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## **AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S URGENCY COMMITTEE HELD AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS ON TUESDAY 16 JULY 2002 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM AND CONCLUDED AT 6.55PM.**

**Present: J C G Brooks, E L Glasson, B J S Patman**

### **2.01/02 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2002/2003**

**RESOLVED: That Councillor J C G Brooks be elected Chairman of the Fire Authority's Urgency Committee for the ensuing year.**

### **2.02/02 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2002/2003**

**RESOLVED: That Councillor B J S Patman be elected Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority's Urgency Committee for the ensuing year.**

### **2.03/02 MINUTES 25 FEBRUARY 2002**

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 25 February 2002, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **2.04/02 ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

In response to a request from the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, Members agreed that, on the grounds of urgency, the following additional Agenda items be included in the Agenda for consideration at the meeting:

Agenda item 5A: 10 Year Licence for Cellnet Companies  
Agenda item 5B: Sonning Fire Station Lease

### **2.05/02 FUNDING OF IMPROVED COMMUNICATIONS FOR TRAINING CENTRE AND BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS EXTENSIONS**

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 5 – not reproduced) to the virement of funds from the Capital Budget for FAMS and E-marking as a contingency measure, if necessary, for the implementation of communications and telephony to the Training Centre at Whitley Wood and the refurbished Workshops at Brigade Headquarters (BHQ). An urgent decision is required to ensure that contingency arrangements are in place should the funding fail to materialise.

Members were advised that the Information Technology and Communications Departments have looked at the costs of using traditional BT technology for communications to the Training Centre and the refurbished Workshop building. This would require a capital investment of £30,000 with an additional £20,000 running costs per annum.

Alternative solutions, already under investigation in the Brigade for 2002/2003, have therefore been brought forward as expenditure on the 'old' technology will sink funding into less cost-effective solutions.

Under the proposal telephones VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) working through the ADSL broadband data network will be installed at both locations with servers to BHQ. This will be the start of a roll out programme to all sites, which is expected to produce savings in Communications cost of approximately £40,000 per annum from 2004.

The virements set out in Section B of the report, represent contingency arrangements should that funding fail to materialise or not be delivered on time. In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer advised that if additional costs were identified in connection with providing the necessary power supplies then it will be necessary to seek Member approval to the additional funding.

**RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, the proposed virements as set out below, to enhance communications to the Training Centre, Whitley Wood and Workshop buildings at Brigade Headquarters, be approved as contingency arrangements should the funding fail to materialise:**

<b>£15,000</b>	<b>FAMS project, and</b>
<b>£31,000</b>	<b>E-Marking project</b>

## **2.06/02 TEN YEAR LICENCE FOR CELLNET COMPANIES**

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 5A – not reproduced) to grant Orange, Airwave and Hutchinson 3G a ten year licence to erect their equipment on the Dee Road site. An urgent decision is required, as the Companies are anxious to gain access to the site.

The Brigade has received so many approaches from Cellnet Companies to erect their equipment on the Authority's masts that they have recently appointed Vail-Williams to advise and negotiate with the Companies. Vail Williams have suggested that the Authority's position would be strengthened if we were to contract out of the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act, but in return they feel that Companies would expect a term of a least ten years against the five years presently granted, albeit with a clause permitting an extension.

There are so many Companies on the Brigade mast at Dee Road that it has almost

reached full capacity. A replacement mast, which would otherwise be necessary to be provided within the next 3-5 years, is believed to be in the order of £100,000. When Hutchinson 3G were told that their request to be included on the existing mast could not be accommodated they offered to build a new mast now and erect a temporary mast to provide continuous cover during its construction, all at the Company's expense.

In addition to paying the Authority's surveyors' and legal costs, each Company pays a £5,000 disturbance allowance and then £6,000 per year increased by inflation.

As the proposal is to grant all three Companies a ten-year licence it is necessary for Authority approval to be sought. At present the Clerk has delegated authority to grant leases/licences of up to seven years. In view of this change in policy it is the Clerk's intention to seek approval at the Authority meeting in September 2002 to increase his delegated powers in respect of cellnet agreements to at least ten years.

**RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, Orange, Airwave and Hutchinson 3G be granted a ten year licence on the terms proposed by the Authority's Agent.**

## **2.07/02 SONNING FIRE STATION LEASE**

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 5B – not reproduced) to enter into a new Lease with the Sonning Trust for the Sonning Fire Station. An urgent decision was required to enable the new Lease to be finalised by August 2002.

Members were advised that after lengthy negotiations, there is now a proposal to extend the Lease at Sonning, which the Authority's agent feels able to recommend for approval. Although the new Lease will increase the rent from £5,000 to £9,000 per annum with five year reviews the Trustees are prepared to grant a twenty-five year Lease, which is sufficiently long enough to justify undertaking the essential Capital works that are needed to improve the facilities.

**RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, the Clerk be authorised to enter into a further lease of twenty-five years on the terms set out in the report.**

## **2.08/02 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated:

	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Paragraph</b>
7	Part II Minutes – Monday 25 February 2002	1, 7 & 8

8      Consideration of Offer from the National Employers      1  
to the Fire Brigades' Union

*Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Urgency Committee meeting held on Monday 31 January 2000.*

**2.09/02      PART II MINUTES      25 FEBRUARY 2002**

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 25 February 2002 were received and approved as a correct record.

**2.10/02      CONSIDERATION OF OFFER FROM THE NATIONAL  
EMPLOYERS TO THE FIRE BRIGADES' UNION**

The Urgency Committee received an update on the latest developments in negotiations with the Fire Brigades' Union.

Signed:  Date: 6 August 2002  
Chairman