

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	19 JULY 2021
SUBJECT	SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP
LEAD OFFICER	GRAHAM BRITTEN, MONITORING OFFICER
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to receive the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group commissioned in December 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Scrutiny Task and Finish Group recommends that:

- 2.1 The Audit and Governance committee agree the findings of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group; and
- 2.2 The Chief Fire Officer write to the Chief Executive of Slough Borough Council reiterating the position of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and provide a copy of the report.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 In December 2020, the Chairman of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Councillor Colin Dudley, was made aware of on-going discussions between a member of the public and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) regarding the Tuns Lane site in Slough by the Chief Fire Officer. The individual made a range of statements and allegations about the Service, which were extremely serious in their nature and related to the involvement of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority in the issuing of a Compulsory Purchase Order by Slough Borough Council (SBC) for the Tuns Lane site in Slough.

- 3.2 The Service sought to engage the individual, clarify the concerns being raised and investigate the matter, attempting to engage the individual in the Service's complaints process. The individual chose not to make a formal complaint.
- 3.3 Due to the seriousness of the statements and potential allegations made by the individual, the Chairman of the Fire Authority requested on 22 December 2020, that a cross-party Task and Finish Group be established to scrutinise the matter, overseen by the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Commitment 6 – We will work with Central Government and key stakeholders in the interests of the people of Royal Berkshire.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None for the purpose of the report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None for the purpose of the report.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None for the purpose of the report.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None for the purpose of the report.

9. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 9.1 None for the purpose of the report.

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Monitoring Officer supported the Scrutiny Task and Finish.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Background papers are referenced in the body of the report.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A – Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Report