



## Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 11th July, 2018, 2.00 pm

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

### Minutes

- Present: (\*)**
- \* Councillor Malcolm Alexander, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
  - Councillor David Carroll, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority
  - \* Councillor Judith Heathcoat (Chairman), Oxfordshire County Council
  - Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Oxfordshire County Council
  - \* Councillor Roger Reed, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority
  - \* Councillor Angus Ross, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

- In Attendance:**
- Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, RBFRS)
  - Mat Carlile (Area Manager, OFRS)
  - Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, RBFRS)
  - Helen Finan (Business Support, RBFRS)
  - Simon Furlong (Chief Fire Officer, OFRS)
  - Tamara Hack (Democratic Support Assistant, RBFRS)
  - Simon Harris (TVFCS Group Manager)
  - Asif Hussain (Principal Accountant, BFRS)
  - Paul Jacques (Area Manager, RBFRS)
  - Rob MacDougall (Assistant Chief Officer, OFRS)
  - Jason Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer, BFRS)

#### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Committee elected Councillor Malcolm Alexander as Chairman for the municipal year 2018/19. The nomination was from Councillor Angus Ross and seconded by Councillor Judith Heathcoat.

**Action**

## 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Angus Ross accepted the nomination as Vice-Chairman.

Please note that during Agenda item 10, Trevor Ferguson (CFO RBFRS) informed the committee that Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee Standing Orders, state that the Vice-Chairman nomination must be appointed from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. Councillor Roger Reed accepted the nomination as Vice-Chairman for the 2018-19 municipal year.

It was agreed that Councillor Angus Ross would continue as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the meeting.

## 3. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman gave the following announcements:

- **Control Visit:** Subject to the meeting finishing in good time there will be the chance before the Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group meeting to visit the control centre. Group Manager Simon Harris will accompany any guests who wish to visit at the end of this meeting.
- **Hot weather:** The prolonged period of dry and hot weather has led to an increase of fires in the open. Some of these have involved a large number of crew and appliances over a number of hours, such as the field fires in Little Marlow, Maidenhead and Colnbrook. This in turn has increased the workload for control over the last few weeks. I would like to thank the staff involved for all of their hard work in dealing with this increased pressure.

## 4. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Councillors Lorraine Lindsay-Gayle and David Carroll. David Sutherland, Neil Boustred, Simon Jefferies and Graham Britten.

## 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

## 6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MARCH 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2018 were agreed as an accurate

record and signed by the Chairman. The following updates were provided:

- Page 6 – Item 5 There is a pause in the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) an update will be provided in the December 2018 meeting.
- Page 7 – The presentation of work streams was due to be presented to the committee, however Simon Harris confirmed it has been included as part of the Performance Report.
- Page 7 – Conor Byrne informed the committee he would be providing an update in the Budget Outturn Report (Item 9).
- Page 8 – Simon Harris confirmed that there was no breach of the Vodapage contract.
- Page 8 - Cllr Ross emphasised the requirement for a quicker mechanism to bring issues to the Joint Committee. Trevor Ferguson suggested that some further delegation to the 3 CFOs may help with this. He indicated he would discuss further in part 2
- Page 8 – Simon Harris confirmed that Service Credits were available and could be offset service credits against costs with Capita.
- Page 11 – Simon Harris confirmed that any significant risks will be included in each quarterly performance report.

## **7. PROGRESS REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS CASE FOR POTENTIAL INTRODUCTION OF APPRENTICES INTO TVFCS**

Area Manager Paul Jacques (RBFRS) presented the report. The recommendation for the committee was to agree that the full business case be deferred. Simon Harris explained that the standard had been approved for use but had not been confirmed which commercial providers can provide the end point assessment.

Councillor Roger Reed suggested rather than defer indefinitely can the committee review in six months' time.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat identified the lack of available providers as a risk and this also applies to the emergency services collaboration apprenticeship projects.

Jason Thelwell (CFO BFRS) explained that Lynne Swift is the National Fire Chiefs Council Lead for apprenticeships and the list of available providers will be refreshed and an update provided in September. Apprenticeships update will be added to the Forward Plan. Jason Thelwell invited Simon Harris to attend a meeting that Lynne Swift is organising with TVP about their call handler apprenticeship.

