

Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2017 at 11.00 am

Present Councillors Brunning (Part), Carroll, Exon, Glover, N Hussain, Irwin, Lambert, Marland, McCall, McDonald, Reed, Sullivan, Teesdale, Walters MBE, Watson and Wilson (Part)

Officers: J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development) D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), K McCafferty (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), M Hemming (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), F Mansfield (HR Services and Development Manager), C Turner (HR Projects Manager), A Burch (Operational Assurance Crew Commander), G Taylor (Service Delivery Manager Buckinghamshire), S Connelly (Station Commander Resilience and Business Continuity), T Brandon (Station Commander Buckingham and Co-Responder), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager) and A McCallum (Executive Assistant to Chief Fire Officer)

2 FBU Representatives and 1 Member of the Public

Apologies: Councillor A Hussain

FA01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

(Director of Legal and Governance presiding)

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Reed be elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2017/18.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Reed be elected Chairman of the Authority for 2017/18.

(Councillor Reed in the Chair)

FA02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was moved and seconded that Councillor McDonald be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2017/18.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor McDonald be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Authority for 2017/18.

FA03 MINUTES

Subject to the following amendments to the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2017:

FA43 Executive Committee on 10 May 2017 not 14 March 2017.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 15 February 2017, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

FA04

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman wished to put on record his thanks from the Fire Authority to the previous Chairman Adrian Busby. The Chairman would write to Adrian Busby on behalf of the Fire Authority.

The Chairman welcomed the new Members, Councillors Arif Hussain, Niknam Hussain, Paul Irwin, Luisa Sullivan and Alan Walters MBE from Buckinghamshire County Council and Councillor Douglas McCall from Milton Keynes Council to the Authority.

The Chairman advised new Members that an Induction Day together with a tour of Aylesbury Fire Station on Monday 24 July 2017 had been arranged for them and that they should all attend.

The Chairman recommended that Members should undertake Fire Station visits and to contact the Democratic Services Officer in the first instance to organise.

Further Chairman's Announcements had been circulated in advance.

The Chairman advised that he had agreed that the meeting should consider as **a late urgent item** a letter received from the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner addressed to the Chief Fire Officers of the three Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services. **The reason for urgency** being that the letter was received on 31 May 2017 and requested a response by Friday 9 June 2017. The Chief Fire Officer had felt that a response should only be made after the Authority had had the opportunity to comment on the proposals contained in the letter.

FA05

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority noted that the following Members had been appointed by the Constituent Authorities to serve on the Fire Authority for 2016/17:

Buckinghamshire County Council (11)

Councillors Carroll, Glover, A Hussain, N Hussain, Irwin, Lambert, Reed, Sullivan, Teesdale, Walters MBE and Watson

Milton Keynes Council (6)

Councillors Brunning, Exon, Marland McCall, McDonald and Wilson

FA06

COMMITTEE MATTERS

- (a) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

The Authority noted that the allocation of seats on the Authority was:

(i) Conservative Group:	11 seats	(64.71%)
(ii) Liberal Democrat Group:	4 seats	(23.53%)
(iii) Labour Group:	2 seats	(11.76%)

- (b) Committee Matters – Committee Appointments

RESOLVED -

That the following Committees be appointed and seats allocated, as follows:

(a) Executive Committee (8 members):

- (i) Conservatives – 5 seats
- (ii) Liberal Democrats – 2 seats
- (iii) Labour – 1 seat

(b) Overview and Audit Committee (9 members):

- (i) Conservatives – 6 seats
- (ii) Liberal Democrats – 2 seat
- (iii) Labour – 1 seat

1. That the following Members be appointed to the Executive Committee:

Councillors Carroll, Lambert, Marland, McCall, McDonald, Reed, Sullivan and Walters MBE

2. That the following Members be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee:

Councillors Brunning, Exon, Glover, A Hussain, N Hussain, Irwin, Teesdale, Watson and Wilson

FA07

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Authority considered possible dates for its meetings and meetings of its committees during 2017/18.

