



# Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Annual Meeting

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020, 2pm, a remote Microsoft Teams meeting hosted by  
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service

## Minutes

**Present:** Councillor Judith Heathcoat (OCC) - Chairman  
Councillor Mark Gray (OCC)  
Councillor David Hopkins (BMKFA)  
Councillor Angus Ross (RBFA)  
Councillor David Cannon (RBFA)

**In Attendance:** Michael Adcock (Area Manager, OFRS)  
Christine Barefield (Personal Assistant, OFRS)  
Trevor Ferguson (Chief Fire Officer, RBFRS)  
Steve Foye (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, RBFRS)  
Jim Powell (Area Manager RBFRS)  
Simon Harris (Group Manager, TVFCS)  
Jason Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer, BFRS)  
Dave Norris (Head of Service Delivery, BFRS)  
Asif Hussain (Principal Accountant, BFRS)  
Ryan Maslen (Deputy Head of Finance, RBFRS)

**Public:** Live webcast broadcast: <https://oxon.cc/TVFCSJC21092020>

**01. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lesley Clarke, Rob MacDougall, Mark Arkwell, Calum Bell and Conor Byrne.

**02. INTRODUCTIONS**

All Members introduced themselves. Officers will make their introductions as they present to committee.

**03. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**04. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2020**

The following amendments were made to the minutes:

Page 3, Item 10, first line should read OBE.

Page 3, Item 10, 4<sup>th</sup> line should read "Councillor Clarke went on to thank everyone who is involved in TVFCS"

Page 4, last line, there should be no #

Page 5, last line, the word 'in' should be before the word staff

Page 6, Item 12, the last sentence should read "Full Business case as,"

Page 7, paragraph 3, should read: "she did query how certain elements could continue"

Page 7, last paragraph, should read 'may mean there is a clash'

RESOLVED –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2020 be amended as per above and then signed as an accurate record by the Chairman.

**05. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising for discussion.

**06. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (WRITTEN QUESTIONS)**

None.

## 07. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER 9.5

None

## 08. TVFCS Performance Report Quarter 1 2020/21

The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) presented the Quarter 1 Performance Report for 2020/21 to the Committee and referred Members back to the Workshop held in Spring of 2019. The workshop had considered how well the format of the previous performance report reflected accurate and appropriate information to Members, taking into account that TVFCS had gone live in April 2015 and, that there had been a number of improvements over the four year period that the Committee wanted to see reflected in the report. The report being presented today delivered on the conversations held at the Workshop and, also started to refresh the way in which information on TVFCS performance was being displayed. The new format showed more closely the activities and, performance of TVFCS into the workings of each individual Fire and Rescue Service by providing operational context that included all activities, not just those within TVFCS and, introduced the headings of Protection, Prevention and Response. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that the report highlighted the wider contribution TVFCS makes aside from the response to emergency incidents. The Members were asked to note that this was the first report of this type and, whilst the Senior Responsible Officers were very comfortable with how the report had come together, they would equally welcome feedback from Members on the information that they would like to see or, any changes to how the information is presented.

As expected, during the first quarter of 2020/21, the operating environment had been significantly affected by the COVID19 pandemic particularly with the changes to the working environment. Through the normal planning cycle, the annual plan for TVFCS is usually agreed in February/March each year, with progress reviewed each quarter and, the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) prefaced the organisational context narrative by advising the Committee that TVFCS staff had been able to deliver their plan over the last quarter despite the pandemic which is of great credit to all of the staff. The ongoing collaboration between the three Fire and Rescue Services remains as strong as ever particularly in support to TVFCS. This has enabled a robust degradation plan to be put in place in the Control Room ensuring that, should staff become adversely affected due to the Covid19 Pandemic or more widely by a range of other factors, a plan is in place for staff absence to ensure the support to the public remains and, this has been the case in the last quarter. Action was taken to restrict access to the Control Room and, Secondary Control Room at Kidlington during the early stages of the pandemic to ensure that any exposure to the Control Room and the staff themselves was kept to a minimum. A combination of those actions along with the diligence of the staff, using increased hygiene prevention and control measures had, ensured the exposure to staff and the impact on performance had been kept to a minimum. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that those arrangements remain in place.

