

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Held on Monday, 24th June, 2024 at 7.00 pm

RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot,
Reading RG31 7SD

Members: (*present)

* Councillor Greg Bello	* Councillor Dave McElroy
* Councillor Dennis Benneyworth	* Councillor Owen Jeffery
Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	Councillor Neel Rana
Councillor Jeff Brooks	* Councillor Joshua Reynolds
* Councillor Tricia Brown	* Councillor Wayne Smith
Councillor Billy Drummond	* Councillor Helen Taylor
* Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	* Councillor Lou Timlin
* Councillor Peter Frewer	* Councillor Simon Werner
* Councillor Paul Gittings	* Councillor Zafar Satti
Councillor Wendy Griffith	

In Attendance: Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Wayne Bowcock (Chief Fire Officer, CFO)
Paul Bremble (Head of Corporate Services, HCS)
Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
Katie Mills (Assistant Chief Fire Officer, ACFO)
Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx)
Christian Riley (Communications and Engagement Officer)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

Councillor Paul Gittings opened the meeting as 2023/24 Vice-Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA). He requested for nominations for the position of Chair. One nomination was received for Chair. Councillor Simon Werner nominated Councillor Jeff Brooks. Seconded by Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

There being no other nominations, it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Jeff Brooks be elected Chair of RBFA for the 24/25 Municipal Year.

Councillor Jeff Brooks read the following statement, '*I, Councillor Jeff Brooks*

Action

having been elected to the office of Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority declare that I take that office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability’.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2024/25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Chair sought nominations for Vice –Chair. One nomination was received. Councillor Brown nominated Councillor Paul Gittings and it was seconded by the Chair.

There being no other nominations, it was:

RESOLVED that Councillor Paul Gittings be elected Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

The Vice-Chair read the following statement, ‘*I, Councillor Paul Gittings having been elected to the office of Vice-Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority declare that I take that office upon myself and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgment and ability’.*

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Tina McKenzie-Boyle, Billy Drummond, Wendy Griffith and Neel Rana.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest from Members in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority’s Local Code of Conduct.

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2024

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2024, be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

6. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDERS 19 AND 25

There were no petitions and questions from the Public under Standing Orders 19 and 25.

7. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed newly appointed Members on behalf of the Fire Authority,

he extended a warm welcome to Councillors Greg Bello, Neel Rana, Zafar Satti, Wayne Smith and Lou Timlin.

The Chair gave his best wishes to the following outgoing Members, Mike Smith, Haqeeq Dar, Robert Stedmond, Ishrat Shah, Pauline Helliard-Symons and Morag Malvern.

8. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee.

9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

There were no questions from Members under Standing Order 30.

10. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 44

There were no notices of Motion under Standing Order 44.

11. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, LEAD MEMBER, MEMBER CHAMPIONS, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Graham Britten, Monitoring Officer (MO), introduced the report and advised each Political Group had submitted their nominations. He tabled amended nominations received from the Liberal Democrat Group for the appointment of Committees, Lead Members, Member Champions, Working Parties and Outside Bodies.

The Chair moved recommendation 2.1 and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair. In response to a question from Councillor Tricia Brown, Graham Britten explained section n) of the Terms of Reference mandated it was the function of the Fire Authority to change the name of '*Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service*'.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the amended Fire Authority Terms of Reference be approved.

The Chair moved recommendation 2.2 and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead Member role is effective from 1 July 2024, in line with the Member Scheme of Allowance approved by the Fire Authority on 8 November 2023.

The Chair moved recommendation 2.3 and 2.4 consecutively, and it was

seconded by the Vice-Chair.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The nominations received from Group Leaders onto the Audit and Governance Committee and Management Committee be appointed. (Table 5)
- 2) The ungrouped Members (Green and Independent Member) onto the ninth seat of Audit and Governance Committee, and eleventh seat of Management Committee be appointed. (Table 5).

