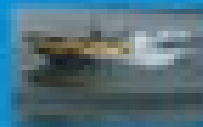


**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**

CORPORATE PLAN
COMPRISING THE STRATEGIC,
BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE &
COMMUNITY SAFETY PLANS

2003/04



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY STATEMENT

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is working towards an environment that gives everyone an equal chance to work, learn and live free from discrimination and prejudice.

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority recognises and values the breadth and diversity of the traditions, beliefs and cultures of the communities it serves, and its employees. It seeks to create, maintain and promote an environment in which each person has equal entitlement to high quality services and opportunities regardless of race, colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic or national origin, religion, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, family circumstances, marital status, trade union membership, staff representation, or nature of employment. In order that all employees are enabled to make their distinctive contribution to the service.

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is committed to being an equal opportunities employer and service provider.

In pursuing this goal the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority will :

- promote the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
- continue to develop clear policies and procedures to address inequality and ensure that all employees and service users are not discriminated against.
- challenge all forms of unfair discrimination and/or harassment by the appropriate use of existing disciplinary procedures and where relevant, appropriate legislation.
- ensure that recruitment, employment, promotion and training systems provide equality of access for all staff.
- monitor and evaluate the implementation of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's policies, making changes and adjustments where appropriate.

In valuing diversity the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority :

- aims to set and achieve high standards; to learn and improve continuously and to work co-operatively.
- believe in openness, honesty and integrity; in responsibility and accountability; in mutual trust and respect, and in valuing diversity in our role both as an employer and as a public service provider.
- recognise the value that a diverse workforce can bring to our organisation and will seek to create an environment that maximises everyone's talents in order to meet the needs of the organisation and of the communities it serves.
- uphold the principle that all employees have both rights and responsibilities and that these must be clearly understood and integrated into all aspects of our work.

यदि आप यह जानकारी हिन्दी में चाहते हैं तो कृपया हमारा संपर्क करें

જો તમને આ માહિતી ગુજરાતી માં જરૂરી હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી અમારો સંપર્ક કરો

Jeśli wymagasz tej informacji po POLSKU, proszę się z nami skontaktować

پسند کر کے اس معلومات کو اردو میں درکار ہوں، تو ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات اردو میں درکار ہوں، تو ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے

INDEX

Foreword from the Chief Fire Officer and Viewpoint from the Chairman of the Fire Authority	4
Our Elected Members	6
Introduction	7
Aims	9
About Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service	10
The Strategic Planning Process	13
Our Performance	18
Best Value Reviews	35
Community Safety	47
The Financial Picture	57
Inspection and Review	59
How to Contact Us	61



FOREWORD

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER IAIN COX MIFireE., ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

I am pleased to introduce the Corporate Plan for 2003/04, a year which will see a period of challenge and opportunity, not just for this Brigade, but for the Fire Service as a whole.

I would also like to acknowledge the achievements of my predecessor as Chief Fire Officer, Mike Clement-Green, who retired in March and pay tribute to his energy and dedication. Under his leadership the Brigade achieved a great deal and built a reputation for innovation and excellence.

This year's Corporate Plan again combines the three elements featured in the 2002/03 plan, namely Strategic, Community Fire Safety and Best Value. As part of a public service that is currently very much in the limelight, the Fire Authority and the Brigade are acutely aware of their responsibilities in being seen to deliver not only first class services but to be proactive in corporate strategy, planning and management and in ensuring that the residents of Berkshire, our working partners and everyone who requires our services benefits from the highest possible professional standards.

We are lucky in having the support of Fire Authority Members who, in addition to their own duties as Councillors and Elected Members of Berkshire's six Unitary Authorities, devote time and energy to the complex and demanding timetable of meetings and briefing papers involved in running the county's fire service. It is not a task to be undertaken lightly and I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by all of our Fire Authority Members and for the support they give the Brigade in ensuring that Berkshire continues to enjoy an excellent standard of service.

Among our priorities this year is the implementation of the Government's plans for modernising the Fire Service nationally. The Government has set a challenging agenda but one that incorporates much that this Brigade has already adopted. Although the national pay dispute had not been settled at the time of this report going to print, I am hopeful that a negotiated settlement will result in a high-performing service delivering even greater improvements for the public that we all serve.



VIEWPOINT

COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS, CHAIRMAN OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

I am very pleased to present the Combined Fire Authority's corporate plan for the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service for the coming year.

The plan contains information on how the Brigade performed against last year's targets, both national and local and looks ahead to a challenging and exciting future. Once again, the Brigade received an excellent report from the District Audit team and a positive budget award for this financial year will enable a great deal to be accomplished.

There is a great deal of work going on involving innovative projects with partnership organisations such as Thames Valley Police and Berkshire's Unitary Authorities, in which the Brigade will play a definitive role in areas such as tackling anti-social behaviour. The excellent work carried out in community fire safety will continue to develop and expand, together with a higher-profile role in fire safety regulation relating to commercial premises.

The Government's modernisation plans for the Fire Service nationally will see a new approach to running

the service. The Fire Service is held in high regard – and justifiably so – but even excellence leaves room for improvement. Here in Berkshire we have a head start in many areas.

This Brigade has always welcomed innovation change for the better and we have taken a proactive approach to improving the quality of our services. Whilst we can expect that the months and years to come will certainly require a great deal of hard work, it is a challenge I feel confident the Authority and the Brigade will tackle capably.

We have now to put behind us a long and exhausting national dispute and there is no doubt that this has had an impact on some areas of the Brigade's forward planning. However we have maintained good relationships across all stakeholders within the Brigade and our award winning 'Partnership for Common Sense' has shown its worth in supporting the Brigade's organisational values.

I therefore commend this report to you.



OUR ELECTED MEMBERS

Members of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are responsible for setting the Brigade's operating budget and determining how the service is run.

The Authority comprises 25 local councillors appointed by the six Unitary Authorities in the county :

Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire District Council and Wokingham District Council.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority are :