This quarter, and particularly for Buckinghamshire the introduction of the new

station at West Ashland known as the 'Blue Light Hub' in Milton Keynes has been a significant success. The planned go-live date of, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020, had been achieved with the work by colleagues in the TVFCS and, across the three Services. The contribution by Capita in this seamless transition was noted by the Committee.

Recruitment had taken place in January 2020 with two new members of staff joining the TVFCS team in June on fixed term contracts with their induction training being completed enabling them to join their operational colleagues in August. A further two members of staff left TVFCS during this quarter which represents 5% of the total establishment. The Committee were asked to note that the recruitment activity during the quarter attracted a high number of applicants. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) suggested that some detail on the quality and diversity of those applicants could be brought back to a future meeting. This would demonstrate the high level of skill and experience the recruitment had attracted.

As expected, sickness levels in the first quarter of 2020/21 had reduced compared with quarter 4 in 2019/20 but were slightly higher than for the equivalent period in 2019/20. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that these patterns were consistent with the seasonal variation that would be expected and, were not attributed to any other extra-ordinary factors. The Control Room had been affected by Covid19 with two members of staff requiring a short-term absence as they were symptomatic with the symptoms identified for coronavirus at that time. No sickness absences relating to COVID19 were recorded in May and June, highlighting the success of the preventative measures taken. The sickness levels displayed within the report indicated that they remain within acceptable levels.

In accordance with the RBFRS Resourcing and Development team, TVFCS staff have now moved from the NVQ system to the new Development and Assessment Pathways (DAPS) for all roles ensuring that operational staff within the Control Room now have the same development pathway which is shared by Fire and Rescue Services linked to the National Operational Standards for Fire Control staff. This change re-enforces the integration of the control room staff with the wider organisation. The relatively high number of staff at Crew Manager level currently going through their development pathway is a reflection of, the number of TVFCS staff achieving promotion within the department over the preceding 18 months and is evidence of the progress that has been made in developing our staff. Previously the report had reported against competence which had perhaps, been seen as mis-leading in some areas as it was competence for pay purposes and, also competence in role. To remove the possible mis-leading nature of that term the report has changed to development which better reflects the position of staff within the Control Room.

The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) appraised the meeting of the new section within the report relating to Prevention, Protection and Response. The narrative was relatively short for this quarter however; a better understanding of the contribution the Control Room makes to Prevention and Protection activity will develop in this section over time. The report reflected on how much additional value is given to the FRS by the Control Staff by showing that

29 members of the public with defective smoke alarms were referred on for further assistance from the FRS directly from the Control Room. Traditionally the first contact a member of the public would have for a non-emergency would be through the website and, this reporting has shown that, a call of this type coming into the Control Room can be dealt with effectively. In addition, 34 queries into Control were dealt with under safeguarding procedures demonstrating how the Control Room can assist with protecting those individuals with other vulnerabilities that may present. TVFCS also dealt with 6 notifications from partner agencies during the quarter, primarily Thames Valley Police, where a credible threat of arson had been received against a person or premises.