RESOLVED -

1. That meetings of the Authority be held on Wednesday 18 October 2017, 13 December 2017, Wednesday 14 February 2018 and Wednesday 13 June 2018, all at 11 a.m.
2. That meetings of the Executive Committee be held on Wednesday 12 July 2017, Wednesday 20 September 2017, Wednesday 22 November 2017, Wednesday 7 February 2018, Wednesday 14 March 2018 and Wednesday 9 May 2018, all at 10 a.m.
3. That meetings of the Overview and Audit Committee be held on Wednesday 26 July 2017, Wednesday 15 November 2017, and Wednesday 7 March 2018, all at 10 a.m. (with the exception 26 July 2017 at 2 p.m.)

FA08

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Authority considered the appointment of representatives to outside bodies:

RESOLVED -

1. That Councillor Reed be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor McDonald as the Standing Deputy) to the Local Government Association Annual Conference.

2. That Councillor Reed be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor McDonald as the Standing Deputy) to the Local Government Association Fire Commission.
3. That Councillor Reed be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor McDonald as the Standing Deputy) to the Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference.
4. That Councillor Reed be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor McDonald as the Standing Deputy) to the Combined Fire Authorities Conference.
5. That Councillors Reed and Carroll be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee.
6. That Councillors McDonald and Walters MBE be nominated as substitute members on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee.

FA09

LEAD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority considered the amendment of Lead Member Responsibilities and the creation of a new Lead Member role; and to appoint Members to those roles.

The Lead Member Responsibilities for 16/17 were follows:

Responsibility
Community Protection
Human Resources and Equality and Diversity
Finance, IT, Procurement and Control
Health and Safety and Corporate Risk
Property and Resource Management

To change, for 17/18, to:

Responsibility
Community Protection
(To lead on issues relating to prevention of, and protection from, harm to our communities).
Human Resources People and Equality and Diversity
(To ensure that the right staffing solutions are in place to provide the best possible service to our communities).
Finance, IT, and Procurement and Control
(To lead on treasury management, MTFP and the longer term aspects of our finances to ensure that we can continue to deliver a high level of service to our community).
Health and Safety and Corporate Risk
(To ensure that measures and policies are in place to mitigate risks to the organisation and our staff).
Property and Resource Management
(To lead on the creation of the Blue Light Hub in Milton Keynes and other property issues and to also ensure that innovative, efficient and workable staffing solutions can be implemented to deliver the best possible service to our communities).
Collaboration and Transformation
(To lead on collaboration across the blue light services in line with the Policing and Crime Act 2017; and on transformation

in partnership with the Royal Berkshire and Oxfordshire fire and rescue services).

A Member asked a question regarding entitlement to more than one Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and was advised that the Members' Scheme of Allowances 2017/18 allowed for a Lead Member to claim a Lead Member's allowance in addition to one other SRA payable.

RESOLVED –

1. that the respective areas of responsibility for Lead Member Responsibilities be approved;
2. that the role description of a Lead Members approved at its meeting on 8 June 2007 (minute FA13) be noted;
3. that Members be appointed as Lead Members for 2017/18 as follows:

Responsibility	Lead Member
Community Protection	Councillor Teesdale
People and Equality and Diversity	Councillor Lambert
Finance, IT and Procurement	Councillor McDonald
Health and Safety, Corporate Risk	Councillor Glover
Property and Resource Management	Councillor Carroll
Collaboration and Transformation	Councillor Reed

FA10

USAR CANINE CAPABILITY

The Head of Service Delivery introduced the report and advised Members that the Service has had an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability since 2006. This was one of a number of national capabilities developed and delivered in 2006-2007, and subsequently reviewed in 2014, when a Concept of Operations (ConOps) was introduced which set a bench mark for USAR team requirements and performance measures. The major change to the USAR capability provision was that each USAR team must have its own search dog capability.

The Head of Service Delivery advised Members that the current capability was delivered through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, which was due to end on 1 February 2019. The Service was funded for this capability through a Section 31 grant for approximately £900k. The Service should be looking to have its own dog as if it doesn't commit to this capability, it may leave itself vulnerable to any subsequent Government review. This proposal was to invest to secure the future of the unit.

Group Commander Gary Taylor advised that for those Members not familiar with the Urban Search and Rescue Team, they were operational firefighters based here in Aylesbury, who crew the fire appliances but have a dual role as USAR technicians.

A Member asked if one dog was enough and was advised that as part of the ConOps the 20 Government funded USAR teams from across the UK were grouped into four zones, each comprising of five teams. Buckinghamshire had been placed in Zone 2 with Norfolk, Essex, West

Midlands and Leicestershire. Each team would have a dog and would liaise with each other to provide cover when required.