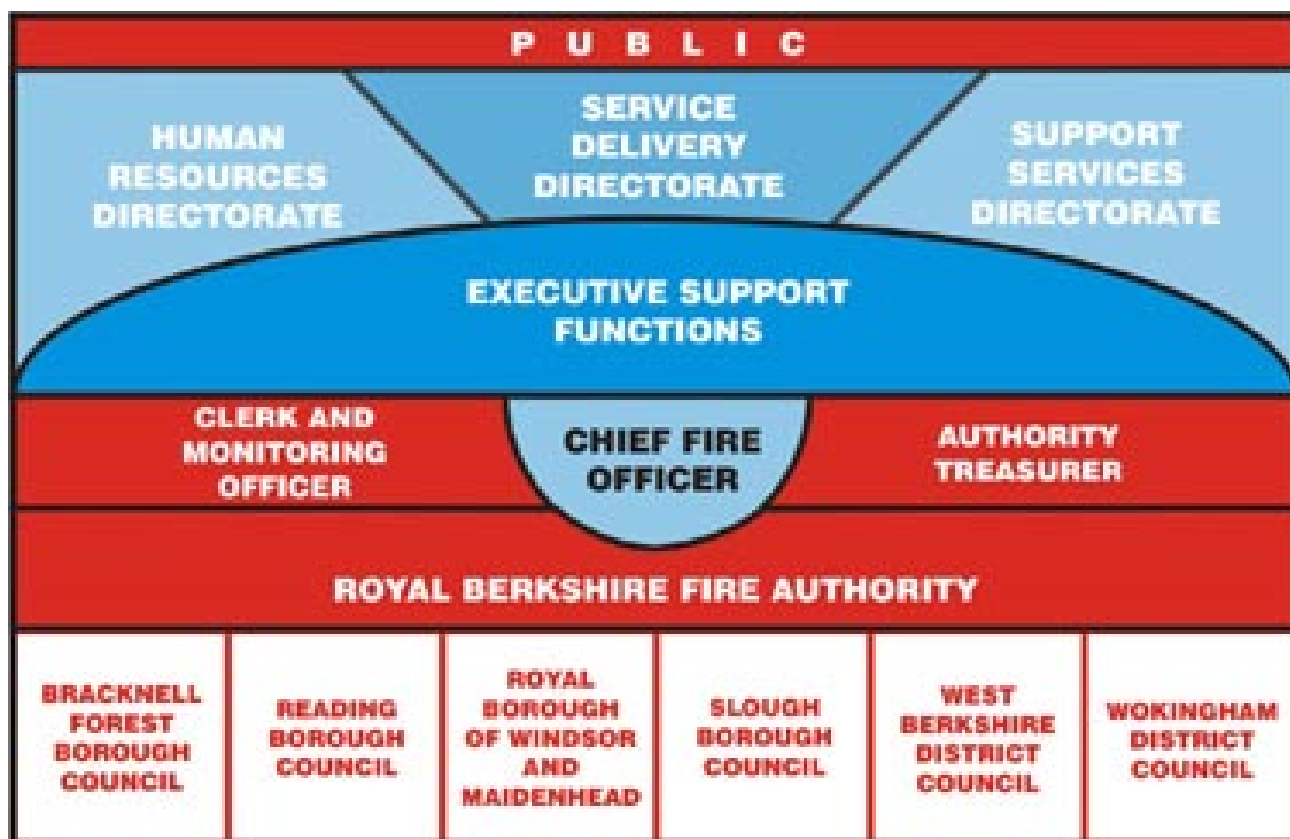
Chairman

Cllr. J Brooks (Liberal Democrat)
Home : 01635 47391
E-mail : jeff.brooks@btinternet.com

Vice-Chairman

Cllr. B Patman (Conservative)
Home : 0118 988 3270

If you would like to **get in touch** with your local member, please contact David Weller, the Authority's Committee Administrator / Members Information Officer, by telephone on 0118 932 2288 or by e-mail wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk.



Cllr. T Mills
Cllr. P North
Cllr. M Adams

Cllr. C Borgars
Cllr. T Crisp
Cllr. C Maskell
Cllr. P Weston

Cllr. C Bateson
Cllr. V Howes
Cllr. D Howes
Cllr. S Werner
Cllr. D Wilson

Cllr. J Grewal
Cllr. D Smith
Cllr. R Webb

Cllr. J Brooks
Cllr. P Bryant
Cllr. G Findlay
Cllr. O Jeffery
Cllr. J Mole

Cllr. P Bray
Cllr. J Green
Cllr. B Patman
Cllr. A Ross
Cllr. D Swindells

LINKS BETWEEN THE UNITARY AUTHORITIES, FIRE AUTHORITY AND THE PUBLIC

INTRODUCTION

As previously, the corporate plan incorporates three documents - the Strategic Plan, the Community Fire Safety Plan and the Best Value Performance Plan. Each element is vital in the Brigade's planning, performance measurement and service delivery and all are inextricably linked.

This plan sets out the Combined Fire Authority's vision and explains how the strategic planning process seeks to achieve that vision. It is based upon Best Value which is defined below.

Best Value legislation requires the Combined Fire Authority to produce an annual performance plan, which describes the Brigade's performance over the previous twelve months and sets targets for the forthcoming year.

This is the fourth Best Value performance plan published by the Combined Fire Authority.

BEST VALUE

Best Value legislation requires local authority organisations to assess their performance and review working practices to secure ongoing improvement in service delivery.

This duty is derived from the Local Government Act (1999) that defines Best Value as, "a duty to deliver services to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most economic, efficient and effective means available."

Although it is no longer a statutory Best Value requirement, the Brigade is undertaking a rolling review of its functions and services over a five-year period. This programme may need to be amended in the light of the continuing industrial dispute and the government's modernisation agenda. Those functions and services that are subject to review are scrutinised using four criteria :

Challenge – to determine whether a particular function should be provided and, if so, to what standard.

Compare – Berkshire's performance with that of similar fire brigades.

Consult – users of the service on their experiences.

Compete – ensure that competitive marketing, testing and development is considered in providing Best Value.

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

The Brigade consults regularly with representative communities throughout Berkshire. As a result a robust and effective dialogue has been established with these groups.

The Brigade is currently revising its strategy to achieve a more integrated approach to consultation. This should enable the consultation needs of a more diverse representation to be sought and addressed. The District Auditor has approved the Best Value element of this consultation strategy.

In July 2002 the Brigade engaged Opinion Research Services Limited to conduct an employee survey. The results of this were compared to a similar survey conducted in 2000. Encouragingly it revealed that there was a 16% rise in the percentage of respondents who feel valued as a member of the Brigade in 2002 compared to 2000.

Best Value reviews rely heavily on effective consultation and analysis of the resultant findings. This feedback is vital in helping the Brigade to improve the quality of its services.

Both of the reviews intended for this year have been delayed. The Fire Safety Best Value review was postponed following proposed changes to the way Fire Safety legislation is applied. As a result this review has now been conducted as a Directorate review instead. The Training and Development Best Value review has been postponed due to the continuing industrial dispute. It is intended that this review will take place in 2003 - 2005 as part of a collaborative approach with other fire brigades.

The Department of Transport and the Local Regions has issued guidance on the Best Value performance indicators for 2002/03. It is intended that public consultation on BVPI 3 (overall service) will take place in September 2003.



FIRE CREWS DEAL WITH A BLAZE IN OUTBUILDINGS AT PADWORTH.

AIMS

The Brigade has developed six strategic aims to deliver its vision of 'A Safer Berkshire' :

- Minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.
- Reduce the number of deaths, injuries and damage caused by hazards other than fire and render appropriate humanitarian services.
- Deliver community safety education, tailored to users' needs, to reduce the number of fire calls and to minimise the consequences of fire.
- Apply fire safety legislation, without bias, to maximise compliance and minimise loss of life, injury and damage from fire.
- Demonstrate continuous improvement in service delivery, based upon consultation and partnership working, within a Best Value framework.
- Be a good employer and be recognised as such.

Each strategic aim is linked to measured outcomes. Evidence of progress against these aims is supplied by the Best Value performance indicators, which are monitored closely by Brigade management to ensure performance is on target.

ABOUT ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Berkshire is amongst the fastest growing and most successful areas in Britain. One of the most densely populated counties, it enjoys an expanding business scene with employment levels well above the national norm. The local government structure is based around six Unitary Authorities. The county has a population of more than 800,000, of which 50,000 are children under the age of four and 90,000 are elderly people (over the age of 65). Statistics show both of these groups as being at significant risk from fire.

There are 20 fire stations sited at strategic locations across the county. Reading's four stations and those at Newbury, Bracknell, Langley, Maidenhead, Slough and Windsor, are fully crewed 24 hours a day, whilst the stations at Lambourn, Hungerford, Mortimer, Pangbourne, Sonning, Wargrave, Ascot, Crowthorne and Cookham are staffed by retained firefighters who are mobilised to fire calls from their workplace or home. Newbury, Maidenhead and Bracknell have a retained section in addition to the wholetime crews and Wokingham fire station is staffed by full-time firefighters during the day with night and weekend cover provided by retained firefighters.

As soon as a 999 call is received by the service's mobilising centre at Reading, a race against time begins - delays can cost lives, homes, businesses and jobs.

Each call is assessed by highly trained control staff who despatch the most appropriate response in the quickest possible time.

The Brigade has a fleet of custom-built emergency vehicles, equipped and maintained to carry firefighters and resources to wherever people or property are in danger.

