACTIONS OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLVED - that the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2025, be approved as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 15 December 2025 – 2pm at Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1BD.

(The meeting closed at 15.06)

DRAFT

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	TVFCS BUDGET 2026/27
PRESENTED TO:	JOINT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	15 DECEMBER 2025
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE & PROCUREMENT, RBFRS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide Joint Committee with the proposed revenue and Renewals Fund expenditure for Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) for the 2026/27 financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Agree** the proposed TVFCS revenue budget for 2026/27 as detailed in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 **Agree** a contingency budget allocation of £150,000 which would provide an upper limit of expenditure without further Authority approval.
- 2.3 **Agree** to delegate authority to the three CFOs (unanimous decision required) for any unplanned expenditure between £10,000 and £150,000.
- 2.4 **Agree** to pay £270,000 into the Renewals Fund (£90,000 from each partner) in 2026/27 towards system replacement costs.
- 2.5 **Agree** the Expenditure Programme from the Renewals Fund for 2026/27 (**Appendix C**).

2.6 **Note** the Medium-Term Financial Plan (**Appendix B**) and Renewals Fund Long-Term Forecast (**Appendix D**).

2.7 **Recommend** to their respective Authorities the TVFCS Revenue Budget and Renewals Fund expenditure for the financial year 2026/27 and the individual Authority contributions to these budgets.

3. **REPORT**

3.1 The proposed TVFCS Revenue Budget for 2026/27 is detailed in **Appendix A** and shows a total budget of £3,121,533, which is an increase of £114,239 or 3.8% compared to the current budget.

3.2 In summary, the main factor for the increase in the budget requirement for 2026/27 relates to the annual uplift from pay awards. Further contributing factors are the rise in ICT recharge costs as well as the reduced NI Grant Income from Government and other inflationary uplifts.

3.3 Employment Costs are affected by the level of pay award agreed for the current year as well as the estimate for next year. The current year's budget was based on a pay award of 2%, whereas the actual pay award agreed was 3.2%. For 2026/27, we are budgeting for a 3% pay award. A low employee turnover in 2025/26 is expected to continue and a small number of staff will achieve full role competence with the accompanying uplift in salary.

3.4 Following the triennial valuation of the Local Government Pension Scheme, the primary employer contribution rate will decrease from 14.8% to 14.4% for the next three years commencing 1 April 2026. Secondary pension contributions will also decrease, leading to a 24% reduction in the deficit recharge for 2026/27. The above reductions will partially offset the pay award costs resulting in an overall increase in employment costs by 2.8%.

3.5 Recharges are set each year for TVFCS to cover corporate costs. The level of recharges has been reviewed and updated to reflect the cost to provide the corporate functions in 2026/27.

3.6 In Finance and Procurement, the increase is predominantly driven by the higher technology costs of a new accounting system as well as a new payroll contract.

3.7 ICT recharges have risen mainly because of increased staff costs due to multiple systems upgrades including the TVFCS command and control system replacement, recommencement of the ESN project and network changes.

3.8 The reduced cost of MAIT will be fully covered by a grant which is budgeted in the Income section. The Grant from Government relating to compensation for the rise in the NI rate in 2025/26 was significantly lower than the current budget, therefore, in 2026/27, we are budgeting for a lower level of grant.

- 3.9 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been produced and is included in **Appendix B**. This reflects potential budget pressures or cost reductions in the medium term and future year salary awards, which for 2027/28 and 2028/29 have been included at 3% for each year. The major pressure in the revenue budget comes in 2028/29 when the new command and control system goes live. Current estimates show the annual cost rising from just under £200,000 to around £1.1 million.
- 3.10 It is proposed that each partner continues to set aside a regular contribution of £50,000 each financial year towards system replacement costs. It is also proposed that for a three-year period from 2026/27 to 2028/29 each partner makes an additional contribution of £40,000 each financial year in respect of the Replacement Project. The Renewals Account stood at £1.44 million as of 31 March 2025.
- 3.11 The proposed Renewals Fund expenditure for 2026/27 is detailed in **Appendix C**. This expenditure relates to the Command and Control system replacement project and amounts to £796,000, including a contingency. The longer-term forecast of payments into and out of the Renewals Account is shown in **Appendix D**.
- 3.12 The budget papers presented have been produced and developed in collaboration with the lead finance contact for each respective partner.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

- 4.1 This report complies with the TVFCS Steady State Legal Agreement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 With employment costs accounting for 73% of the total proposed budget, financial performance and budget requirements are largely controlled by factors not directly determined locally such as pay awards and LGPS pension contributions.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 In accordance with Schedule 7, clause 12.1 of the legal agreement, any underspend will be reimbursed to partners in accordance with the cost apportionment model.
- 6.2 The 2026/27 budget complies with statutory 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 main budget risks relate to uncertainty around pay awards and the cost of the replacement Command and Control system.
- 8.2 If the pay award in July 2026 were to be 4% rather than the budgeted assumption of 3%, then there would be an additional in year-pressure of just under £17,000.

9. CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS

- 9.1 The Committee provides oversight on behalf of the three Authorities of the performance of TVFCS fulfilling their statutory duty to make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and summoning personnel (Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004).

