



# British Fire Services Association

LONDON & SOUTH EAST DISTRICT.

## **Minutes of the 6th Ordinary Meeting of the London & South East District held on 23 Mar 2023 via a Zoom Meeting**

The District Chairman, Mark Skinner, opened the meeting at 1900hrs. He started the meeting with an introduction of himself and his background. He then invited all attendees to do likewise.

### **Members present were:**

M Skinner (District Chairman), G. Howgate (District President), F. Turner (District Treasurer), M. Harris (District Secretary and Dep Treasurer), P. Basson, P. Brough, M. Francis and T. Meller.

### **Apologise for absence:**

A number of members sent their apologies. (Note that the Secretary stated when sending out the notice of the meeting to all members that only those attending need reply and apologies for not attending would not be required and accepted as being sent).

### **Minutes of the last meeting:**

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed as true record.  
Proposed F Turner and Seconded by P Basson.

### **Matters arising:**

There were no matters arising.

### **Chairman's Report:**

The Chairman welcomed all members attending the Zoom meeting and his report is attached.

### **Secretary's Report:**

The Secretary stated that there had been a further increase in new members that had joined the District, two on the day of the meeting, which is always great news. We look forward to hopefully seeing them in the not-too-distant future attending the meetings, or maybe one of the functions. As suggested by the District President, the minutes of the meeting will now be published on the BFSAs Web Site, under the District Tab.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

There is presently £1923.40 in the District Account. The Statement of Accounts and Treasurer's Report are attached to these minutes. At present the raffle donations at the Annual Dinner is the only form of raising funds. These funds are being utilised to pay for the visit of the Grunheide Firefighters.



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The Treasurer requested that if any member has any contacts to see if they could obtain any sponsorship for supporting either the Annual Dinner or the visit of the Grunheide Firefighter, then this would be greatly appreciated.

### **Members Welfare Fund (MWF):**

Frank Turner reiterated the overall view of the MWF.

Its income is derived from an Investment Fund managed by Barclays Wealth and is presently in good financial health. More details are available on the BFSA Web Site. There are at present four beneficiaries that receive £125 and at Christmas there is bonus payment made to their partner, should they have one.

Members can apply for financial help/grants which are awarded on a case by case basis by the Committee. Funding is also available for help for those that are suffering Stress and Trauma, again awarded by the committee on a case by case basis.

### **Any other business:**

District Dinner It was proposed that a date for the Annual District Dinner be set for Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023. This will be held at the Union Jack Club (UJC) in London. The room has been booked and paid for from a very kind donation received for the sum of £500. The Treasurer volunteered to check out the potential costings of food and wine and would report back to the Committee at the next meeting. Any members wishing to attend should email the District Secretary ( [secretarybfsa.lse@gmail.com](mailto:secretarybfsa.lse@gmail.com) ). Spaces will be allocated on a first come basis. Menu and cost will be sent out to all members in the near future. Closing date for bookings and Full non-refundable payment will be 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023. Accommodation can be booked at the UJC for non-members whilst attending this function.

Grunheide Visit The next visit to Grunheide will be 29 Sep to 1 Oct 2023. Graham Howgate is in communication with Grunheide to arrange all matters of travel etc. He would report back to the committee at the next meeting of who will be attending and proposed flight times and departure airport.

Emergency Services Show The Emergency Services Show will be taking place on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023. The BFSA, represented by the London and South East District members, will be in attendance again at the NEC.



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Future Meetings It was proposed by the Chairman to continue to hold the meetings via Zoom and at the later time of 1900 hours. It was also suggested by the District President to possibly combine a summer meeting with a social event. Paul Brough kindly offered to look into organising an event in Aug to coincide with the meeting.

Next Meeting The date for the next meeting will be on Thursday 22 Jun at 1900 hours, via Zoom.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 1916 hrs.



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[www.bfsa.org.uk](http://www.bfsa.org.uk)

*District Chairman: Mark W Skinner MBFSA*

## **Chairman's report for the ordinary meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**

1. Welcome to what is another Zoom meeting.

Picking up on recent comments we really need to move away from making our meetings reliant upon using Zoom and start meeting face to face again. My reason for asking that this meeting be put back an hour to the 7pm start is to give some the ability to attend after their working hours. We must accept that, in today's world, people no longer work 9 to 5 hours

2. This leads me into another matter, which I know has risen its head a few times recently, and more recently last week by Graham, that the district committee really must strive towards reaching out to its membership and engaging with them more.

This district is fortunate, in that we have a good number of both personal members and some large group members. We have 4 large airport groups in Gatwick, Stansted, Southend and Biggin Hill airfields. How many other districts can boast that?

But why did they choose to become members of the BFSA?

What is it that they felt the BFSA could offer them?



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Has the executive committee reached out yet to those group members and asked them to nominate a representative to join and participate in the committee?

Even by doing that one thing could add another 4 members to this committee. Graham and Frank will both recall that we set a precedent in that when we had the London City Airport join us, and the Airport's Senior Officer was invited to join the committee, rising to the position of Chairman, with a leading hand becoming an assistant district secretary (who, I am now informed, has become the senior airfield fire officer at London Luton Airport)

If Graham and Frank remembers Ian?

3. And we need to look at the ordinary committee meetings themselves.

Is it always necessary to hold these meetings in the evenings of a working week?

If we were to start reaching out to our members and asking some of our group members, or those with a company back-ground and asking them to host our meetings, maybe on a Saturday afternoon instead of during a working week, would that then start attracting some new members?

Certainly during the Summer months, it might add some new interest to our current members to attend events, such as open days for district members to attend, with the committee meeting taking place during the event.

4. District Newsletter

As the new Chair for the district, I am happy to design and circulate, to our district members, a newsletter, firstly to introduce myself as their current Chair, (following my few years of hiatus) but mainly to try and engage with the members and offer suggestions, and also ask for some suggestions for ideas for forthcoming events ... such as our 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary in 2025.



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Not all of our members are up for the annual dinner events, but might, for example, be willing to host/attend something like a small garden party event during the Summer of 2025 instead, as an addition to the more formal dinner event.

If offered this year then it gives them time to consider and organize something for 2025

Graham, if you recall the event you hosted, as Station Commander at Hainault, when we had 2 of the cast from London's Burning attend, which drew a decent crowd. But something more for the district membership, rather than the general public. Something of interest to the district members themselves, and their families.

For an example, throwing this into the ring, maybe Biggin Hill fire service hosting an event which invited other group/industrial members to participate in. Biggin Hill has a small open grass field behind their station which could possibly make an ideal venue that would not interfere with airfield operations.

But something along the lines of a summer garden fete for the members and their families to attend, and if each of the group members put a small sum each into a pot, would then cover the cost of a simple buffet lunch.



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## Treasurers Report of the Accounts

### Income:

Balance Brought Forward: £1783.40

Donation: £ 500.00

Balance: £2283.40

### Expenditure:

Union Jack Club Room Hire £ 360

Total Balance: £1923.40