As well as 24 fire engines, at least one of which is based at each station, the fleet also includes specialist vehicles, such as those used for chemical incidents, operations support and rescues, together with operation control units and extending hydraulic platforms.

Last year, fire crews in Berkshire dealt with more than 4,550 fires in homes, industrial buildings, vehicles and outdoors. They carried out more than 1,140 rescues, including people trapped in buildings or in vehicles as

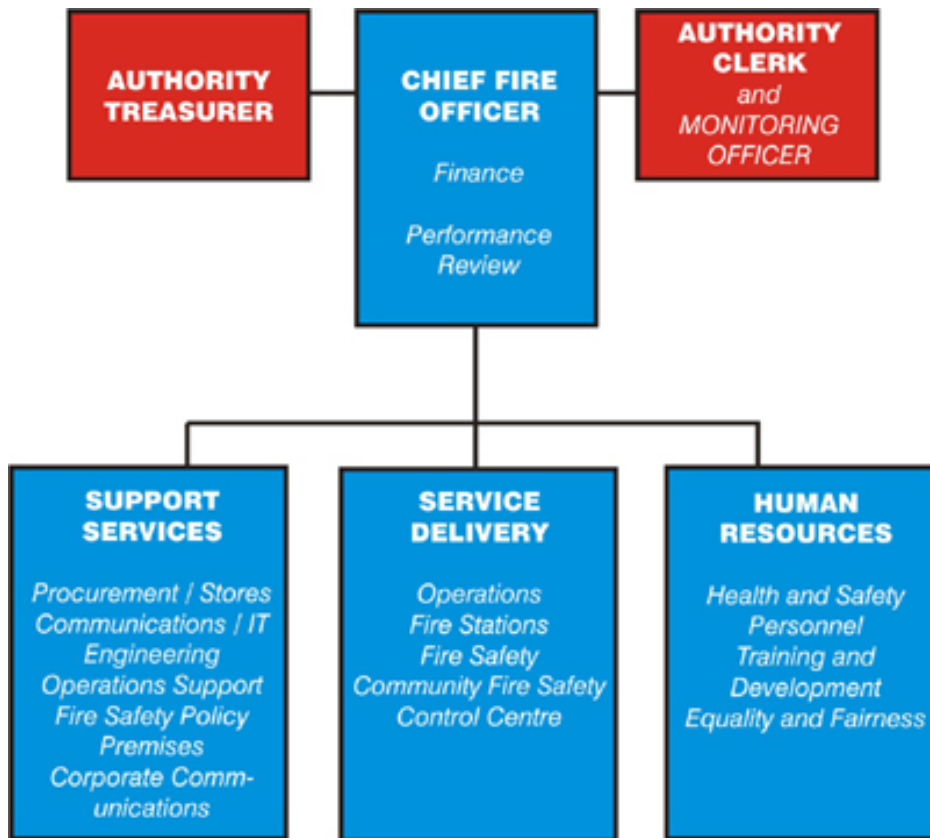
the result of a road traffic accident and animals which were trapped, injured or in danger.

However, prevention is better than cure and a key part of the Brigade's service to the public is to help prevent fires from occurring in the first place. Firefighters and a dedicated team of specially trained staff work hard to keep the community safe by spreading the fire safety message. Staff are involved in a wide variety of initiatives, many of which have been developed in response to specific incidents or problems, to ensure people are informed about fire safety.

Last year Inspecting Officers carried out over 4,800 inspections of a wide range of commercial and industrial premises enforcing both the Fire Precautions Act (1971) and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1999.

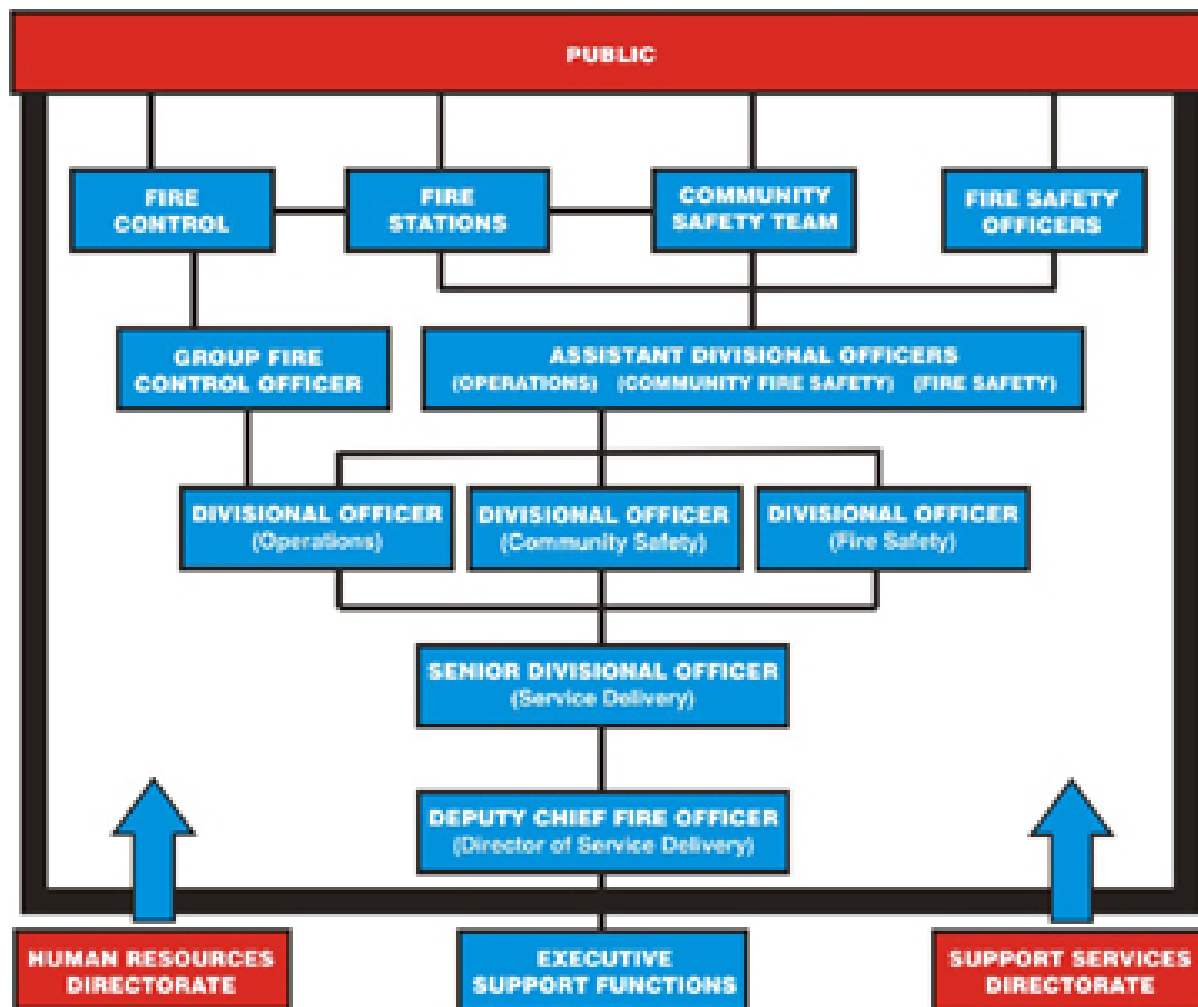
Inspecting Officers also work closely with other Local Authority agencies such as Building Control and Environmental Health Officers to ensure that all new and converted buildings are built to current standards and the risks from fire are minimised.

During the year a comprehensive directorate review of the statutory Fire Safety function of the Brigade took place which resulted in seven recommendations for continuous improvement in anticipation of the introduction of new legislation.