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Simon Harris, TVFCS Group Manager
- 10.2 Joint Co-ordination Group
- 10.3 Senior Leadership Team, Royal Berkshire FRS
- 10.4 Lead Finance contacts at each respective partner
- 10.5 Monitoring Officer

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A: TVFCS Revenue Budget 2026/27
- 12.2 Appendix B: TVFCS Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 – 2028/29
- 12.3 Appendix C: Renewals Fund Expenditure 2026/27
- 12.4 Appendix D: Renewals Account Long-Term Forecast

13. REPORT AUTHOR

- 13.1 Jana Samajova, Management Accountant, RBFRS

Appendix A			
TVFCS Budget			
	2025/26	2026/27	Movement
	£	£	£
Staff			
Employment Costs	2,233,691	2,296,561	62,870
Mileage and Subsistence	8,484	6,885	-1,599
Training	3,000	3,000	0
Recruitment	600	1,000	400
Sub Total	2,245,775	2,307,446	61,671
Corporate			
Facilities	150,230	146,276	-3,954
Finance and Procurement	28,450	32,658	4,208
HR and Learning and Development	109,883	113,659	3,776
ICT	131,180	143,601	12,421
Liability Insurance	12,474	12,414	-60
Management	23,428	22,775	-653
Sub Total	455,645	471,383	15,738
Other			
Equipment purchases & Maintenance	4,500	4,500	0
OFRS Costs (Includes Secondary Control Airwave Rental)	59,129	61,522	2,393
Contingency Call Handling Provision	20,000	20,000	0
Sub Total	83,629	86,022	2,393
Technology			
Vision System (Maint)	83,506	83,506	0
DS3000 (for Primary and Secondary) ICCS	104,511	109,644	5,133
Charges for Unicorn Network and Telephony Rental	44,977	43,310	-1,667
Software Maintenance	930	2,000	1,070
EISEC (999 Caller Location)	9,500	9,500	0
Smart services to switch 999 lines to secondary control / elsewhere	17,000	17,000	0
MAIT	13,320	10,260	-3,060
Airwave rental (SAN I ,B) (Primary, Secondary) (7+8)	21,116	23,525	2,409
Sub Total	294,860	298,745	3,885
Total Budgeted Expenditure	3,079,909	3,163,596	83,687
Income			
Alarm Receiving Centre Income	-13,345	-13,260	85
MAIT Grant	-13,320	-10,260	3,060
Grant - Compensation for Rise in NI Rate	-45,950	-18,543	27,407
Total Budgeted Income	-72,615	-42,063	30,552
Total Budget	3,007,294	3,121,533	114,239

Contingency	150,000	150,000
Upper limit of TVFCS expenditure without further FA approval	3,157,294	3,271,533

Authority:	2025/26	2026/27	Difference
RBFRS (37.5%)	1,127,735	1,170,575	42,840
OXFRS (28.8%)	866,101	899,002	32,901
BFRS (33.7%)	1,013,458	1,051,956	38,498
TOTAL	3,007,294	3,121,533	114,239

Appendix B			
TVFCS Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2028/29			
	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
	£	£	£
Staff			
Employment Costs	2,296,561	2,365,458	2,436,422
Mileage and Subsistence	6,885	7,092	7,305
Training	3,000	3,090	3,183
Recruitment	1,000	1,030	1,061
Sub Total	2,307,446	2,376,670	2,447,971
Corporate			
Facilities	146,276	150,664	155,184
Finance and Procurement	32,658	33,638	34,647
HR and Learning and Development	113,659	117,069	120,581
ICT	143,601	147,909	152,346
Liability Insurance	12,414	12,786	13,170
Management	22,775	23,458	24,162
Sub Total	471,383	485,524	500,090
Other			
Equipment purchases & Maintenance	4,500	4,635	4,774
OFRS Costs (Includes Secondary Control Airwave Rental)	61,522	63,368	65,269
Contingency Call Handling Provision	20,000	20,600	21,218
Sub Total	86,022	88,603	91,261
Technology			
Command and Control System	193,150	196,670	1,075,556
Charges for Unicorn Network and Telephony Rental	43,310	44,609	45,947
Software Maintenance	2,000	2,060	2,122
EISEC Calcot (999 Caller Location)	9,500	9,785	10,079
Smart services to switch 999 lines to secondary control / elsewhere	17,000	17,510	18,035
MAIT	10,260	10,568	10,885
Airwave rental (SAN I ,B) (Primary, Secondary) (7+8)	23,525	24,231	24,958
Sub Total	298,745	305,433	1,187,582
Total Budgeted Expenditure	3,163,596	3,256,230	4,226,904
Income			
Alarm Receiving Centre Income	-13,260	-13,658	-14,068
MAIT Grant	-10,260	-10,568	0
Grant - Compensation for Rise in NI Rate	-18,543	-18,543	-18,543
Total Budgeted Income	-42,063	-42,769	-32,611
Total Budget	3,121,533	3,213,461	4,194,293
Contingency	150,000	150,000	150,000
Upper limit of TVFCS expenditure	3,271,533	3,363,461	4,344,293

Appendix C

Thames Valley Renewals Fund Expenditure 2026/27

Spending from the Renewals Account in 2026/27 will be made in respect of Phase 1 of the TVFCS Replacement Project, which will comprise supplier implementation, technology integration and project resourcing made up of several fixed term roles.

The profile in Table 1 sets out the total projected funding envelope for the coming year, including a reasonable contingency as required by the IAA.

The roles are described in the narrative below and summarised in Table 2.

Proposed Annual Expenditure - 2026/27	
Item	£
Project Resourcing Costs	296,000
Other Technology Costs	31,000
Contingency	66,000
Implementation and Double Running Costs	403,000
Total	796,000

Table 1

Project Resourcing Summary – 2026/27	
Role	£
Procurement Lead	39,000
Business Analyst	69,000
TVFCS Control Room Lead	70,000
Project Manager	68,000
PSO/PMO Support	50,000
Total	296,000

Table 2

- 1.1 Expenditure for 2026/27 is based on the Initial Business Case. Costs are indicative using inputs from suppliers and other reference Fire and Rescue Service implementations. Assessments of specific suppliers, products and associated implementation efforts, will further develop and mature, in line with the evolution of the Procurement Process and Commercial Strategy, leading to publication of a finalised Business Case in Q2 2026/27.
- 1.2 The requirement for expenditure from the Renewals Fund in 2026/27 is set out in Table 1 - the estimated draw on the Renewals Account is £796k.