The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) led the Committee through the details relating to Total Emergency Calls Answered and Number of Mobilisations both of which showed an impact from the Covid19 Pandemic. The number of incoming emergency calls reduced by around 12.6% in comparison to the same quarter last year. The reduction in calls was most noticeable in April, where the number of calls received was 21.24% lower than in April 2019. It is believed that this coincides with the reduction in people going to work and, the social and economic impacts of the early part of lockdown. The table detailing the Emergency calls answered within 5 and 10 seconds demonstrates from the point when the call comes into control and, how effectively those calls are handled to enable the necessary action to be taken by Fire and Rescue Services. The Committee noted that, over quarter 1 all calls were answered within the stated target period and TVFCS are comfortably within acceptable limits. The report included a narrative that no more than 3% of calls received should ring for more than 10 seconds with a second, more demanding, target that no more than 7% of calls should ring for longer than 5 seconds. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) turned the targets into tangibles by advising that, should members of the public ring in to Control they can expect calls to be answered within 10 seconds on 97% of occasions and this has been comfortably achieved over this period. The report also included a table to reflect the % occasions where time to alert a station is within 90 seconds of the emergency call being answered. Call handling times are expected to increase slightly during the summer months, as more calls to outdoor locations are received which involve extended questioning of the caller and the use of location identification technology to ensure that the most appropriate resources are mobilised. Whilst some variance was expected in this area, the performance in June fell by more than would normally be anticipated. Analysis of the data had shown the reduction in commercial activity with workforces working from home, being furloughed or, not being in the normal working location meant that the procedures whereby Control would normally gain information from representatives on site had lowered meaning the work involved for identifying the call has changed. It is believed these are significant factors affecting the call handling time over the recent period. The Committee were mindful that the call challenge procedure operated by Oxfordshire and Royal Berkshire to a greater extent than Buckinghamshire at this time also had a corresponding impact. As a result of the recent HMICFRS report, a joint evaluation between the three Services in to the effectiveness of the current response arrangements to Automatic fire alarms is being undertaken and, the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) will report back in the next performance

report on whether any further changes are seen as a result of behaviours and commercial activity during the lockdown period. The Senior Responsible Officers advised Committee that the table showing the alerts to incidents types demonstrates where the workings of the Control takes' best effect. In terms of alerts in primary fires, secondary fires and road traffic collisions all targets are within acceptable limits.

The resilience arrangements for staffing and, the systems were discussed. On 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 a business resilience exercise had taken place which simulated a scenario where TVFCS calls needed to be diverted to the Staffordshire & West Midlands Fire Control (S&WMFC). During the exercise, S&WMFC staff were able to correctly identify and notify the appropriate Thames Valley Resources for each call passed to them using the agreed resilient 'fall back' systems and our existing resilience arrangements remain in place. In the current circumstances, the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that TVFCS were working with Staffordshire & West Midlands Fire Control (S&WMFC) to support their resilience arrangements along with testing our own showing that the arrangements work in both directions.

The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) again reiterated the success of the introduction of the Blue Light Hub' becoming fully operational and formally recognised the work by Capita alongside TVFCS staff and colleagues to make the changes to the Command & Control platform required to support this change. It was reported that following go-live in June 2020, no major issues had occurred with mobilisation or support to the public which is testimony to the work undertaken during the transition period.

In a change to previous reporting, the financial summary will still be provided Appendix B however; in terms of a summary the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) drew the Committee's attention to the current projection which was a favourably variance of 2.2% equating to an underspend of approx. £50,000. This financial position is kept under regular review and, will continue to be reported against.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) for the re-revised style of the report which she felt was more focussed and an improved style. The Chairman also congratulated the Senior Responsible Officers on the good outcome of the business resilience exercise. On behalf of the Joint Committee, the Chairman requested that a letter be sent to everyone in the Control Room thanking them for their exemplary performance during, what has been a really testing time. The Committee supported this recommendation.

Cllr Gray reiterated how much easier the new style report was to read and understand and went on to ask if the delay in response times over 10 seconds occurred at any specific time of the day. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that this was difficult to determine as the Fire Control Service is a 24/7 operation therefore; the stations within are permanently staffed and, he suggested that the delay is more a symptom of the incident rather than Control as an operation. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) will come back to a future meeting with examples of when there is an excess of 10 seconds. Cllr

**SRO's to write to Control Staff on behalf of the Joint Committee.**

**DN to explore examples on excess of 10 seconds.**

Gray went on to ask if the Control Room had received calls over the lockdown period from people who had just wanted someone to talk to rather than being malicious calls. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that he would ask the Group Manager TVFCS to review this and bring back any examples to a future meeting.