THE DIAGRAM ABOVE SHOWS THE BRIGADE'S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND THE AREAS OF ACTIVITY WITHIN EACH DIRECTORATE

THE DIAGRAM BELOW DEMONSTRATES HOW THE BRIGADE STRUCTURE SUPPORTS SERVICE DELIVERY TO THE PUBLIC



THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Effective strategic planning is essential in order to determine the Brigade's future direction. In order to support this process, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service has integrated its strategic planning and performance management, using Best Value performance indicators to ensure consistent standards of quality and efficiency.

The strategic plan is development based and uses Best Value criteria and performance management to support delivery of continuous, sustainable improvement. It defines the Combined Fire Authority's long-term service aims for the people of Berkshire but must be sufficiently flexible to allow for changing priorities.

The strategic targets, including Best Value performance indicators, drive the service towards the achievement of its vision. They are monitored monthly by the Brigade's management team. Any performance gaps are addressed by reviewing the area of concern and the implementation of appropriate measures.

Achievement of these targets is through the policies and strategies of the three directorates which are evaluated regularly. Each of the Brigade's major functions is also subject to fundamental performance reviews. In addition specific directorate reviews and key tasks complement the continuous cycle of analysis and improvement.

Ownership of the strategic planning process is at four distinct levels :

- **Elected Members** of the Combined Fire Authority have a strategic overview of the planning process and an opportunity to determine the priorities of the service.
- **The Chief Fire Officer** maintains an executive overview of the strategic planning process.
- **Directors** are responsible for delivering strategic objectives, which are agreed with the Chief Fire Officer.

- **Key Managers** are responsible for implementing strategy. They work to terms of reference, which include definition of project parameters, allocation of resources, timescales, Best Value criteria and opportunities for collaboration. These must be available for scrutiny by Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate, District Audit or the Brigade's own Performance Review team.

AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS FOR 2003/04

The Brigade will be working in four key areas in 2003/04 :

Strategic

At a strategic level the Brigade will be concentrating on ensuring that it's corporate governance systems meet the needs of a flexible and modernised fire service.

Support Services

The Directorate will be focused on the fire service modernising agenda working towards the implementation of an Integrated Risk Management Plan aimed at improving the service to the local community. Other key areas include business continuity, enhancing the quality of the environment by continuing to reduce vehicle emissions, improving working conditions for our staff and delivering the Governments electronic service delivery targets.

Service Delivery

The Directorate will be focusing on operations, and particularly the Integrated Risk Management Plan. There will also be a focus on community safety with a drive towards collaboration with other organisations where appropriate.

Human Resources

The Directorate will focus on delivery of the Integrated Personal Development System implementation strategy, management development, further development of partnership working, the review and improvement of Health and Safety policy and practice, continued implementation of the Equality and Diversity Strategy and the implementation of an enhanced Occupational Health Service. The Directorate has also introduced a policy for managing workloads and working time as well implementing a comprehensive risk management strategy.

In terms of national priorities the Directorate has produced an implementation strategy for the Integrated Personal Development System. In terms of local priorities the Directorate has maintained high levels of wholetime recruitment in order to maintain crewing levels.

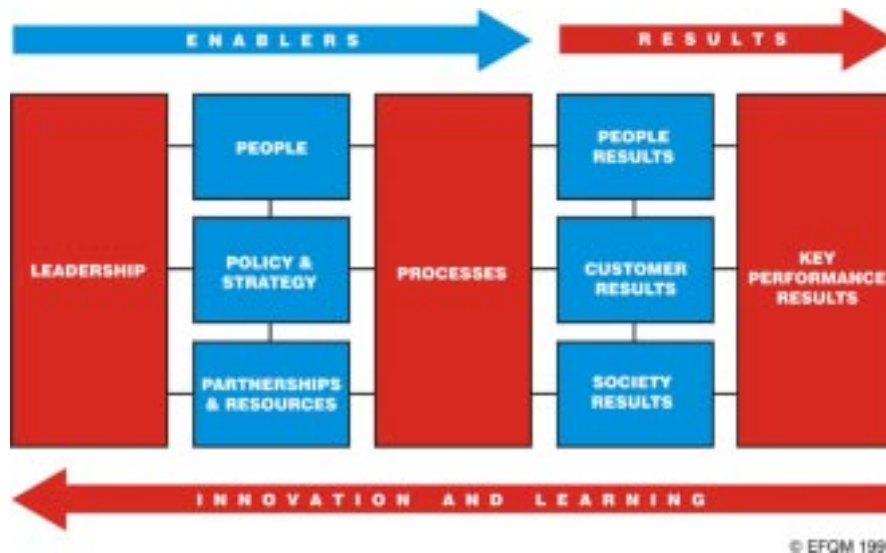
The implementation of the continuous improvement plan arising from the management review of Personnel Services has commenced but elements have been delayed as a result of industrial action arising from the national fire service pay dispute which has yet to be resolved. The outstanding parts of the plan will be implemented in 2003/04.

The Connecting Communities project and associated positive action measures have seen a widening of the contacts between the Brigade and the black and ethnic minority communities of Berkshire which has produced an increase in the number of wholetime firefighter applicants from black and ethnic minority communities.

EFFICIENCY

The Brigade continues to work towards efficiency improvements through the integration of its strategic planning and performance management system, incorporating recommendations from District Audit. This work is scrutinised by the Brigade's own management team and by the Combined Fire Authority's Performance Review and Audit Panel.

The Brigade uses the European Foundation for Quality Management's (EFQM) Excellence Model to review its functions and identify areas for improvement. This is based on nine criteria which are shown below :



THE NINE ELEMENTS OF THE EFQM EXCELLENCE MODEL

The Brigade conducted a self-assessment in 2001 using the EFQM Excellence Model to identify areas for improvement. As a result, during 2002 the following was implemented :

- The employee survey was repeated
- The Brigade's performance against internal (policy) and external (Best Value Performance Indicators) standards was assessed

Preparation for a further self-assessment is already underway. Results from this self-assessment will be determined in July 2003 and reported in the Brigade's Corporate Plan in 2004/05.

PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SENSE

Another important strategic development for the Brigade in 2001 was the formation of the Partnership for Common Sense, which involves managers, elected members and all employees.

Strategic planning affects every member of staff. The Partnership for Common Sense process articulates the views of every level within the organisation – everyone 'has a say' in what is affecting them directly or on current issues that may be causing concern. The process has representation from the workforce, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), middle managers, senior managers, principal management and Fire Authority members.

There is a commitment at every level to make improvements where these are identified as being necessary. This commitment has been re-confirmed by all levels within the Brigade in 2003. The issues to be addressed through 2002 were :

- Resources
- Continuity
- Accommodation
- Management Practice
- Respect and Dignity

Individual working groups were established to address each of the areas above. The groups work across the hierarchy of the service and are an influential factor in the strategic planning process.

This work will continue through 2003 and be evaluated and updated using a series of station and departmental visits mid-year. This will be followed with further workshops towards the end of 2003 to encourage as many Brigade personnel as possible to have active involvement in furthering the Partnership principles. This will enable the improvement in several Best Value Performance Plan key performance indicators.

LINKS TO PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

In support of ongoing improvement, the Brigade's performance review system operates cyclically by :

- Deriving departmental aims from strategic aims.
- Using targeted performance measures to assess how well departmental aims are being achieved.
- Devolving responsibility for performance indicators and targets to individual staff and assessing the achievement of targets through personal development plans and performance appraisal mechanisms.
- Aggregating performance information and proposed future targets at a departmental level and feeding the information into the strategic planning process.
- Using the results to review the strategic vision, aims and targets.