Project Resourcing Costs

- 1.3 A breakdown of Project Resourcing Costs is shown in Table 2.
- 1.4 All Green book role gradings are defined using HAY evaluation and are provided with on-costs.
- 1.5 Procurement Lead - budget requirement of £39k in 2026/27. Oxfordshire County Council Procurement Team are leading the market engagement and procurement process. Resource will be needed throughout the procurement activity until the supplier is selected and engaged. The role is currently in place to support project initiation, on a fixed term contract expiring 31/10/2026.
- 1.6 Business Analyst - budget requirement of £69k in 2026/27 and £120k for further 18 months. This role is responsible for business requirements elicitation, specification workshops, product assessment, business project support and testing support. The post is currently in place until Oct 2026, extension is required for further 24 months.
- 1.7 TVFCS Control Room Lead - budget requirement of £70k in 2026/27 and £146k for further 24 months. This role is projected to be required from Apr 2026 for 36 months and will be responsible for providing subject matter expertise, specification workshops, product assessment, quality assurance, training and testing coordination and delivery, and business process redesign.
- 1.8 Project Manager - budget requirement of £68k in 2026/27 and £106k for further 18 months. This role is projected to be required from Apr 2026 for 36 months and will lead the project delivery. Responsibilities will include change management and test lead for any testing outside of the specific Control Room user acceptance testing.
- 1.9 PSO/PMO Support - budget requirement of £50k in 2026/27 and £79k for further 18 months. This role is projected to be required from Apr 2026 for 30 months and will provide project and business support to all project roles, ensuring adequate capacity to manage a range of key activities at the desired pace.

Other Technology Costs

- 1.10 The project will involve other technology implementation costs in addition to the supplier implementation and product costs. Given the high level of potential for variance, the estimated cost of £31k in FY 2026/27 and additional £46k in the

following 24 months are subject to refinement through the evolution of the procurement process.

Contingency

- 1.11 The TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement makes provision for a separate contingency allocation from the Renewals Account. A contingency allocation of 20% has been used in relation to the project resourcing costs and other technology costs.

Implementation and Double Running Costs

- 1.12 The project will replace the current C&C system (NEC Vision CAD and DS3000 ICCS) with a modular, cloud-enabled solution. The indicative costs for solution and double running costs are £403k in 2026/27 and £807k in the following year. The costs are expected to be refined during the procurement process.

Appendix D

Thames Valley Renewal Account Long Term Forecast (LTF)

The Inter Authority Agreement (the agreement) Schedule 7, Part B, 2.1 sets out that RBFA shall provide a forecast of expenditure from the Renewals Fund for each year over the life of the Agreement. The Agreement in its current form terminates in 2030.

Renewals Account Long Term Forecast (£'000)	
Balance as at 31 March 2025	1,438
Regular Contribution 2025/26	150
2025/26 Capex programme spend	-136
Balance as at 31 March 2026	1,452
Regular Contribution 2026/27	150
Additional Contribution 2026/27	120
2026/27 Proposed Annual Capex Programme (see Appendix C – Phase 1 of Replacement Project)	-796
Balance as at 31 March 2027	926
Regular Contribution 2027/28	150
Additional Contribution 2027/28	120
2027/28 Proposed Annual Capex Programme (see Appendix C – Phase 1 of Replacement Project)	-1,171
Balance as at 31 March 2028	25
Regular Contribution 2028/29	150
Additional Contribution 2028/29	120
2028/29 Proposed Annual Capex Programme (see Appendix C – Phase 1 of Replacement Project)	-232
Balance as at 31 March 2029	63
Regular Contribution 2029/30	150
Projected total at end of current agreement (April 2030)	213

Funding is required for the replacement of the Command and Control system. It is proposed that each partner continues to set aside a regular contribution of £50,000

each financial year towards capital replacement costs. It is also proposed that for a three-year period from 2026/27 to 2028/29 each partner makes an additional contribution of £120,000 each financial year in respect of the Replacement Project.

The 2025/26 expenditure for Phase 1 of the Replacement Project is progressing and relates to employment of the Business Analyst, working on delivering the outline and full business case, and Procurement Lead, responsible for market engagement and procurement process.

The 2026/27 Capex of £796,000 is set out in Appendix C.

Interest accrued

The agreement also sets out that OCC will hold the Renewals Account balance and invest it in line with its treasury management policies. The average interest rate earned on all of its investments will be applied to the Renewals Account balance and the corresponding amount of interest shall be added to the Renewals Account balance.

Due to inherent uncertainty relating to delivery of the multi-year large scale replacement programme, the forecast of the accrued interest has been excluded from the Renewal Account long term forecast.

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THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	TVFCS Performance Monitoring Report Q2 - 2025/26
PRESENTED TO:	TVFCS Joint Committee
DATE OF MEETING	15 December 2025
LEAD OFFICER	Area Commander Paul Scanes
EXEMPT INFORMATION	None
ACTION	To Note

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 During July /August 2025, the TVFCS Joint Coordination Group (JCG) reviewed the key performance measures to improve and enhance the monitoring of the Service. These performance measures were presented to the September 2025 JCC.

1.2 The report now includes narrative boxes for each measure and therefore reduced the narrative in section 3 of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the TVFCS Q2 Performance Monitoring Report for 2025/26 is noted.

3. REPORT

3.1 This report demonstrates Service performance for Q2, between June and September 2025 and includes the new performance Measures.

3.2 Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Performance Monitoring Dashboards

- Detailed measures by category:
 - **Great Place to Work – People**
 - **Public Safety – Effectiveness**
 - **Public Value – Efficiency**

Ref: GP 1.1 Headcount Vs Establishment

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Target	39	39	39	39	39	39							B	>100%
	2025	41	41	41	41	41	41							G	>94.9%
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							A	<95%
Cumulative	Target	39	39	39	39	39	39							R	<90%
	2025	41	41	41	41	41	41							What is good	
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							Nearest target	

Description	This measure is the total number of people in roles v's budgeted establishment
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP1.1

Narrative: TVFCS staffing levels have remained static through the period. The variation between headcount and establishment is as the result of flexible working patterns, where a number of employees working lower the full time hours equate to a single full time equivalent post.