**DN to review calls into Control and report back.**

Cllr Ross supported the positive feedback on the style of the report and, the performance of the Control Room. Cllr Ross stated that he was particularly interested to see the new form of staff development and, how that is progressing. He went on to ask whether the target of 80% was realistic for time of alerts to Stations as the Committee would not want to prompt Control to send Crews out when they do not have enough information pulled together however; we want Crews to be mobilised as soon as possible. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) suggested a review of the target may be more appropriate when the impact of the current arrangements around Covid19 can be seen as this will provide a, greater sense on how the public are affected and how well we are able to adapt our arrangements to the information the public are able to provide. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) also suggested that waiting for the outcome of the Automatic Fire Alarms review would also be prudent as the level of call challenge on the caller may be placing an unrealistic pressure on that target which may be the point where we would have the evidence to review the target. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) will bring a recommendation to the Committee once the review has been completed which will enable an evidence-based decision to be taken using scrutiny and judgement.

**DN to bring back to a future meeting.**

Cllr Hopkins thanked the Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) for a very understandable report and asked about the performance of Capita in terms of the launch of the Blue Light Hub and, also over the recent challenging time in terms of partner and supplier. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that the support of Capita during the resilience arrangements, launch of the hub and over the Covid19 period had, not only been satisfactory but, on many occasions went over and above what was expected at this time. The Area Manager (RBFRS) advised that Capita had put in place working arrangements over the Covid19 period and notified on how they would operate with our access restrictions should there have been any issues. The Area Manager (RBFRS) went on to advise that he was not aware of any particular issues in terms of the standard of service and our maintenance contract.

RESOLVED –

That the contents of the report be noted.

## **09. TVFCS Members Workshop Report**

On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020, a Joint Committee Members Workshop had been held to consider a range of items regarding the future direction and development of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) and the ongoing arrangements with Capita. At the workshop, Members had agreed that the Committee meetings would take place as scheduled for July, September and

December 2020. Moving into 2021 Committee meetings would take place in July for the annual reporting and, December to set the budget for the coming year. In March and September Workshops would take place which would start to take Members through the arrangements expected over the coming period affecting Control. These Workshops could be turned in to Committee meetings if required. The Head of Service Delivery (BFRS) advised that the Senior Responsible Officers, Group Manager TVFCS and, colleagues in Control are looking to obtain a forward sense of some of the substantive issues coming over the next two years and, thinking about the first workshop in March 2021. There will be a few issues to take Members through in terms of the Control system replacement with a report due from Capita on what that might like. The presentation from the Members Workshop had been included in the agenda pack for information.

The Chairman advised that she felt that the Members Workshop had gone very well in terms of being a relaxed meeting with no formal agenda allowing it to flow well. There were no further questions or comments made and, the Chairman advised that she looked forward to the second workshop taking place in March 2021.

RESOLVED –

That the Joint Committee agreed the contents of the report as an accurate record of the business conducted at the workshop.

#### **10. EMERGENCY SERVICES MOBILE COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME (ESMCP) UPDATE**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) delivered a presentation to the Committee relating to the Emergency Services Mobile Communication Programme (ESMCP) which is the national programme within the Home Office to deliver the emergency services network (ESN). ESN will replace the current Airwave network with a wireless coverage data network enabling handheld, vehicle and airborne devices to communicate with each other and, with a Control Room such as TVFCS. The programme is intended to deliver an end-to-end solution that incorporates all necessary access gateways, the protocols for operation and, the services to make sure the network, systems and devices are supported. The fundamental element of ESN technology is, that it is based on the 4G mobile data network with the ESN coverage being provided by EE which is a BT company. ESN is going to provide talk-groups for emergency services access only essentially through that network with priority of calling and pre-empting function ahead of other users on the network. There will also be a simulated push-to-talk capability on the devices that are used. Airwave was established in 2000 and went live in 2004 meaning that the infrastructure is ageing and was due for decommission in 2019 when, due to the original transition plan, ESN was due to have been in place. With the delay that has occurred Airwave has been extended requiring significant investment indicated at approximately £1 million per day by the programme meaning that it remains resilient however; this is at significant expense in its own right compared to the comparable daily costs of the ESN system when it is operational. Moving to



