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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 MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2003 COMMENCING AT 6.09PM AND CONCLUDED AT 6.30PM.

**Present: J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman),
E L Glasson (Leader of the Labour Group)**

3.01/03 MINUTES 31 JANUARY 2003

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Friday 31 January 2003, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3.02/03 OPERATIONAL LEASE FOR FURNITURE

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 3 – not reproduced) for the operational lease of furniture to allow the provision of new furniture within the refurbished office accommodation at Brigade Headquarters. An urgent decision is required, as orders for the furniture must be confirmed by 28 February 2003.

In noting the background to the refurbishment of the former Workshop Building at Brigade Headquarters, Members were advised that although provision was made for certain office furniture, the provision of new furniture was deferred at an early stage due to budgetary constraints. Having consulted staff it became clear however that the provision of new furniture would considerably enhance the acceptance of the new office accommodation. The approval by the Fire Authority to a revenue budget of £30,000 for furniture in 2003/2004 Budget will allow for new furniture to be phased in.

Discussions with the furniture manufacturers indicated that by using an operational lease it would be possible that furniture to the value of £54,000 could be supplied in one year at an estimated cost £12,450 per annum over a five year period as the lease would be tendered. As Morris Furniture was to be used it would be necessary for Members to approve the award of a single tender action in accordance with Section 10 of the Standing Orders Relating to Contracts. Morris furniture had been chosen as they had been successful in bidding for the tender to supply furniture in the Staff, Library and Training Departments which had been of median price and good quality.

The Authority Treasurer drew Members attention to the fact that the operational leasing of furniture was a change in Fire Authority Policy as prior to this only appliances had been leased.

The use of an operational lease will allow the new office accommodation to be fully

furnished to a good standard and will also allow for the refurbishment of existing furniture to a high standard, which in turn can be used to replace the oldest and most dilapidated furniture. This will improve the accommodation for all employees and is thought essential that the improvements at Headquarters are matched by improvements at other sites to preclude any perceptions of discrimination. To achieve this further operational leasing resulting in an estimated £10,000 per annum over five years would be involved.

RESOLVED: That:

1. **On the grounds of urgency and in accordance with the Fire Authority's Standing Order 10, sub paragraphs a, d and f, Relating to Contracts, the contract for the operational lease of furniture for the Workshop Building, be awarded to Morris Furniture at an estimated cost of £12,450 per annum for a five year period.**
2. **Operational leasing of furniture for Headquarters and other premises resulting in a further annual estimated cost of £10,000 per annum over five years be agreed in principle.**

3.03/03 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:

	Agenda Item	Paragraph
5	Part II Minutes: Friday 31 January 2003	1
6	Redman versus Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	1

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Urgency Committee meeting held on Monday 24 February 2003).

3.04/03 PART II MINUTES: 31 JANUARY 2003

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 31 January 2003 were received and approved as a correct record.

3.05/03 REDMAN VERSUS ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

The Urgency Committee determined whether to make an application for costs in connection with Ms K Redman's unsuccessful Employment Tribunal application.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date: 9 June 2003