Ref: GP 1.2 % Staff turnover

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Target	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%		B	
	2025	0	0	0	0	0	0							G	<1%
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							A	1.1%-2.5%
Cumulative	Target	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%		R	>2.5%
	2025	0	0	0	0	0	0							What is good	
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							Lower is better	

Description	This measure is the number of employees who leave the Service, expressed as a percentage of total workforce.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP1.2

Narrative: TVFCS continue to have historically low staff turnover. Our planning assumption is that staff turnover in TVFCS will normally be 5% of the total establishment in any given year. There have been no TVFCS leavers since February 2024. A resignation was received within September, which will take effect in October 2025.

Ref: GP 1.3 % Long-term Absence

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Target	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	B	<1%	
	2025	2.26%	7.92%	7.92%	3.40%	2.10%	2.63%							G	1.1%-3%	
	Status	G	A	A	A	G	G							A	3.1%-10%	
															R	>10.1%
Cumulative	Target	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	What is good		
	2025	2.26%	5.09%	6.03%	5.38%	4.72%	4.37%							Lower is better		
	Status	G	A	A	A	A	A									

Description	This measure is the percentage of people absent long term, expressed as a percentage of total workforce
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP1.3

Narrative: Levels of long term absence have reduced during the reporting period. This is a result of a number of staff members returning to the workplace after prolonged absence.

Ref: GP 1.4 % Short-term Absence

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Target	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	B	<1%	
	2025	1.80%	5.57%	0.65%	2.78%	1.97%	1.81%							G	1.1%-3%	
	Status	G	A	B	G	G	G							A	3.1%-10%	
															R	>10.1%
Cumulative	Target	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	<3%	What is good		
	2025	1.80%	3.69%	2.67%	2.70%	2.55%	2.43%							Lower is better		
	Status	G	A	G	G	G	G									

Description	This measure is the percentage of people absent short term, expressed as a percentage of total workforce
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP1.4

Narrative: Short term absence levels have been within tolerance throughout the reporting period. This reflects expected levels of absence during the summer months, where levels of transmissible illness are typically lower in the general population

Ref: GP 1.5 Number of Overtime shifts utilised

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B	
Monthly	Target													G	
	2025	12	14	24	18	10	14							A	
	Status													R	
Cumulative	Target													What is good	
	2025	12	26	50	68	78	92							Lower is better	
	Status														

Description	This measure is the number of overtime shifts (full shifts and/or part shifts)
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP 1.5

Narrative: The number of overtime shifts required to maintain our desired minimum staffing level is sensitive to a number of factors, including staff absence, leave and modified duty patterns required after periods of absence. The variation in the number of shifts required reflects this. We expect to see higher numbers of overtime shifts required during peak holiday periods, as any sickness absence that coincides with these periods is more likely to require overtime to cover. The grey book terms and conditions of service place limitations on the amount of overtime performed by employees, which helps us to ensure that staff have the right amount of time away from work to maintain a healthy work/life balance and their own health and wellbeing.

Ref: GP 1.6 Number of occasions falling below resourcing model

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B	
Monthly	Target													G	
	2025	2	0	1	1	0	1							A	
	Status													R	
Cumulative	Target													What is good	
	2025	2	2	3	4	4	5							Lower is better	
	Status														

Description	This measure is the number of occasions falling below resourcing model
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Against target
Reference	GP 1.6

Narrative: This measure reflects situations where we are unable to reach the required level of staffing through normal arrangements, including overtime. In these circumstances, shift cover is provided by members of the TVFCS management team, officer colleagues from the three Thames Valley Fire & Rescue Services, or agreed staffing degradation arrangements are applied. We expect these arrangements to be required more often during peak holiday periods, when staff are less likely to be available for overtime shifts and this is reflected in the data.

Public Safety – Effectiveness

Ref: PS 1.1 Emergency calls answered

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Monthly Last Year	2918	3018	3294	3783	3916	3262	3248	2893	2944	2750	2601	2736
2025	3382		3826	3489		3100						
Status	A		G	G		G						
Cumulative Last Year	2918	5936	9230	13013	16929	20191	23439	26332	29276	32026	34627	37363
2025	3382											
Status	G											

B	<10%
G	Within 10%
A	>10%
R	>20%

What is good
Within 10% of previous five year average

Description	This measure monitors the number of 999 calls into the control room.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Previous year average
Reference	PS1.1

Narrative: Due to technical issues experienced within TVFCS during the quarter, accurate call volume data is unavailable for some months during the period. During these periods, TVFCS were using the fallback Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS). This fallback system provides identical functionality to Control room users as the primary system, but does not allow the same data capture. This loss of data means that the cumulative performance measure will be an inaccurate representation of call volumes for the year. Available data shows a slight increase in call volumes during most months compared with the same month in 2024/25. It appears that this was related to the notably drier and warmer weather conditions experienced nationally during Summer 2025.

Ref: PS 1.2 Emergency calls answered within 5 seconds

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Monthly Target	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%
2025	95.55%		94.22%	86.49%		93.58%						
Status	B		B	A		B						
Cumulative Target	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%
2025	95.55%		96.68%	96.31%		92.46%						
Status	B		B	B		G						

B	93%-100%
G	92%-92.9%
A	91.9%-81%
R	80.9%-0%

What is good
Quicker is better

Description	This measure uses the time taken from when the Fire Control Room system receives an emergency incoming call alert to the moment they are answered by a TVFCS Operator
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PS1.2

Narrative: TVFCS continued to perform strongly against this measure in most months during the reporting period. July performance dipped below target. More detailed analysis indicates that this was a result of the higher numbers of calls received to outdoor fires during the month. Outdoor fires take longer for Control staff to process than incidents located in buildings, and typically create larger numbers of repeat calls. These spikes in demand can outstrip the inherent call handling capacity within TVFCS causing some delays in answering. There are some gaps in data, which have the same cause as reported in measure PS 1.1. The performance data within this months (RAG status greyed out), represents the performance only against the calls where data is captured.