ESN avoids the costs of replicating masts and network links and benefits from enhancement of the future 4g network. Alongside this ESN offers potential additional capabilities through mobile broadband alongside enhanced service capabilities which would be used for video and body work cameras. A product pathway is available and, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) delivered a very high overview within the presentation on Assure, which is the testing of the coverage across the country and, Connect and Connect+ which provides the voice and data capability which is in trial in some services. Direct provides the connection of voice and data with Control rooms and this has been tested in recent weeks. Prime offers the finished product but without the full encryption however; this is suitable for Fire and Rescue Service transition. Prime+ offers a higher level of encryption but is currently seen as a need for Police colleagues rather than Fire or Ambulance Services.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that there has been a clear and tangible increase in activity this quarter with the intent to accelerate progress. The Covid19 impact has been minimal and the full business case is expected to achieve full ministerial approval in February 2021. It continues to be a point of note, including at the Public Accounts Committee this month, that the business case is not signed off though the programme continues to drive forward. The newly appointed National Programme Director, John Black attended a recent Fire Group Meeting and articulated his view that fundamentally ESN is the right solution with the business case for change not being in doubt. In essence, sustaining the Airwave system adds costs in the region of £1 million per day to the programme whilst post-delivery ESN is fundamentally a cheaper option however; it does remain unclear what the cost implications will be for the Fire and Rescue Service post ESN delivering and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that there is still a push to understand that.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that everyone is still working to the National Programme current timeline which is showing the final transition of all emergency services to ESN by November 2024 with the Fire Sector being one of the later services to transition. There is a desire in the national programme to bring this transition date forward to mid-2023 for the financial reasons raised earlier in the presentation. Whilst supportive of transition taking place earlier, the fire sector has communicated that the ESN must safely meet the requirements. The biggest issue in the current timeline of 2024 is that there is no contingency in the plan however; it had been reassuring that the new Programme Director recognised this as an unrealistic position and, regionally it has been noted that there has been some slippage in the current path of activities and, when combined with the lack of contingency, this does leave some relatively low confidence with the plan. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) caveated this with the recognition that the new Programme Directors' intent is to deliver a base product as soon as practicable but with the clear view that it must be fit for purpose being the primary success factor. Whilst the sector, are broadly supportive of this like for like replacement as a priority to get the product live it does leave some concern that the potential added value benefits, use of tools and technology may not be so easily realised after delivery of the base product. The view of the Programme Director is that, the programme is now in the proving stage with the core

technology available. His intent is to get the first release and base capability in place to replace Airwave and, he would like the programme to work with the user community to establish confidence, focus, reality and collaboration. The lead for the coverage assurance testing is from Oxfordshire working collaboratively within the South East Region along with colleagues in the Police thus making the best use of our resources. Each user organisation has been issued with a small number of handheld devices e.g. vehicles checking devices. The Direct project has been successfully trialled in Merseyside this summer with delivery of the prime product on track for mid-2021. With reference to the deployment planning, the programme is updating deployment plans and Services have been asked to update a return for the end September 2020 providing a useful opportunity to review and underpin the assumptions. Our core plan assumption for the Thames Valley remains for a transition no sooner than 6 months after the service goes live but no later than 12 months before Airwave turns off. Based on current planning our window of transition appears to be between Q1 of 2022 and Q4 of 2023. Contingency dates may need to change should the end date of the programme be brought forward. Additional detail regarding the handheld and fixed vehicles device are beginning to emerge from the programme and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) gave an overview of the devices and equipment to the Committee. Indicative costs are indicated to be slightly higher than current Airwave devices however; there are alternative providers already coming through which could increase options and, have implications on costs.

