



The Fire Brigade Society

**Minutes of the Inaugural Executive Supervisory Board Meeting
Held at London Fire Brigade's, Dagenham Fire Station
10.30 hours, Saturday 24th February 2018.**

Attending: Richard Williams, Membership Services Unit and Lead of the Management Working Party, Alan Field, Lead of the Financial Working Party, Ralph Horton, Publications Unit, Steve Dodge, Events & Administration Unit, Eddie Mills, Sales Unit, Non Executive Board Members Martin Kingsnorth and Peter Williams.

Apologies: Jon Hall, President, Steve Udall, Information Technology Unit and Brian Jackson, Finance Unit.

1 Introduction

Jon Hall had asked that Ralph Horton lead the meeting and take the minutes.

Ralph Horton reminded the meeting that the Management and Financial Working Party's reports, agreed by a very strong membership vote, was the mandate that would be followed.

It was agreed that the minutes of Executive Supervisory Board Meetings would not be verbatim, but a record of the main points, decisions and action points, hence a 'shorter' format.

As it was intended that 'face to face' meetings would be kept to a minimum, the processes for electronic discussion / decision making, as well as the way that meetings will be convened, was discussed.

It was agreed that at least one 'face to face' meeting will be needed annually to set budgets, etc. The rest of the duties will be conducted electronically wherever possible.

An outline procedure for recording electronic discussions and decisions was agreed. A report (minutes) would be compiled at the end of each quarter of The Society year, and when agreed by the Executive Supervisory Board would become a formal record. A log would be compiled to ensure decisions were duly recorded.

2 Roundup of Current Position

The outstanding work left to be completed by the Working Parties, and likely timetable for conclusion, current positions not filled, including consequences thereof and steps being taken to get new appointees up and running were discussed.

It was noted that the Officers Handbook was currently in hand with the Management Working Party and after discussion it was agreed that this document would be titled 'The Appointed Officer's and Volunteer's Handbook'.

3 Budgets and Operational Plans

(a) Finance Unit

Reports on the projected out-turn for the 2017/2018 financial year and a forecast of funds available for 2018/2019 was discussed.

It was concluded that there were no concerns regarding finance available for the operation of The Society and that the membership rates for 2018/19 would remain as for 2017/18.

It was noted that the combined effects of the Management Working Party and the Financial Working Party had resulted in economies, clarity of financial accountability and stability.

It was stressed that that income and spending must be clearly allocated to the relative Society's financial year to maintain clarity and stability.

Where 'benefit in kind' occurs, this has the potential of masking the true running costs of The Society, and it was agreed that such items must be identified, costed and recorded.

AP1 FEB 2018: Alan Field was tasked with facilitating the update of The Society's claims form (FBS007 Issue 2 January 2015).

(b) Publications Unit

The meeting was informed that from the initial appointment of the Editorial Team they had operated to an agreed annual Operational Plan. The success of this approach is the reason for the adoption of annual Operational Plans for all the newly formed Society Units.

A progress report on the next Fire Cover to be published, No. 219, was given.

As a result of a donation of £284, from a member who wishes to remain anonymous, an extra eight pages have been added to Fire Cover 219.

A general discussion followed regarding the currency of feature articles held and the general content of Fire Cover.

The meeting was advised that a review of material held for Fire Cover will be carried out in 2018/19.

The Editorial Team advised that they were working with MP Printers to reflect the managerial change in The Society in the first Fire Cover of the 2018/19 Society year (No 220).

It was noted, with thanks, that the 2017/18 Editorial Team's Operational Plan had been delivered slightly under budget, even with the replacement of the Team's aging 'stand-alone' computer hard drive.

The Editorial Team's 2018/19 Operational Plan was unanimously agreed.

(c) Membership Services Unit

Distribution Manager: It was noted, with thanks, that the 2017/18 Operational Plan had been delivered slightly under budget.

The Distribution Manager's 2017/18 Operational Plan, which includes distribution of Fire Cover, and production and circulation of general notices, etc., was unanimously agreed. It should be noted that this plan, because of its nature, has traditionally been associated with Editorial Team's Operational Plan.

Membership Secretary: A discussion on the current membership status took place.

Several recruitment initiatives undertaken in 2017/18, namely a free advert in the Preston Hall Fire Engine Rally program, an article with membership offer in National Association of Firefighters (NARF) journal, targeting of Young (Apprentice) Firefighters in London Fire Brigade and Durham & Darlington FRS, complimentary Fire Cover (with application form) offered to visitors to the Emergency Services Museum, Sheffield, had disappointingly not resulted in any new members. It was noted that these initiatives had no budget implications.