Table 5

<p><i>Audit and Governance Committee (9 seats)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Lib Dem) Cllr Owen Jeffery 2. (Lib Dem) Cllr Lou Timlin 3. (Lib Dem) Cllr Billy Drummond 4. (Lab) Cllr Tricia Brown 5. (Lab) Cllr Greg Bello 6. (Lab) Slough Member 7. (Con) Cllr Dennis Benneyworth 8. (Con) Cllr Neel Rana 9. (Green) Cllr Dave McElroy
<p><i>Management Committee (11 seats)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Lib Dem) Cllr Jeff Brooks 2. (Lib Dem) Cllr Joshua Reynolds 3. (Lib Dem) Cllr Rachelle Shepherd DuBey 4. Lib Dem) Cllr Simon Werner 5. (Lab) Cllr Paul Gittings 6. (Lab) Cllr Wendy Griffith 7. (Lab) Cllr Peter Frewer 8. (Con) Cllr Tina McKenzie-Boyle 9. (Con) Cllr Wayne Smith 10. (Con) Cllr Zafar Satti 11. (Independent) Cllr Helen Taylor

Following clarification of the typo in recommendation 2.5 which should be amended to '**NOTE**' instead of '**APPROVE**'. The Chair moved recommendation 2.5, and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the roles to attract Special Responsibility Allowances be noted. (Table 6)

Position
Chair of Authority
Vice-Chair of Authority
Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee Chair (24/25)
Opposition Leader (s)
Finance Lead
Collaboration Lead
Community Risk Management Plan Lead
Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead
Community Safety Champion

In referring to table 6, where there was more than one nomination for a position, it was put to the vote.

Two nominations (Councillors Wendy Griffith and Tina McKenzie-Boyle) were received for the position of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead, and two nominations were received for the position of Community Safety Champion (Councillors Owen Jeffery and Zafar Satti).

On being put to the vote respectively, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) Councillor Wendy Griffith be appointed as Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead;
- 2) Councillor Owen Jeffery be appointed as Community Safety Champion.
- 3) All the other nominations for the Special Responsibility Allowance roles be appointed (Table 6)

Table 6

Position	
Chair of Authority	Cllr Jeff Brooks
Vice-Chair of Authority	<i>Cllr Paul Gittings</i>
Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee Chair (24/25)	<i>Cllr Peter Frewer</i>
Opposition Leader (s)	<i>Cllrs Paul Gittings and Tina McKenzie-Boyle</i>
Finance Lead	Cllr Joshua Reynolds

Collaboration Lead	Cllr Simon Werner
Community Risk Management Plan Lead	<i>Cllr Paul Gittings</i>
Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Cllr Rachelle Shepherd DuBey
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead	<i>Cllr Wendy Griffith</i>
Community Safety Champion	Cllr Owen Jeffery

The Chair moved recommendation 2.6, and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

In referring to table 7, where there was more than one nomination for the position of Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee representatives and as TVFCS Joint Committee substitutes, it was put to the vote.

Three nominations were received for two TVFCS Joint Committee seats (Councillors Peter Frewer, Simon Werner and Dennis Benneyworth), and three nominations were received for two TVFCS Joint Committee substitute seats (Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Owen Jeffery and Paul Gittings)

In referring to Table 9, where there was more than one nomination for the position of Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative, it was put to the vote.

Two nominations were received for Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission seat (1 seat), Councillors Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Tina McKenzie-Boyle).

On being put to the vote respectively, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) Councillors Peter Frewer and Simon Werner be appointed onto TVFCS Joint Committee;
- 2) Councillors Owen Jeffery and Paul Gittings be appointed as TVFCS Joint Committee Substitutes;
- 3) Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey be appointed as LGA Fire Commission representative; and
- 4) The nominations received for the appointments listed in Tables 7 – 10 be agreed.

Table 7

Position	
----------	--

TVFCS Joint Committee (2 seats)	<i>Cllr Peter Frewer, Cllr Simon Werner</i>
Two substitute Members for TVFCS Joint Committee	<i>Cllr Owen Jeffrey and Cllr Paul Gittings</i>

Table 8

Position	
Budget Working Party - minimum three Members	<i>Cllrs Paul Gittings, Tricia Brown, Dennis Benneyworth, Joshua Reynolds and Jeff Brooks</i>
Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group - minimum three Members	<i>Cllrs Greg Bello, Wayne Smith; Lou Timlin and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey</i>

Table 9

Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative (1 seat)*	Cllr Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
Substitute Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative *	Cllr Paul Gittings

Table 10

Honorary Armed Forces Champion*	Cllr Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey
---------------------------------	-------------------------------------

**These roles do not attract a special responsibility allowance.*

The Chair moved recommendation 2.7, and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the amended Role Descriptions for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members (attached as Appendix B) be agreed.

12. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

13. MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that it be noted the Minutes of recent meetings were published on RBFRS website.

14. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting on Tuesday 9 July 2024, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

(The meeting concluded at 7.30pm)