SUPPORTING AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

To complement the performance review cycle, the organisation's planning process links individual targets and the Combined Fire Authority's strategic aims and objectives, enabling employees to recognise their own contribution to those aims.



THE CASCADING OF STRATEGIC AIMS AND TARGETS

The cyclical nature of the performance management system includes all employees in the strategic planning process. The method of performance review employed by the Brigade is illustrated in the following diagram :



THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW CYCLE

OUR PERFORMANCE

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has categorised all brigades into four 'family' groups. Brigades within a family group are deemed to be similar, based upon fire calls, population, budget, number of staff etc. This is intended to allow for more realistic performance comparisons between the brigades Berkshire is measured against :

- Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service
- Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Dorset Fire and Rescue Service
- County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Brigade
- East Sussex Fire Brigade
- Norfolk Fire Service
- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Oxfordshire Fire Service
- Suffolk County Fire Service
- West Sussex Fire Brigade
- Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority

Full Best Value Performance Plans (BVPP) produced by any other brigade in England and Wales can be obtained from their respective headquarters. If you need any assistance in obtaining a BVPP for another fire brigade, please contact Berkshire's Performance Review Department on 0118 932 2000.

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

At the heart of Best Value is the statutory performance management framework. This provides for annual reporting by Best Value authorities of a set of national performance indicators and standards set by the Government.

The Brigade assesses its performance against the targets set in last year's BVPP, and then sets new targets – aiming for continuous improvement – for the forthcoming year.

This approach to year on year improvements supports the Brigade's strategic, longer term vision.

The following tables show our performance for the previous two years and set targets for this year.

The comparative data is based on the actual year end figures available from 5 family group (Group 2) brigades at the time of going to print.

The performance data for 2002/03 does not include calls handled by the police and has not been validated. The District Auditors have to validate the data in a report to the Combined Fire Authority by 31 December 2003. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will publish estimated data that covers periods of industrial action later this year. This data will be reported in this or a future BVPP.

There is some variation in the Brigade's performance for 2001/02 reported in last year's BVPP compared to this year's plan. This is due to improvements in the system that the Brigade employs to collect and record its performance data.

CORPORATE HEALTH BVPIs

Corporate Health BVPIs provide a snap shot of how well the Fire Authority is performing overall. The indicators determine the health of the Fire Authority at the highest level in respect of managing its finances and its staff effectively.

BVPI 2a

The level (if any) of the Equality Standard for Local Government to which the Fire Authority conforms.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
3	1	3	1	(ix)	3

The Brigade is currently undertaking a formal assessment against this standard.

BVPI 2b

The duty to promote race equality.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(viii)	(viii)	(viii)	(viii)	(ix)	68.4%

This is a new indicator for 2003/04.

BVPI 3

The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
100%	98%	100%	98%	(ix)	100%

Our performance in 2002/03 is based on the results of the National Public Opinion Survey conducted in 2000. This is repeated every three years and the Brigade will conduct the National Public Opinion Survey again in September 2003 in order to gauge citizens satisfaction with the overall service provided.

BVPI 8

The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services which were paid by the Fire Authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the Fire Authority.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
95%	86%	100%	88.2%	(ix)	100%

The 100% target is set by the Government. A new financial system has been installed from April 2003 to speed up the movement of invoices from cost centre managers to the finance department.

BVPI 11 (a)

The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(iii)	(iii)	(iv)	26.3%	(ix)	26%

BVPI 11 (b)

The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(iii)	(iii)	(iv)	5.3%	(ix)	10%

BVPI 12 (a)

The proportion of working days / shifts lost to sickness absence by wholetime uniformed staff.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
7.16%	8%	7.3%	6.5%	(ix)	6.5%

Last year's target was exceeded and this year's target has been set to consolidate this improvement.

BVPI 12 (b)

The proportion of working days / shifts lost to sickness absence by all staff.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
7.2%	6.7%	6%	5.2%	(ix)	5.2%

Last year's target was exceeded and this year's target has been set to consolidate this improvement.

BVPI 13

Voluntary leavers as a percentage of staff in post.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
5%	5.1%	(i)	9.3%	(ix)	6.5%

We are seeking a significant improvement on last year's high level of voluntary leavers.

BVPI 14

The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
1%	1%	1%	0.1%	(ix)	1%

Last year's target was met. There is no requirement to publish this performance indicator. However, it is included for information.

BVPI 15 (a) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The percentage of employees retiring on the grounds of ill-health as a percentage of the total workforce – members of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%	(ix)	0.6%

Last year's target was met.

BVPI 15 (b) ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

The percentage of employees retiring on the grounds of ill-health as a percentage of the total workforce – members of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	0%	0%	0%	(ix)	0%

Last year's target was met.

BVPI 16

The percentage of Local Authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
0.3%	0.15%	0.3%	0.1%	(ix)	0.3%

This target was not met last year. Performance is limited by self-classification and fitness requirements for operational posts. There is no requirement to publish this performance indicator. However, it is included for information.

BVPI 17 (a) ^(v)

The percentage of ethnic minority uniformed staff.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(v)	1.7%	(v)	2.2%	(ix)	3%

Last year's target was met and efforts continue to recruit more people from ethnic minority communities to uniformed posts.

BVPI 17 (b)

The percentage of minority ethnic community population of working age in the Brigade area.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(v)	(vi)	(v)	(vii)	(ix)	(vii)

The Brigade is awaiting the results of the 2001 census.

BVPI 157

The number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(iv)	(iii)	(iv)	43%	(ix)	66%

The Brigade has identified the following types of interaction that are enabled for electronic service delivery :

- Providing information
- Collecting revenue
- Regulation
- Applications for services
- Booking resources
- Paying for goods and services
- Access to community professional and business networks

This is not an exhaustive list as there will be others, depending on local circumstances.

Enabled presumes that all services are capable of being enabled for electronic delivery unless there is a legal or operational reason why this cannot be done. Electronic means delivery through internet protocols and other ICT methods and includes delivery by telephone if the transaction carried out is electronically enabled i.e. the officer receiving the call can access electronic information and / or update records on-line there and then.

The Brigade is committed to improving the way that it monitors this particular Best Value performance indicator.

KEY

- (i) Not a BVPI for 2002/03.
- (ii) BVPI 15 was misinterpreted in the BVPP for 2001/02. As a result the targets set were not relevant.
- (iii) New BVPI for 2002/03. No previous data available.
- (iv) New BVPI for 2002/03. No target required.
- (v) No target set as definition changed.
- (vi) No data available as definition changed.
- (vii) Awaiting census results.
- (viii) New BVPI for 2003/04.
- (ix) Insufficient data provided by other Group 2 brigades.

FIRE BVPIs

Fire BVPIs provide an indication of how well the Fire Authority is performing in relation to service delivery.

BVPI 142 (i)

The total number of calls to fire (excluding false alarms) per 10,000 population.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
55	64.9	70.1	57.9	56.6	60

The Brigade has recruited extra personnel to the community safety team allowing for more community safety education and activities to take place.

BVPI 142 (ii)

Primary fires per 10,000 population.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
30	33.4	32	29.3	31.1	29

In addition to the extra personnel recruited to the community safety team, the Brigade has carried out a range of advertising campaigns warning of the dangers of fire.

BVPI 142 (iii)

Accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 dwellings.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
16	17.7	17	15.8	13.4	16.3

As above.

BVPI 143 (i)

Deaths arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 10,000 population.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
0	0.25	0	0.13	0.36	0

The target for deaths arising from accidental fire will always be zero.

BVPI 143 (ii)

Injuries arising from accidental fires in dwellings per 100,000 population.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
9	11.2	10.8	9.9	9.3	9.0

The Brigade is entering into partnerships to enable home risk assessments to be undertaken and smoke detectors fitted and maintained.