The meeting was advised that a 'stand-alone computer hard drive' for all the membership records had been procured. This would aid The Society's aims in the protection of personal data and facilitate the seamless transfer of records in the event of a change of Membership Secretary.

The Membership Secretary's 2018/19 Operational Plan was unanimously agreed.

(d) Events and Administration Unit

Events Manager: The meeting was briefed on details of planned visits and FBS What's On 2018/19.

It was emphasised that all visits must be 'self financed' by those members attend the visit.

It was recommended that the start points for visits should be such that members without transport could attend and that visit should have an identified formal lunch break where possible. This was especially important if travel is by car, so as to discourage members to eat whilst driving.

It was thought sensible that the Event Manager included in his budget any cost associated with local newsletters.

The Events Manager 's 2018/19 Operational Plan (which included FBS What's On 2018/19) was unanimously agreed.

Central Administrator:

In the absence of a Central Administrator, a discussion took place as to the approach in covering the duties associated with the post. It was noted that the email and postal traffic for the previous Secretariat had drastically declined over the last twelve to eighteen months.

As each Unit will be responsible for dealing with its own mail, etc., it was agreed to review the situation regarding this aspect of the Events and Administration Unit on a regular basis.

(e) Sales Unit

The meeting was briefed regarding the locations where the Sales Unit stock was held. It was noted that the majority of the FBS Mobile Sales Unit stock would pass to the Sales Manager after the meeting.

It was agreed that the Midlands based stock would be reviewed before handover to the Sales Manager.

Sales policy was discussed with the Sales Manager.

It was agreed that after the stock was sorted and assessed, the prime aim would be to clear existing holdings via clearance sales.

The Sales Manager was alerted to the requirement that sales stock must not exceed the provisions for said stock in The Society's insurance.

An initial Sales Unit float of £500 would be provided in the future.

The Sales Unit's 2018/19 Operational Plan (basic launch document) was unanimously agreed.

AP2 FEB 2018: Richard Williams and Ralph Horton were asked to review the Midlands based Sales Unit stock, which was as a result of collecting stock from elsewhere within The Society over the last six months.

(f) Information Technology Unit

The meeting was briefed on the age, issues that have arisen, and limitation of the current web site.

The Information Technology Unit's 2018/19 Operational Plan, which included the cost of setting up a new web site and the annual costs associated were discussed. It was ascertained that the new platform would support future social media initiatives. From the alternative proposals presented it was agreed that the 'enhanced web site' option would better serve The Society and provided optimum economical results.

The Management Working Party would act as liaison with the Web Manager regarding the development / requirements of the new website.

The meeting was updated on the Web Manager's progress with setting up fbs gmail addresses for the new Units / roles.

The Information Technology Unit 's 2018/19 Operational Plan was unanimously agreed.

AP3 FEB 2018: Richard Williams to check the suitability of the new website platform to support e-commerce.

Summary:

After a final review of the financial aspects of each of the Unit's Operational Plans for 2018/19, expense against income, the Unit's Operational Plans were unanimously agreed in total, these being established as the benchmark for future financial years. It was noted that the collective Unit's Operational Plans for 2019/20, and subsequent years, would be presented to the membership for a formal vote.

4 General Discussion

A general discussion followed on other future developments within The Society, and the organisations we interact with.

The meeting closed at 1530 hours.

Ralph Horton
Minutes Secretary

These minutes were agreed by the Executive Supervisory Board 31st March 2018.

DISCHARGED ACTION POINTS:

AP2 FEB 2018: Richard Williams and Ralph Horton were asked to review the Midlands based Sales Unit stock, which was as a result of collecting stock from elsewhere within The Society over the last six months.

Richard Williams and Ralph Horton examined the Sales Unit stock assembled at Interserve in Aldridge. The assessment yielded 4 more crates of useable stock to go to the Sales Unit, about 6-7 crates of old Fire Covers to be integrated into the existing remaining stock of left-over copies of Fire Covers at the Distribution Manager's home, these to be used as 'give-aways' on visits, and as recruiting tools. Boxes of miscellaneous fire related magazines, brochures, etc., to be donated to the National Emergency Services Museum, Sheffield, and limited stock small items which will also be used for recruitment purposes. Arrangements are being assessed to remove the items to their ultimate destinations.