A Member asked how often the Authority had used the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service dog and was advised that it had been used most recently at a house explosion in Oxfordshire in February 2017 and the Didcot Power Station incident in February 2016.

A Member asked if the Authority paid Hampshire for the use of the dog and was advised that the Authority pay approximately £6k per year as part of the MOU.

A Member asked if the dog was not going to be used that often, what other benefit would it give to the Service and was advised that consistent with the principles of the duty to collaborate, capability could be developed to allow for multi-agency work with Police Search Teams to search for high risk missing persons such as dementia sufferers, vulnerable adults and children.

RESOLVED –

1. that the move to an In-Service USAR canine capability be implemented to become effective no later than 1 February 2019.
2. that the current MOU be terminated once the In-Service USAR capability is effective.
3. that an internal recruitment process for a suitable dog handler be undertaken.
4. that a suitable dog be procured.
5. that a suitable converted vehicle be procured.
6. that the Capital funding of £36,500 to procure the canine, vehicle, kennels and equipment as set out in the report be approved.

FA11

BUSINESS CONTINUITY DURING INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The Head of Service Delivery advised Members that during the last period of Industrial Action in 2013/14 documents were created and actions were recorded but there was no formal guidance written specifically relating to maintaining business continuity. This document had been created and had been updated to reflect changes implemented by the Trade Union Act 2016.

Members had an in-depth discussion on secondary employment and partial performance during industrial action.

Councillor Marland moved the following recommendation which was seconded by Councillor McCall:

That the wording on 8.2 be changed from 'where permission has been withdrawn, after each period of IA, employees who have taken part in IA will have to reapply via normal procedures, for permission to resume secondary employment' to 'where permission has been withdrawn, after each period of IA, it will be reapplied'

On being put to the vote the recommendation was declared lost.

RESOLVED –

1. that the Business Continuity during Industrial Action Guidance Document be approved; and

2. that it be noted that in approving the Guidance Document the Authority endorses that it shall always require a union to provide no less than 14 days' notice of intended industrial action.

FA12 SCHEME MANAGER DISCRETION FOR THE FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME 2015

After a short discussion Officers withdrew the report to be resubmitted to Members at the next Fire Authority meeting on 18 October 2017.

FA13 THE AUTHORITY'S PEOPLE STRATEGY 2016 TO 2020 - ANNUAL

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development advised Members that people were an important asset and resource for the Authority and that there were serious choices to be made as to how the Authority invests in the future and how it communicates and engages with staff. Some Members may recall that the People Strategy was approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2016. The aim last year was to produce a modern and interactive strategy that allowed staff across the service to have real examples of initiatives and to show how progressive the Authority's approach was.

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development advised Members that much of the development work had been completed through a task and finish approach which allowed staff outside of Human Resources to work on projects whilst being paid extra for their time and also allowed them to get involved in areas where they would normally otherwise not touch, which offered a great development opportunity. The contribution from staff under task and finish had been invaluable.

Station Commander Charlie Turner and Crew Commander Adam Burch gave Members an electronic demonstration of the People Strategy.

A Member asked if the People Strategy could be shared and it was agreed that a link would be provided for Members.

RESOLVED –

That the Service's People Strategy 2016 to 2020 main developments and achievements to date, set out in Annex A and the employee engagement outcomes in Annex B be noted.

FA14 LATE URGENT ITEM – PROPOSAL FROM THE THAMES VALLEY DEPUTY POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the purpose of this late item was to bring to Members' attention a letter sent to the Chief Fire Officers of the three Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services by the Thames Valley Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner received 31 May 2017, requesting a response by Friday 9 June 2017 and to seek direction from the Authority to the Chief Fire Officer for an appropriate response. The letter also asked the Authority to contribute financially for the work, although there was no budget for the work and there were no costings as to how much this would cost the Authority.

Members discussed the letter and the brief for consultative services to assess the scope for further police and fire and rescue collaboration and integration. Members were also concerned that as it was half way through the financial year, no budget had been allocated for this work and it did not take into account the budgets for each Authority when it suggested that they each paid an equal share.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that a lot of collaboration already took place, and indeed the Authority already shared premises with Thames Valley Police at Broughton Fire Station and was in discussions on various other locations. The Authority had also signed up to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which encouraged collaboration and no decision could be made by the Authority, or one of its Committees, without the principles of collaboration having first been taken into account.