The ESN Regional Grant Funding is managed by Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority for the Region with individual Service Grant Funding managed locally. Programme spend is agreed through a short business case process and, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that the regional grant funding for 2020/21 was £236,000 - money from the programme covers this. The funding for the TVFCS ESN upgrades and capabilities is held by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service and to date all costs have been met by the programme. As expected with any system change, there are internal costs associated with key staff committing time to support the work. As part of the full business case there has been some articulation from the programme of their assessment of core and non-core costs. This is important as it is the non-core costs which will fall to user organisations such as ourselves. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that he expected to have costs associated with the system however; they must be realistic, foreseeable and manageable. The programmes' assumptions on these costs has been queried at a national level through the Fire Customer Group with the question being taken forward. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that the programme had recently appointed assurance partners from across the three Emergency Services with the Fire Sector being represented by Merseyside and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Services. The purpose of the partners is for them to work alongside the programme to support the end-to-end build, testing and deployment of the network. There will be an opportunity in the future to engage through scenario testing and, it was suggested that this may be an area the Thames Valley would wish to engage in. Engagement is also taking place to validate deployment and service viability for on-boarding ESN such as IT health checks and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) confirmed that the TVFCS is ahead of the curve with the work that is being undertaken.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised the Committee on the key points for TVFCS and the Joint Committee at this time. The primary upgrades and DNSP connection were completed in 2018 with subsequent changes by the programme requiring work from Capita. Current indications are that these are likely to take place in Summer 2021 and, will be grant funded by the programme. The timeline will be monitored to ensure that the upgrade can be managed around other TVFCS developments. The current intention is to complete the transition to ESN before any future major Control Room replacement process.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) stated that it was important to note that Airwave continues to operate without any performance issues and the programme has already committed to maintaining the system until such time as ESN is in place. It is the costs associated that are driving the programme to have as early adoption of the new system as possible. In light of, the given timeline for the full business case, meetings and workshop, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) proposed that the next update to Committee should take place as part of the workshop in March 2021.

The Chairman thanked the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) for a superb presentation and, asked that it be shared with the Committee for reference. The Chairman expressed some disappointment that the Fire Sector was being shown as one of the latest services to transition and, also questioned the statement on 'low confidence in the plan'. The Chairman asked why, as a blue light service, Fire was being considered not important. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that the confidence in the plan is not intended to indicate anything other than, it continues to be a developing plan. The programme has high confidence with the dates published however; the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) suggested that it would be remiss of him not to look at this in context of a programme that should have been delivered in 2019. Independent reviews to date have highlighted the low engagement of the national programme with the user organisations and, this is being addressed by the new Programme Director. With reference to the transition date for the Fire Sector, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised this was less of a concern for him and was more around when organisations may want to transition. The exact timelines for this still need to be worked through and the deployment exercise being undertaken to understand when we would want to transition is very helpful as it allows us to advise on our preference. He assured the Committee that the transition would take place in the timelines that work for us. This statement was welcomed by the Chairman.

Cllr Hopkins supported that this was core secure infrastructure in essence, but highlighted that the timeline for delivery is another 4 years hence and, with the speed of technology and development such as artificial intelligence, the reliance on 4G etc. asked whether this delivery would ever happen as the robustness of the core infrastructure will need to keep pace. Cllr Hopkins further sought reassurance that the development aspect was working alongside the developing applications and, with the Control Room technologies. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) advised that the current Airwave system is based on a Tetra Bespoke system and is very expensive as

**SF to share presentation with the Committee.**

it is designed on the requirements for use by emergency services. The move to a 4G based network will provide much greater legacy advantage with evolving technology. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer (RBFRS) suggested that there is a need to be open minded that, whilst, ESN affords us opportunity with technology use, it does not mean that that it is the only way to access technology directly. The Area Manager (RBFRS) stated that the question from Cllr Hopkins highlighted the complexity being dealt with. ESN is one part of an overall jigsaw puzzle that fits around Control and, there are some other aspects that will be taken through to the Workshop in March 2021 for further discussion. The Area Manager (RBFRS) went on to say that ESN is one part that will play out over the next 4 years and, that the Joint Co-Ordination Group will also be looking at the Control replacement as well as exploring the next generation of 999 systems. The Workshop taking place in March 2021 will consider how all, of these elements will come together and, he advised that whilst there are some exciting opportunities there is also a level of realism of the complexities involved.

Cllr Hopkins stated that whilst he was attending the Joint Committee meeting as a substitute, he would welcome attending the Workshop as either an Observer or participant if that were possible. The Chairman advised that this would be discussed outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED –

That the contents of the presentation on the ESMCP and the delivery of the ESN were noted.

#### **11. FORWARD PLAN**

It was agreed that ESMCP would be moved from the December meeting to the March workshop.

RESOLVED –

That the Forward Plan be updated.

#### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 2:00 pm.

(The Chairman closed the meeting at 3.15 pm)