Simon Furlong suggested the end of the education year as the best time to recruit to the apprenticeship programme following an enquiry from the Chairman. Jason Thelwell reminded the committee that apprenticeships are open to all ages and TVP have the same issues with their emergency control apprenticeships.

- Subject to the amendment of timeline for production of a full business case the deferral was agreed and the report noted.

## **8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

Mat Carlile presented the report which looked back over the last 12 months and provided information on the considerable change embedded in the service plan with new fall-back arrangements with Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire Control providing stability in the system. He had expressed his thoughts on how well Control Staff had proved themselves with the challenges faced over the last year.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat highlighted the transition and how far we had come forward, but commented on the challenges faced by the upcoming HMICFRS Inspection and ongoing Thames Valley collaboration work.

Councillor Malcolm Alexander asked for this report to be available in the public domain, Trevor Ferguson confirmed the report had been published on the website as part of the agenda pack for the meeting.

Simon Harris confirmed in response to a question from Councillor Angus Ross that all Crew Manager vacancies have now been filled.

Jason Thelwell asked for the Mobilisations within 60 seconds to be broken down individually as there was better performance than indicated in the report. Trevor Ferguson made a suggestion that the original Thames Valley control measures were brought to the next meeting to provide further new measures. Councillor Angus Ross asked for further breakdown of the 60 second mobilisation figures for each service and provide a composite report.

- It was agreed that Simon Harris would take a proposal for breaking down the 60 second measure into a more usable format for the September meeting and the report was noted.

**SH**

## **9. TVFCS PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 2017/18**

Paul Jacques presented the report, the data was reported to RBFRS Strategic Performance Board which provides further assurance. Simon Harris presented the report which provided an overview of performance levels, challenges and sickness and establishment levels.

Simon Harris explained that Capita are providing ongoing reassurance and commitment to the emergency services. The procurement team continue to monitor the risk but have deemed Capita as a low risk. The upcoming HMICFRS inspection was highlighted as having a significant impact and it was noted the inspection is expected the week commencing 24 September 2018.

BKFRS were standardising their IT systems for resource management. This does have an impact on TVFCS but they were taking a collaborative approach.

Simon Harris in response to a question from Councillor Alexander on the resourcing pressures explained that due to the preparation of data for HMICFRS had been a drain on resources and time consuming. The ops alignment piece previously managed by Eddie Cardoso before his retirement had now become business as usual. Councillor Ross commented that the data management should not drift too long into a backlog.

Cllr Ross asked if the HMICFRS inspection would require the involvement of Councillors. Trevor informed the committee that HMICFRS wanted to inspect three times but were convinced once was more efficient. He added they have not indicated member involvement.

Trevor Ferguson asked the service lead to check if member involvement is required for the TVFCS HMICFRS inspection.

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Simon Furlong requested the data for training and competence of staff to be added to the report.

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Cllr Roger Reed asked for the Joint Committees thanks to be recorded to Neil Boustred for his support and engagement in the joint control project.

- Report has been noted.

## **10. BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2017/18**

Conor Byrne provided an overview of the report and highlighted the underspend for the year as referenced in section 3.1 of the report. Cllr Ross asked what happens to the underspend, Conor explained that each service is invoiced in arrears and each service just pays what is owed.

Jason Thelwell asked where the reserves for TVFCS are stored and Simon Furlong confirmed that the reserves are held in the Oxfordshire Treasury Department but are shown across all three service's accounts.

- The report was noted.

## **11. FORWARD PLAN**

Jason Thelwell asked for the apprenticeship update to be added to the Forward Plan for 5 December 2018.

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Simon Harris confirmed that there is no agreed methodology underpinning the cost apportionment model and that he would develop one for agreement during the review. Simon Furlong highlighted that the Oxfordshire budget bidding processes would be before the next meeting and that he would need early notice of any potential changes.. Simon Harris agreed to update Simon Furlong ahead of the next meeting.

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## **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 24 September, 2.00pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 7SD

## **13. 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 Agenda Item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated and is exempt information if, and so long as, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **14. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MARCH 2018**

The joint committee discussed Thames Valley Control Significant Risks in greater detail.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS - PART II.**

Trevor Ferguson requested to discuss a matter as any other business in part II.

The committee agreed.

*(The meeting closed at 2.45pm)*

### **Post Meeting Note:**

**The Thames Valley Fire Control Significant Risks will be captured in the quarterly performance report under emerging issues and risks.**