BVPI 144 (b)

Accidental fire in dwellings confined to room of origin in smaller cities / larger towns and classified as "B risk".

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
100%	80%	88%	88%	91%	93%

The Brigade continues to give advice to ensure that calls for assistance are made quickly and the service is continually exploring new methods of firefighting.

BVPI 144 (c)

Accidental fire in dwellings confined to room of origin in smaller towns and urban residential areas and classified as "C risk".

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
95%	80.9%	94.6%	87.5%	91.3%	92%

The Brigade's performance has improved on previous years but the strategies outlined above will assist further improvement against the target.

BVPI 144 (d)

Accidental fire in dwellings confined to room of origin in rural village areas and classified as "D risk".

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
96%	74%	88%	73%	83%	80%

A reduction in the number of part-time firefighters in previous years has affected the speed of response in rural areas.

BVPI 145 (a)

The percentage of incidents at which the number of appliances met the standards of fire cover.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
100%	99.8%	100%	99.9%	99.3%	100%

This target has been closely monitored during the year.

BVPI 145 (b)

The percentage of incidents at which the number of riders met the standards of fire cover.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
99%	97%	97%	99%	88%	99%

As above.

BVPI 145 (c)

The percentage of incidents at which the attendance times met the standards of fire cover.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
98%	91.9%	92.7%	94.6%	94.8%	95%

As above.

BVPI 146

The number of calls to malicious false alarms per 1,000 population.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
1	1.20	1	0.86	0.65	0.85

On going campaigns targeted at areas with a high prevalence of hoax calls has achieved a significant reduction.

BVPI 147

The average time taken by the Fire Authority to issue fire safety certificates.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
95 days	97 days	95 days	98 days	77 days	95 days

The target for this year was not achieved due to the lack of qualified officers in the establishment and an unusual number of qualified officers being on long term sickness absence.

BVPI 149

False alarms caused by automatic fire detection apparatus per 1,000 non-domestic properties.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
210	213.2	202.5	203.3	130.2	210

Campaigns to reduce the number of calls from automatic fire alarms have had to contend with an increase in the number of systems coming on line. Further proactive campaigns are being planned for 2003/04.

BVPI 150

Expenditure per head of population on the provision of fire and rescue services.

Target 2001/02	Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Group 2 Brigades 2002/03	Target 2003/04
£28.00	£25.19	£29.00	£26.86	(ix)	£32.00

The Brigade's expenditure is budgeted to increase by 9.5% in 2003/04 compared to the previous year.

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Local performance indicators are set by the Brigade to support the nationally set Best Value performance indicators.

Local performance indicators 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c) are new. They have been introduced as a result of recent nationally agreed targets for control rooms. Local performance indicator 1 has been renamed 2(a).

LOCAL PI 1 (a)

To achieve a call handling time of 7 seconds or less (from the time the telephone rings in control to the time it is answered by an operator).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	(ii)	85%

LOCAL PI 1 (b)

To achieve a call handling time of 10 seconds or less (from the time the telephone rings in control to the time it is answered by an operator).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	(ii)	95%

LOCAL PI 1 (c)

To achieve a call handling time of 20 seconds or less (from the time the telephone rings in control to the time it is answered by an operator).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	(ii)	98%

LOCAL PI 2 (a)

To achieve a call handling time of 45 seconds or less (from receipt in control to turnout of appliances).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
13.9%	(i)	16.1%	(i)

LOCAL PI 2 (b)

To achieve a call handling time of 60 seconds or less (from receipt in control to turnout of appliances).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
58.2%	63%	59.4%	75%

The Brigade's performance has improved from 2001/02. This indicator will be monitored more closely during 2003/04 as the Brigade continues to develop its performance management system.

LOCAL PI 2 (c)

To achieve a call handling time of 90 seconds or less (from receipt in control to turnout of appliances).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
84.6%	90%	85%	90%

The Brigade's performance has improved from 2001/02. This indicator will be monitored more closely during 2003/04 as the Brigade continues to develop its performance management system.

LOCAL PI 2 (d)

To achieve a call handling time of 120 seconds or less (from receipt in control to turnout of appliances).

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
93.9%	99%	93.9%	99%

This target will be more closely monitored during 2003/04 as the Brigade continues to develop its performance management system.

LOCAL PI 3

To achieve a turnout time of 70 seconds or less for wholetime operational appliances.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
27.4%	35%	25.7%	30%

Health and Safety legislation requires that fire crews have to dress in fire clothing before the fire appliance leaves the station. This indicator will be monitored closely during 2003/04.

LOCAL PI 4

To achieve an attendance time to incidents of 20 minutes or less for supervisory officers.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
82.5%	95%	77.1%	83%

Performance for 2002/03 includes attendance times to all incidents and not only emergency incidents that require an attendance time of 20 minutes.

LOCAL PI 5

To carry out a fire safety workplace inspection within two working days following a fire.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	100%	55.6%	90%

A revised policy was introduced in January 2003 to improve the response to post fire inspections. This will ensure the revised target is attainable.

LOCAL PI 6

The number of inspections carried out of high risk premises.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	(ii)	(iii)

This is a revised indicator that will gather meaningful data in preparation for the introduction of new Fire Safety legislation in early 2004.

LOCAL PI 7 (a)

The percentage of shifts where operational crewing is equal to or greater than 60.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	54%	60%

This indicator can be affected by the large number of people leaving the Brigade due to the high cost of living in Berkshire.

LOCAL PI 7 (b)

The percentage of shifts where operational crewing is equal to or greater than 54.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	100%	100%

This target is monitored closely to ensure that the minimum standards are maintained in accordance with the Brigade’s current crewing policy.

LOCAL PI 8

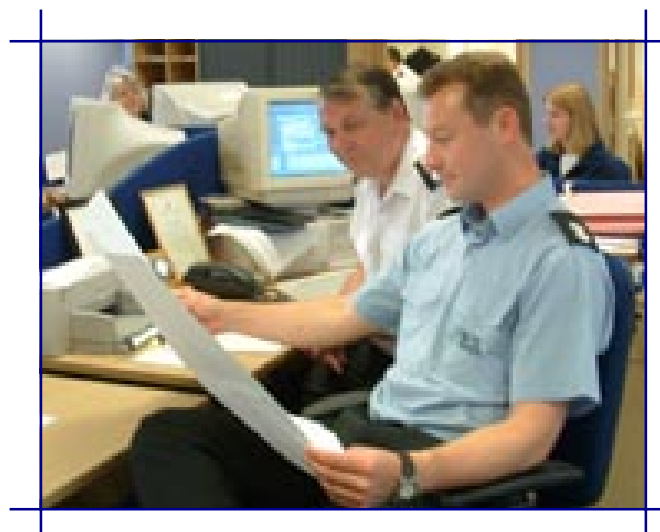
The percentage of shifts where control crewing is greater than minimum.

Performance 2001/02	Target 2002/03	Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04
(ii)	(iii)	(ii)	(iii)

No data available yet.

KEY

- (i) This PI is no longer in use and will be replaced in 2003/04 with targets drawn from the nationally agreed Control Room Output Specification.
- (ii) No previous performance available.
- (iii) No target set as no previous performance available.



**MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS FIRE SAFETY TEAM
DISCUSS BUILDING LAYOUT PLANS**

LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS*

WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are working with West Berkshire District Council to promote home safety by setting the following targets :

Accidental fires in dwellings in West Berkshire

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
80	65	65	65

Injuries arising from accidental fires in dwellings in West Berkshire

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
30	22	22	22

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are working with Reading Borough Council to reduce antisocial behaviour by setting the following targets :

Number of deliberate fires

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
674	**	**	**

Number of hoax calls

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
338	**	**	**

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are working with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to reduce antisocial behaviour by setting the following targets :

Number of deliberate fires

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
329	**	**	**

Number of hoax calls

Performance 2002/03	Target 2003/04	Target 2004/05	Target 2005/06
82	**	**	**

* See **COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN**

** Targets to be confirmed



THE AFTERMATH OF A HIGH SPEED ROAD ACCIDENT - FIRE CREWS WORKING TO RESCUE A TRAPPED MOTORIST

HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE

The Brigade has set objectives to reduce incidents of accidents, injuries and dangerous occurrences. These objectives will assist the Brigade in meeting the health and safety targets outlined in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) "Revitalising health and safety document". The financial period of 2002/03 has been compared against 2001/02 figures.

- The total number of injury accidents reduced by 25%.
- The number of reportable accidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, were reduced by 22%.
- The number of reportable dangerous occurrences to the HSE were reduced from 7 to 4.
- 37% reduction in the number of near misses.

The focus for reducing the number of accidents, continues to be on slips, trips and falls and manual handling activities, as these are the most common causes for injury to employees in the Brigade.

The Performance Review department carried out an audit of the Brigade's Health and Safety Management System. The audit was based on the standards in the Health and Safety Executive guidance document HS(G) 65 "Successful Health and Safety Management".

This publication recommends that compliance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 should be achieved through the five key elements outlined below. The score that was awarded in each area is also given.

1. Policy 73%
2. Organising 74%
3. Planning and Implementation 74%
4. Measuring Performance 69%
5. Audit and Performance Review 47%

An overall Health and Safety Performance rating of 69.1% was achieved.

In addition to auditing the Health and Safety Management System, the audit team undertook an audit of the plan submitted to the Health and Safety Executive

by the Brigade in response to the requirements of the Health and Safety Improvement Notice (I/RCT/BFRS1) served upon the Brigade on 22 January 1997 by HM Inspector of Health and Safety.

The Brigade is largely compliant with the plan that was put in place to discharge the improvement notice.

An action plan to address the recommendations of the audit report will be developed by the end of June 2003.

BEST VALUE REVIEWS

BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME

Following recommendations from Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate and District Audit the Best Value review programme has been revised to achieve a more strategic approach.

In order to provide some form of continuity the South East Region of the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA) has divided the functions of all brigades in the region into three primary strategic areas. These are service delivery, support services and corporate services. Below this strategic level the reviews are split further into functional areas and in some cases the function may cut across several departments within the organisation.

These functional reviews will be brought together by March 2004, enabling the Brigade to complete its strategic overview programme by 2005. These functional reviews feed into the three Best Value reviews, which will be scrutinised using the four "C's" of the

Best Value criteria. The programme will deliver a comprehensive review of all areas of the Brigade.

The Brigade also carries out reviews as directed by central government, including one for Training due for completion in March 2005.

The Best Value review programme has been developed to ensure that it can be delivered on time, using existing resources. The original centrally imposed timescale running from 2000/05 has now been removed but the Brigade's review programme continues to follow this timescale.

In the light of likely changes that will impact on the Brigade and as part of the continuous improvement process, the Brigade's management team will reconsider the Best Value review programme in consultation with, and with the assistance of, the Audit Commission.

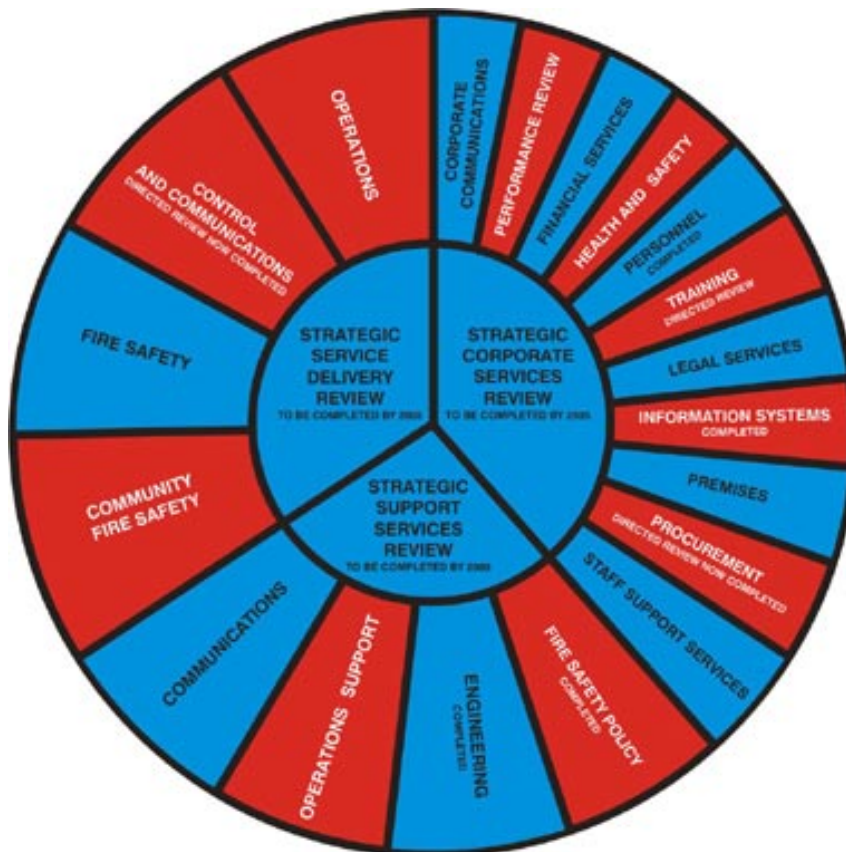


DIAGRAM DEMONSTRATING THE PRINCIPLE OF SEGREGATING THE STRATEGIC AREAS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BRIGADE INTO MANAGEABLE SECTIONS IN ORDER TO UNDERTAKE A REVIEW OF EVERY PROVISION OF THE SERVICE

KEY RESULTS OF COMPLETED REVIEWS

DAMAGE CONTROL

The review of damage control operations formed part of an overall Best Value review of delivery of front line services to the community.

The objective of the review was to achieve annual efficiency improvements of two per cent, by reducing the cost of fire and non-fire related damage.

What is Damage Control?

The Fire Service has :

- A duty to take 'reasonable steps to prevent or mitigate damage at fires'.
- Powers to 'employ the fire brigade for humanitarian services, for which it may make a charge'.

What the Review Identified

The review identified eight service improvements :

- Location of non-mobile salvage equipment is reviewed.
- The Brigade no longer levies a charge for damage control operations.
- Extra equipment is made available on fire engines for improving damage control operations.
- More focused training is conducted internally and in partnership with external organisations.

- Production of a policy for damage control operations.
- Establishment of a partnership with the commercial sector for improving delivery of post-incident damage control.
- The Brigade explores the possibility of establishing a consultancy for production of salvage plans.
- Feasibility of collaborative working with neighbouring brigades is assessed.

The following action plan was agreed by the Combined Fire Authority's Performance Review and Audit Panel in April 2002. Due to the limited financial savings identified in the review combined with the competing priorities such as the need to progress consultation to implement recommendations of the special appliance review, the Authority agreed to delay the implementation of the damage control review until 1 April 2003.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
To produce a policy on damage control operations.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed within 3 months.	
To implement recommendations of an audit damage control equipment.	Assistant Divisional Officer (Central Team)	To be completed within 6 months.	