Ref: PS 1.3 Average time taken in seconds to alert Stations (All Incidents - excluding call challenge)

Monthly	Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	2025												
	Status												
Cumulative	Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	2025												
	Status												

B	<90
G	90-90.9
A	91-100
R	>100

What is good
Higher is better

Description	This measure is the average number of seconds elapsed between an emergency call being answered and control staff operating equipment at a station notifying crews that they are required to mobilise. It does not include occasions when the control operator applies call challenge.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PS1.3

Narrative: We have encountered difficulties in reporting against this measure. Identifying where calls have been 'challenged' by Fire Control staff requires a manual intervention by Control staff during call handling. We are not comfortable that this is providing us with reliable data. The TVFCS JCG are exploring alternative ways of evaluating this area of performance.

Ref: PS 1.4 Average time taken in seconds to alert Stations (Building fires)

Monthly	Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Avg Seconds	72	74	74	73	72	72					
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B					
Cumulative	Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Avg Seconds	72	73	73	73	73	73					
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B					

B	<90
G	90-90.9
A	91-109.9
R	>110

What is good
Higher is better

Description	This measure is the average number of seconds elapsed between an emergency call being answered and control staff operating equipment at a station notifying crews that they are required to mobilise when responding to building fires.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PS1.4

Narrative: TVFCS continue to perform strongly against this key measure of performance. Typically, fires in buildings are more straightforward for Control staff when identifying and confirming the location of the incident, which assist in achieving high levels of performance

Ref: PS 1.5 Average time taken in seconds to alert Stations (Road Traffic Collisions - Persons trapped)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Monthly												
Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Avg Seconds	108	105	109	94	110	100						
Status	A	A	A	A	A	A						
Cumulative												
Target	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Avg Seconds	108	107	107	104	105	104						
Status	A	A	R	R	R	R						

B	<90
G	90-90.9
A	91-109.9
R	>110

What is good
Higher is better

Description	This measure is the average number of seconds elapsed between an emergency call being answered and control staff operating equipment at a station notifying crews that they are required to mobilise when responding to road traffic collisions with people trapped.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PS1.5

Narrative: This measure continues to be challenging, due to the way that the majority of calls to road traffic collisions are reported (most are reported by members of the public to the Police or Ambulance service and then exchanged between services), which prevents TVFCS staff from using the Geo-locations tools provided by the 999 system. A question has been raised with the national 999 liaison committee, to understand whether any technological improvements are being considered which would allow services to share this data electronically.

Ref: PS 1.6 Challenged calls resulting in no requirement to attend

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Monthly												
Prev 5 year												
2025												
Status												
Cumulative												
Prev 5 year												
2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Status												

B	
G	
A	
R	

What is good
Monitor

Description	Future work - There is currently no way of extracting this data effectively.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	Vision
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Previous five year average
Reference	1.6

Narrative: This measure is impacted by the same issue as reported in narrative for measure PS 1.3 The TVFCS JCG are exploring an alternative approach to measuring the effectiveness of the application of call challenging principles by Fire Control staff.

Public Value – Efficiency

Ref:PV 1.1 - Service Desk Response

Monthly		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B	100%
	Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	G	> 97.9%
	2025	100	100	100	100	100	100							A	> 95.9%
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							R	< 96%
Cumulative	Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	What is good	
	2025	100	100	100	100	100	100							Higher is better	
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B								

Description	Work in progress - This measure highlights the Helpdesk tickets logged with our maintenance resolved within SLA.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PV1.1

Narrative: All faults logged within the reporting period have been resolved by the supplier within the time stipulated in the SLA.

Ref:PV 1.2 - Service Desk tickets logged

Monthly		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B	<10
	Prev 3 year													G	10-15
	2025	21	14	20	37	27	19							A	16-25
	Status	A	G	A	R	R	A							R	>25
Cumulative	Target													What is good	
	2025	21	18	18	23	24	23							Monitor	
	Status	G	A	A	A	A	A								

Description	This measure highlights the Helpdesk tickets logged with our maintenance contractors
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Previous three years
Reference	PV1.2

Narrative: The TVFCS Command & Control system developed a number of technical issues during the period, which resulted in a higher number of tickets being logged than would normally be expected.

Ref:PV 1.3 - System Uptime

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	B	100%	
	2025	100	100	100	100	100	99.6							G	> 97.9%	
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	G							A	> 95.9%	
															R	< 96%
Cumulative	Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	What is good		
	2025	100	100	100	100	100	99.9							Higher is better		
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	G									

Description	This measure demonstrates the percentage of time the command and control system is available to users.
Owner	Joint Coordination Group
Data source	TVFCS
Pattern	Monthly
Comparison	Target
Reference	PV1.3

Narrative: Despite a number of technical problems being experienced, the TVFCS Command & Control system was available to users for the majority of the reporting period. The dip in performance during September relates to a single event during September, where a failed change by the supplier during technical work in TVFCS caused the system to be unavailable for short period. Fallback business continuity arrangements were applied during this outage to maintain service provision.

4 COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

4.1 This report complies with clause 4 of the IAA – ‘Principles of Collaboration’.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None identified at this time.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None identified at this time.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None identified at this time .