Members requested to receive a report about the aspects of collaboration at the next meeting of the Authority on 18 October 2017. It was also agreed that the Chief Fire Officer would invite the Police & Crime Commissioner to attend this meeting.

A Member asked if the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) could impose a change of governance on the Authority and was advised that the legislation was drafted in such a way that imposition was not the approach; it would be necessary for the PCC to prepare a business case with the assistance of the three fire and rescue authorities and the final arbiter of the business case would be the Home Secretary.

A Member asked if the PCC was under a statutory duty to undertake this exercise and was advised that this was not the case; the PCC was given an enabling power to undertake the preparation of a business case. A separate duty does arise, although related, and that was the duty on blue light services to consider if it is in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness and public safety to collaborate with other blue light services.

RESOLVED –

That the CFO be delegated to respond in writing to the Office of the Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner in consultation with the Chairman, taking into account the views of the Authority Members.

(Councillor Wilson left the meeting)

FA15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

By virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as Annex 2 contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including BMKFA); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

FA16 BLUE LIGHT HUB FOR MILTON KEYNES

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that this particular concept of an emergency service or blue light hub was something that for many years had been an aspiration of the Authority in respect of putting its communities at the heart of everything it strived to achieve in making Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest places to live, work and travel.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that this project effectively brought the three blue light emergency services from five sites across Milton Keynes into one state of the art hub that would serve the communities for decades and even generations to come. In 2014 the Authority seized upon the opportunity presented to it by Government in the shape of a transformation fund that was made available for transformational projects with the emphasis upon collaboration with other

blue light services. To this end, the Authority developed a bid in conjunction with Thames Valley Police, initially in order to meet the tight Government timescales but it was always the intention to broaden this out to involve South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) so all three services could come together.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that there were many inherent benefits that would improve the service to the public:

- Operational benefits – the service already works very closely with its partners, but this makes those arrangements far more efficient.
- Ability to train more closely and frequently together.
- Sharing of information and data in respect of community safety issues and of course recent events have again highlighted the importance of the prevent agenda in respect of radicalisation.

(Councillor Brunning left the meeting)

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the main purpose of the report today was to update Members on the outcome of the recent tender exercise held in respect of the construction contract for the Blue Light Hub in Milton Keynes. The recent procurement exercise had not produced a compliant bid. Research had been undertaken as to why this was and although the Government had said all major public sector projects should be Building Information Model (BIM) compliant, the construction market, in particular contractors and suppliers were not ready for it. Although a change of strategy in respect of the procurement process is recommended within this report, the BIM methodology was intended to remain in place to continue to drive the procurement process.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members there were a number of salient points, and one of which was affordability. The proposal is designed to ensure that the project remains affordable to the Authority and will allow other vital investment to continue e.g. vehicles and equipment.

The Director of Finance and Assets updated Members on the position with South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) and Thames Valley Police (TVP). SCAS would be combining their operations from Bletchley and Milton Keynes Hospital and including their patient transport services all on the one site. The TVP presence was slightly smaller but essential, as funding came with them.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the decision notice for planning was imminent and the Section 106 agreement had been sealed. All the pre planning conditions had been met. Members would note from the report that it was planned to build the second floor as there was a lot of interest in it. The Director of Finance and Assets was confident that it would be filled and there would be a good return for the Authority. As it was not guaranteed, it was not included in the figures, but if it was fully rented out, it could give over £100k per year, back to the Authority.

A Members asked for assurance that they would not need to ask for any more funding and was advised that it was not the intention to come back and ask for more.

A Member asked about the additional sprinklers and whether sprinklers were needed in a fire station and was advised that with the Authority promoting the fitting of sprinklers throughout facilities of a similar size and use across the county, it was recommended that sprinklers were fitted throughout this facility. This had the advantage of providing a working example to interested businesses within the community, that the Authority would encourage others to invest in such systems in future. It was also recommended for the Authority's own business continuity to have sprinklers.

A Member asked if the Authority would own the land and building and was advised that it would.

RESOLVED -

1. that a new proposal for a 'Develop and Construct' procurement process be approved;
2. that the additional funding as set out in Annex 2 be approved; and
3. that delegation be given to the Executive Committee to amend as appropriate the capital budget for the Blue Light Hub project should the tendered 'target price' exceed the approved capital budget.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 14.12PM