

AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S URGENCY COMMITTEE HELD AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS ON TUESDAY 26 AUGUST 2003 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.15PM.

**Present: Christine Borgars (Leader of the Labour Group)
J C G Brooks (Chairman of the Fire Authority)
B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority)**

5.01/03 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2003/2004

RESOLVED: That Councillor J C G Brooks be elected Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Urgency Committee until 31 December 2003.

5.02/03 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2003/2004

RESOLVED: That Councillor B J S Patman be elected Vice-Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Urgency Committee until 31 December 2003.

5.03/03 PART I MINUTES: 9 JUNE 2003

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 9 June 2003, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5.04/03 FINAL ACCOUNTS – YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2003

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 4 – not reproduced) to the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2003 which had been produced in accordance with Part III of the Local Government Finance Act 1982 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003. An urgent decision is required as the September meeting of the Fire Authority has been postponed until Tuesday 21 October 2003 and it is a statutory requirement to secure approval of the accounts before 30 September 2003.

In speaking to the Statement, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 1 (not reproduced), the Authority Treasurer drew Members attention to page six which showed that whilst the Fire Authority's net Revenue Budget was set at £23.890m the actual expenditure for the year was £23,906m a variance of £16,000. At the year-end the sum of £41,000 was transferred from the Pensions Provision and, after making this provision adjustment, the end of year balance on the Revenue

Account was a surplus of £25,000, which will be transferred back to the Constituent Authorities.

In noting the process in accordance with the Regulations, as set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that the Audit of the Final Accounts will be followed by a Management Letter meeting, which is likely to take place in late November/early December 2003. It is anticipated that the District Auditor will then present the Management Letter to the Fire Authority at its meeting in December 2003.

In response to a request from Members the Authority Treasurer agreed to send a copy of the Statement of Accounts to all other Fire Authority Members for their information.

Having sought clarification on some other aspects of the report and noting that the minor amendments to the text, as requested by Councillor Borgars, had been incorporated into the final document it was **RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2003, as submitted, be approved.**

5.05/03 SINGLE TENDER ACTION – PURCHASE OF CADCORP GIS SYSTEM

The Urgency Committee's approval was sought (Agenda item 5 – not reproduced) for a single tender action to purchase the Cadcorp Mapmodeller software. An urgent decision is required to allow the core software to be purchased which links to the required development for IRMP work in Quarters 3 three and four of the current financial year.

The Critical System Support Team had identified Cadcorp as the most advanced software for processing OS MasterMap data and an order was therefore placed by this Brigade to test this functionality on behalf of the National Electronic Service Delivery ESD Project. The development was successfully demonstrated at the IT Manager's Conference in April and as a direct result OS MasterMap has been established as a key component of the ESD Project.

Therefore at that time there was no intention to use Cadcorp for anything further so the estimated cost of £7,000 was well within the Authority's single tender limits. However the Governments White Paper has subsequently focused the Brigade's attention on Integrated Risk Management Planning (IRMP). Having discussed how the Brigade would tackle this problem with Cadcorp it became apparent that all the functionality required was part of the standard MapModeller product. Training was required and this was carried out in July and proved invaluable.

The Brigade now intend to develop the IRMP analysis using Cadcorp and to combine this with the OS MasterMap which will, increase the Brigade's estimated expenditure to £15,500 which can be funded from within the approved 2003/2004 Budget.

The Phase II development is likely to be funded by the National ESD Project and the

quotation has been sent to the Project Manager for consideration as part of the overall project. In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that if the National Group decide not to fund the Phase II development then a report, seeking authority to proceed with Phase II will, dependant on the timing, be presented to a future Fire Authority or Urgency Committee for approval.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. On the grounds of urgency, and in accordance with Standing Orders relating to Contracts 10a, 10d and 10f, a single tender action be approved for the purchase of a Cadcorp Mapmodeller and Services required for Phase I as detailed in the report.**
- 2. Phase II will be dealt with separately following the tendering decision by the National ESD Team and if necessary a report, seeking authority to proceed with Phase II will, dependant on the timing, be presented to a future Fire Authority or Urgency Committee for approval.**

5.06/03 PROPOSED CAR SCHEME FOR PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

The Urgency Committee was requested (Agenda item 6 – not reproduced) to consider a proposed revised car scheme for Principal Officers. An urgent decision is required to enable the scheme, if approved, to proceed.

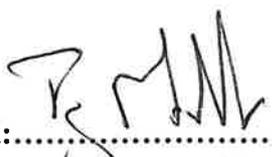
Members were reminded that the Authority recently approved an annual allowance of £6,000 for the Chief Fire Officer (CFO) to use towards the provision of a car, with an extra £885 per annum for insurance together with a fuel card as part of the package. Whilst no specific details were set by the Authority the CFO was asked to explore the most effective and tax efficient manner of utilising these monies and that this would inform the schemes for other Principal Officers.

In noting the outcome of these discussions as summarised in paragraph 2 of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that under the previous scheme the CFO and Deputy were given the same car allowance. It is therefore proposed that the allowance for the CFO be extended to the DCFO and ACFO, as they have similar mileages and are on call for one week in every three. A slightly reduced allowance of £5,000 per annum plus £700 for insurance should be paid to the other two Principal Officers, namely the Director of Human Resources and the Head of Financial Services/Authority Treasurer. In addition all Officers would receive a fuel card.

In response to a question the CFO indicated that there may be a difference in the actual figures quoted of approximately £1,000 and that the scheme to be adopted remains on trial and that the tax effect is still to be worked out. The overall additional cost would be an estimated £10,000 in addition to the existing cost of £20,000 and this can be found from within the 2003/2004 approved Budget.

RESOLVED: That, on the grounds of urgency, the trial scheme be continued for a further twelve months to see if it is financially viable but that it be subject to a maximum additional financial provision of £10,000.

Approved by Executive Committee – Thursday 22 January 2004

Signed: .....
Councillor T Mills
Chairman

Date: 22 January 2004