8 RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None identified at this time.

9 CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS

9.1 As stated in the TVFCS IAA schedule 2: ‘Primary objectives’:

9.2 To satisfy the core functions of the Fire Authorities as defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004

9.3 To satisfy the statutory duty of all the Fire Authorities as category one responders as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

9.4 To improve the resilience of the control room function

9.5 To provide the capability for future expansion of TVFCS with other agencies or clients.

10 PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

10.1 Joint Coordinating Group.

11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/TVFCS-JOINT-COMMITTEE-AGENDA-PACK-22-SEPTEMBER-2025.pdf>

12 APPENDICES

12.1 None

13 CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Area Commander Paul Scanes pscanes@bucksfire.gov.uk 07765041960

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THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	Thames Valley Fire Control Service Technology Replacement Initial Business Case
PRESENTED TO:	Joint Committee
DATE OF MEETING	15 December 2025
LEAD OFFICER	DCFO Mark Arkwell
EXEMPT INFORMATION	Appendices 1–3 are exempted as per Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12a, Paragraph 3.
ACTION	For decision – approval of the Initial Business Case and commercial strategy and associated recommendations.

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 TVFCS underpins emergency responses for 2.5 million Thames Valley residents. The current system contract ends in April 2028, and critical components will be unsupported by April 2029, risking statutory compliance and operational resilience.
- 1.2 Continuing with the existing system beyond 2029 is not viable due to hardware and software obsolescence, security non-compliance, and the inability to integrate with future technologies.
- 1.3 The Business Case calls for the replacement of NEC Vision CAD and DS3000 ICCS with a modular, cloud-enabled solution covering call handling, incident management, GIS mapping, ESN integration, and securing long-term compliance.
- 1.4 A cloud-based or hybrid solution is preferred, offering scalability, resilience, and cost-effectiveness.
- 1.5 The estimated cost for 2026/27 is £795,897, drawn from the renewals fund plus £40,000 per authority contribution. Dual running costs have been calculated with a discounted cost of 75%.

- 1.6 Supporting the procurement and implementation will ensure statutory compliance, improve resilience, support Emergency Services Network transition, enhance functionality, and deliver predictable costs.
- 1.7 Risks include potential cost and timeline overruns, supplier dependency, and governance delays. Proposed mitigation includes robust procurement and contingency planning.
- 1.8 The report seeks approval of a procurement of a cloud-based or hybrid command and control (C&C) system and asks for endorsement of the funding approach while noting the long-term financial implications.
- 1.9 Approval is sought to procure a replacement C&C system for Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) in a timely manner, before the current system becomes unsupported in 2029.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the analysis presented in the Initial Business Case, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 2.1 **AGREE** to recommend that Fire Authorities decide to proceed with procurement of a replacement C&C system, targeting a cloud-based or hybrid solution.
- 2.2 **NOTE** that Joint Committee will be asked to approve the recommendation of contract award in Q2/3 2026 for Fire Authority decision.
- 2.3 **AGREE** to recommend that Fire Authorities decide to support the anticipated internal project resourcing costs and other technology implementation costs of up to £795,897, for year 2026/27 can be drawn from the TVFCS renewals fund, with direction and approval at Project Board level.
- 2.4 **AGREE** to recommend to Fire Authorities that they decide to uplift the renewals fund contribution for 2026/27 by an additional £40,000 per Authority.
- 2.5 **NOTE** the longer-term anticipated project costs and potential increased revenue implications, as described and that these assumptions are reflected in the refreshed TVFCS Medium Term Financial Plan.

3. **REPORT**

3.1 **The Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) – C&C System Replacement**

3.2 **Initial Business Case Summary**

3.3 **Purpose**

This business case seeks approval to proceed with the procurement of a replacement C&C system for TVFCS. The current system, implemented in 2015, is approaching end-of-life. Key infrastructure components will become unsupported by 2029, creating significant operational, legal, and compliance risks. Replacement is essential to maintain statutory obligations under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and ensure resilience for emergency response across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services.

3.4 **Strategic context**

TVFCS serves approximately 2.5 million residents and underpins the ability to receive 999 calls, mobilise resources, and manage incidents. The existing system contract expires in April 2028, with a final extension option to 2030. However, critical components, including Windows Server infrastructure, will be unsupported by April 2029. Risks include operational degradation, security non-compliance (notably Airwave Annex A), loss of resilience, and potential challenges in integrating with the future Emergency Services Network (ESN) enhancements. A failure to implement a replacement C&C system would breach statutory obligations and expose the authorities to reputational and legal risk.

3.5 The project aligns with strategic objectives to improve resilience, support digital transformation, and provide value for money. The renewal of the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) in 2028 is a dependency.

3.6 **Problem statement**

Continuing with the current system beyond 2029 is not viable. Hardware and software obsolescence will compromise operational integrity and legal compliance. Without replacement, TVFCS would operate an unsupported legacy system incapable of delivering technological improvements or meeting statutory duties.

3.7 **Scope**

The project will replace the current C&C system (NEC Vision CAD and DS3000 ICCS) with a modular, cloud-enabled solution. Scope includes:

- 3.7.1 Emergency call handling, incident management, and resource mobilisation.
- 3.7.2 Integration with Airwave, ESN, and other communication technologies
- 3.7.3 GIS mapping and operational dashboards.
- 3.7.4 Data migration, reporting, and training.
- 3.7.5 Security and compliance with UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018, and recognised cybersecurity standards.
- 3.7.6 Excluded from scope: HR, payroll, finance systems, and broader ICT upgrades not directly required for C&C operation.

3.8 **Options appraisal**

Six options were assessed:

- 3.8.1 **Do nothing** – High risk of failure and non-compliance. Not viable.
- 3.8.2 **Extend current system** – Limited vendor support; risks remain. Not recommended.
- 3.8.3 **Replace with cloud-based or hybrid solution** – Lower capital outlay, scalable, aligns with cloud-first strategy. Preferred option.
- 3.8.4 **Replace with on-premises solution** – High upfront cost, limited scalability. Not feasible.
- 3.8.5 **Broader transformation** – High complexity and cost. Not feasible.

3.9 **Preferred option:** Cloud-based or hybrid solution, offering flexibility, resilience, and cost-effectiveness.

- 3.10 **Benefits**
- 3.11 Statutory compliance and risk mitigation.
- 3.12 Improved resilience and disaster recovery.
- 3.13 Enhanced functionality and interoperability.
- 3.14 Predictable annual costs and shared service efficiencies.
- 3.15 Supports ESN transition and future innovation.

3.16 **Milestones**

- 3.17 Key milestones for the programme are set out in table 1.

Phase	Status	Target Date
Plan	Phase 1 Market Engagement, Scoping, Commercial Strategy.	Sep 2025
Define	Phase 2 Market Engagement, Initial Business Case, Specification, Contract Drafting.	Nov 2025 to Feb 2026
Procure	Tender Publication, Clarification Questions, Evaluation & Moderation, Financial Evaluation, Finalised Business Case, Award Approval.	Feb 2026 to Sep 2026
Implement	Planning, Implementation, Testing.	Oct 2026 to Mar 2028
Manage	Go-Live, Lessons Learned, Handover.	Apr 2028

Table 1

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

- 4.1 This report and associated Business Case is drafted in a way that aligns with the Inter-Authority Agreement in four areas.

4.2 Statutory purpose and primary objectives

- 4.2.1 The business case explicitly relates to the capacity of TVFCS to discharge statutory functions under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- 4.2.2 The focus on call handling, mobilisation, resilience, and interoperability aligns with the primary objectives and the defined “purpose” of TVFCS in the agreement.

4.3 Governance

- 4.4 This report:

- 4.4.1 Seeks Joint Committee agreement to proceed with procurement in principle (2.1), which is consistent with the Joint Committee’s strategic oversight role.
- 4.4.2 States that the Joint Committee will be asked to approve the contract award at a later meeting (2.2), matching the staged decision-making approach in the agreement.
- 4.4.3 Anticipates governance oversight including a project board, which supports the reporting and monitoring duties set out in clause 12 and the wider governance framework.
- 4.4.4 Recognises that each fire authority must comply with its own standing orders and contracting rules, as required by clause 6.1.2.

4.5 Financial arrangements

- 4.6 The report complies with this framework because it:
- 4.6.1 Treats the C&C replacement as Capex to be funded from the TVFCS renewals fund in 2026/27, in line with the requirements of schedule 7, part B.
 - 4.6.2 Proposes an uplift of £40,000 per authority to the renewals fund contribution, which is consistent with equal one-third contributions and the ability to “top up” the renewals account under paragraph 1.4 and paragraph 8, part B.
 - 4.6.3 Recognises longer-term revenue and capital implications that can then be reflected in the annual capital expenditure programme and medium-term planning, in line with the requirement to provide forecast capital expenditure for each remaining year of the agreement.

4.7 Contracts, assets and technology change

- 4.8 The Inter-Authority Agreement identifies the existing mobilising system contracts (NEC/Vision and DS3000) as TVFCS contracts and treats them as core assets supporting the purpose of the service.
- 4.9 The report:
- 4.9.1 Plans for the orderly replacement of those existing contracts before they become technically and commercially untenable, which is consistent with the duty to operate and manage TVFCS in line with the primary objectives and purpose.
 - 4.9.2 Addresses security, ESN integration and technology change through a jointly agreed project and procurement route, rather than unilateral change by one authority. That respects clause 6.1.8, which requires authorities to obtain consent before making system or technology changes that impact TVFCS.
- 4.10 Compliance is achieved through the appropriate use of the governance structures, financial mechanisms, and joint decision-making processes that the legal agreement prescribes, while directly supporting the statutory purpose for which TVFCS was established.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Indicative costs included in the Business Case comprise supplier implementation, technology integration, and internal project resources. Forecast for 2026/27 is up to £795,897, drawn from the TVFCS renewals fund, with an additional £40,000 per authority contribution recommended. Longer-term costs will be refined during procurement. Dual running costs during transition have been estimated at a 75% discount.

Capital Costs

Financial Year	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029 +	Total
Implementation & Double Running Cost	£0	£403,334	£806,667	£0	£0	£1,210,001
Procurement Lead	£32,636	£38,952	£0	£0	£0	£71,588
Business Analyst	£69,336	£69,336	£78,940	£40,664	£0	£258,276
Control Lead	£0	£69,932	£72,028	£74,192	£0	£216,152
Project Manager	£0	£67,912	£69,972	£36,806	£0	£174,690
PSO	£0	£50,348	£51,880	£26,730	£0	£128,958
Other Technology	£11,664	£30,656	£30,656	£15,328	£0	£88,304
Other Technology Implementation Costs Total	£113,636	£730,470	£1,110,143	£193,720	£0	£2,147,969
Contingency	£22,727	£65,427	£60,695	£38,744	£0	£187,594
Total	£136,363	£795,897	£1,170,838	£232,464	£0	£2,335,562

5.2

Renewals Fund Balance (TVFCS)

Opening Bal	£1,438,451	£1,452,088	£926,191	£25,353	£62,889
In Year Contributions	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000	£150,000
Capital Expenditure - TVFCS	(£136,363)	(£795,897)	(£1,170,838)	(£232,464)	£0
Additional Funding Needed	£0	£120,000	£120,000	£120,000	
Total	£13,637	(£525,897)	(£900,838)	£37,536	£150,000
Closing Balance	£1,452,088	£926,191	£25,353	£62,889	£212,889

5.3

Revenue Implications	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029 +	
OFRS	£51,840	£54,017	£56,286	£309,760	£322,770	28.80%
BFRS	£60,660	£63,208	£65,862	£362,462	£377,686	33.70%
RBFRS	£67,500	£70,335	£73,289	£403,334	£420,274	37.50%
Total	£180,000	£187,560	£195,438	£1,075,556	£1,120,729	100.00%

5.4

Revenue Pressure	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029 +	
OFRS			£2,177	£2,269	£253,474	£13,010
BFRS			£2,548	£2,655	£296,600	£15,223
RBFRS			£2,835	£2,954	£330,044	£16,940

5.5

5.6

Cost Category	Totals £
Communications, Incident Management, Mobilisation	22,000
Mobile Access	1,800
Resource Availability Data Interface	20,000
Mapping and Address Data	7,500
Risk Information Data Interface	13,000
Business Reporting	5,000
General Technology Implementation	15,000
Replacement of BT EISEC hardware	4,000
	88,300

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Statutory duties and liability

6.2 The current C&C system will become unsupported, creating operational, security and compliance risk. This engages the statutory duty on each Fire and Rescue Authority to make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and summoning personnel under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

6.3 Ensuring compliance supports the category 1 responder duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to maintain effective emergency plans and arrangements for responding to emergencies.

- 6.4 Successful implementation of a replacement C&C system strengthens the authorities' position by demonstrating proactive management of statutory duties and cyber, data protection and operational risk.
- 6.5 **Procurement law**
- 6.6 The report commits Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities to a major, multi-authority replacement of a core operational system, with procurement from 2025/26 onwards. For procurements started after 24 February 2025 the main regime is the Procurement Act 2023, which replaces the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 for new competitions.
- 6.7 Legal implications include the need to:
 - 6.7.1 Treat one or more partners as the contracting authority running a compliant competition under the new Act.
 - 6.7.2 Follow transparency, equal treatment and publication requirements; and,
 - 6.7.3 manage joint procurement within that framework.
- 6.8 **Updating the Inter Authority Agreement**
- 6.9 The business case assumes:
 - 6.9.1 Use of the renewals fund at scale for this project; and
 - 6.9.2 A new C&C contract becoming a core TVFCS asset.
- 6.10 Further to this, the Agreement does not permit Authorities to enter a contract that outlasts its expiration date.
- 6.11 That implies a need to ensure the inter-authority agreement is updated so that:
 - 6.11.1 The expiration date is extended
 - 6.11.2 The new contract is properly designated as a TVFCS contract.
 - 6.11.3 Capital and revenue flows match the contribution and renewals mechanisms; and
 - 6.11.4 Governance bodies (Joint Committee, Coordination Group, project board) are exercising only the functions that the authorities have lawfully delegated.
- 6.12 Work to review the Inter Authority Agreement has been proposed and is underway with an update expected by Joint Committee in 2026.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Business Case and Commercial strategy have been subject to Equality Impact Assessment.
- 7.2 The procurement and implementation phase of the programme will give due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty, with the aim of eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.
- 7.3 The ongoing involvement with, and consultation of, protected groups (for example disabled staff, neurodivergent staff, pregnancy/maternity, older workers) in the control room will be a driver of compliance and improvement.
- 7.4 Equality impact assessment will support accessibility and provide a clear opportunity to specify inclusive user interface and work environment standards with the intention to limit workforce impacts.
- 7.5 Customer-facing equality aspects (for example, language support, communication needs for callers with hearing or speech impairment, digital exclusion) will be developed and understood during the procurement process.

7.6 **Potential and implied benefits**

7.7 A modernised system creates a strong opportunity to improve accessibility and usability for a diverse control workforce and for callers with additional needs.

7.8 Enhanced data and reporting could support better monitoring of service access and outcomes by protected characteristic, if specified in requirements.

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 If we do not procure and implement a new C&C system in a timely manner, which may become possible, given the complexity and financial demand, then we can expect challenges with compliance and mobilisation which is significant in respect to our statutory duties, community and staff safety.

8.2 Identified risks are set out below:

Ref	Risk Title	Inherent Score	Residual Score
A	Lack of market engagement or competition	6	3
B	Cost overrun	12	8
C	Timeline overrun	16	8
D	Legal challenge to procurement	8	4
E	High resource impact during contract qualification	9	3
F	Supplier dependency / poor performance	8	8
G	Technology obsolescence	8	4
H	Poor quality solution	8	4
I	Governance delays (IAA dependency)	8	4
J	Technology complexity	9	6

8.3 Proposed mitigation strategies include:

8.4 Risk scoring matrix and monitoring tools in place (See Commercial Strategy for full detail).

8.5 Governance boards (JCC, SLTs, Project Board) to oversee risk management.

8.6 Lessons learned from previous contracts.

8.7 Supplier engagement to co-design contract terms and performance measures.

9. **CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS**

9.1 The contents of this report support the following primary objectives as set out in the TVFCS partnership agreement:

1. To satisfy the core functions of the Fire Authorities as defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
2. To satisfy the statutory duty of all the Fire Authorities as category one responders as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
3. To improve the resilience of the control room function.
4. To improve performance.
5. To generate efficiencies.

10. **PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

- 10.1 Chief Fire Officers
- 10.2 Section 151 Officers
- 10.3 Monitoring Officer

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 [Minutes of Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting Thursday, 12th December, 2024 at 2.00 pm](#)
- 11.2 [Minutes of Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting Monday 22 September 2025 at 2.00 pm](#)

12. APPENDICES

Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the appendices contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the Thames Valley fire and rescue authorities); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

- 12.1 Appendix 1: Business Case (Initial), Thames Valley Fire Control Service: Command and Control
- 12.2 Appendix 2: Commercial Strategy, Thames Valley Fire Control Service: Command and Control
- 12.2 Appendix 3: Finance Section Detail

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Tim Readings, Area Manager, 07776 325 423. readingst@rbfrs.co.uk

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ITEM	NEXT REPORTING DATE	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
TVFCS Proposed Budget 2026/27	15-Dec-25	Agree	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Performance Report Q1	15-Dec-25	Note	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Technology Replacement Initial Business Case	15-Dec-25	Agree and recommend	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Q3 Budget Outturn	16-Mar-26	Note	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Technology Replacement Initial Business Case Update	16-Mar-26	Agree and recommend	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I
TVFCS Performance Report Q3	16-Mar-26	Note	Senior Responsible Officers	N/A	Part I