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
To stop charging for personnel, time spent and equipment used at damage control incidents.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed within 12 months.	£1500 per annum.
Further equipment added to fire appliances to assist personnel in damage control operations.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed within 12 months.	
Aquavacs purchased for special fire appliances and for fire stations.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed within 12 months.	
A partnership is established with the commercial sector for improving the delivery of a damage control service to the community.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed within 12 months.	
A centralised training package is made available on damage control operations.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed when resources permit.	
The feasibility of forming partnerships with technical colleges to facilitate a risk free damage control environment.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed when resources permit.	
The possibility of establishing a consultancy on provision of salvage plans for business continuity is explored.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed when resources permit.	
The feasibility for joint working with neighbouring fire brigades on damage control is explored.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	To be completed when resources permit.	

CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS

The review of Control and Communications forms part of an overall Best Value review of delivery of front line services to the community.

What is Control and Communications?

- The primary function of the control centre is to receive emergency calls, mobilise an appropriate response and provide at-incident support to fire crews.
- This is achieved using computerised communications equipment, supported by the 24-hour callout communications team.
- Contingency arrangements are provided to ensure continuity of service should the facility or equipment become unusable for any reason.

- Closer liaison should be sought between control and other relevant emergency service control rooms in order to familiarise and understand each other’s needs.
- Suggestions for income generation should be investigated to further improve competitiveness.

Fifteen improvements were agreed by the Combined Fire Authority’s Performance Review and Audit Panel in March 2002 and are contained within the following action plan. The timescale for implementing the action plan was revised in May 2003 to take account of delays caused by a change of lead officer and the fire service trade dispute.

What the Review Identified

- In the short term the service should continue the existing model of operation, making improvements in quality as described in the recommendations of the report.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Create new audit system to encompass output specification standards.	Brigade Control Manager	Call handling performance targets set and these will be monitored regularly. Training sessions for staff to be organised.	
Review continuation training and management training needs.	Brigade Control Manager	Continuation training and management training needs reviewed – NVQ system introduced.	
Check allocation of watch references and amend if required.	Brigade Control Manager	References amended.	

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Create and implement over-establishment recruitment policy.	Brigade Control Manager	Policy created and implemented.	
Reduction in call handling times – investigate a methodology.	Brigade Control Manager	Pre-alerting policy to be researched and systems to reduce call handling times are being installed which will be followed by staff training – to be completed within 6 months.	Capital costs £15,000 Revenue costs £5000 per annum
Set up inter-service Control Manager’s Liaison Group.	Brigade Control Manager	Regional inter service control managers liaison group set up. Feasibility of setting up an inter-service control managers group - to be completed within 6 months.	
Complete control management policy documentation.	Brigade Control Manager	To be completed within 6 months.	
Evaluate opportunities for further involvement in community safety.	Brigade Control Manager	Projects including initiatives to reduce hoax calls are being discussed in meetings of the Brigade Control Manager and the Community Safety Manager – to be completed within 6 months.	
Investigate appliance availability recording processes.	Brigade Control Manager / Information Systems Manager	Systems for recording availability of appliances crewed by part-time firefighters in place. Dynamic mobilising system being investigated - to be completed within 12 months.	

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
E-mail access via Geographical Information system (GIS) personal computers.	Information Systems Manager / Brigade Control Manager	On going – technical problems with the GIS system have been encountered – to be completed within 12 months.	
Instigate the DETR Staffing Model.	Brigade Control Manager	To be completed within 12 months.	
Evaluate opportunities for provision of services for other agencies.	Brigade Control Manager	To be completed within 12 months.	Potential income generation.
Seek and implement a permanent location for secondary control.	Communications Officer	This project has been postponed pending the outcome of the Thames Valley Fire Brigades' Networking Control Rooms initiative.	
Consider feasibility of any new collaborative procurement projects.	Brigade Control Manager	On going – collaborative procurement projects are being discussed amongst the three Thames Valley Fire Brigades.	
Evaluate opportunities for improving public awareness and profile.	Brigade Control Manager	To be completed when resources permit.	



CONTROL ROOM OPERATORS DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY CALL.

PERSONNEL SERVICES

The review of Personnel Services formed part of an overall Best Value review of Corporate Services.

The objective of the review was to improve the quality and efficiency of the people management activities of the Brigade.

What are Personnel Services?

The provision of advice, support and services to the Combined Fire Authority, line managers and employees of the Brigade and other internal and external stakeholders in respect of all aspects of managing human resources except training and health and safety.

What the Review Identified

The review identified seven service improvements :

- Full implementation of the Firewatch system in 2002/03.

- Review and where appropriate re-engineer personnel process to ensure, as far as possible, this activity is carried electronically.
- Agree appropriate service standards for personnel services and procedure on output-based specification for support services.
- Review the structure of the personnel team to improve support to line managers.
- Develop and deliver a people management skills training programme.
- Re-focus resources on recruitment and retention issues.
- Explore the possibility of partnership with local fire and rescue services to provide personnel support services from a common source.

The following action plan was agreed by the Combined Fire Authority's Performance Review and Audit Panel in April 2002.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Full implementation of Firewatch system to be given high priority in personnel workplan for 2002/03.	Brigade Personnel Manager / Information Systems Manager	Completed	Met from existing budgets
Review and where appropriate re-engineering of personnel processes and paperwork to ensure as far as possible this activity is carried out electronically.	Brigade Personnel Manager	High - 70% complete	To be met from existing budgets
Organise and run focus groups comprising of line managers and the personnel team in order to agree appropriate service standards for support to line managers and an output based specification for personnel services.	Director of Human Resources	High - to be undertaken at conclusion of national pay dispute.	To be met from existing budgets

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Review structure of personnel team following full implementation on Firewatch and review of personnel process in order to provide a higher level and more pro-active personnel support service to line managers.	Director of Human Resources / Brigade Personnel Manager	Team restructured from 1st April 2003 from a functional to a geographical basis.	Met from existing budgets.
Based on the outcome of focus groups; develop and deliver a people management skills training programme tailored to the identified training needs of line managers.	Director of Human Resources / Brigade Personnel Manager / Senior Divisional Officer (Training)	Medium - awaiting outcome of focus groups.	To be met from existing budgets
Review of personnel team structure to include identification of a specific resource to focus on recruitment and retention.	Director of Human Resources / Brigade Personnel Manager	Medium - responsibilities have been redistributed to improve focus on recruitment.	To be met from existing budgets
Explore the possibility of partnership with other fire and rescue services to provide personnel services and support from a common source.	Director of Human Resources / Brigade Personnel Manager	Medium - development of collaboration initiatives has been delayed because of the national pay dispute.	To be met from existing budgets

PROCUREMENT

The review of procurement formed part of an overall Best Value review of Support Services.

The review was designed to establish whether the procurement function of the Combined Fire Authority meets the requirements of Best Value in providing an effective service and ensuring there is a process of continual improvement.

What is Procurement?

Procurement can be defined as an activity that provides all the functions of the Combined Fire Authority, including both operational and support services, with the goods and services it requires.

What the Review Identify

- An integrated procurement system is to be developed and implemented within a procurement strategy.

- An asset management system has been developed and implemented to support the procurement system.
- Consideration will be given to the provision of a purchasing card (initially at strategic level) to reduce the number of purchase orders made for low value items. This will also simplify the billing / invoicing procedure for such items.
- Increasing use will be made of collaborative procurement arrangements.
- Improved consultation procedures, both internal and external.
- Savings and efficiency targets will be set for each area of procurement.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
An integrated procurement system is to be developed and implemented within a procurement strategy.	Procurement and Facilities Manager	Initial work has begun. It is hoped that a complete strategy will be in place by October 2003.	No financial implications.
An asset management system has been developed and implemented to support the procurement system.	Information Systems Manager	A system has been implemented in part but is behind schedule due to the national dispute.	£50,000.
Consideration will be given to the provision of a purchasing card (initially at strategic level) to reduce the number of purchase orders made for low value items. This will also simplify the billing / invoicing procedure for such items.	Procurement and Facilities Manager	Work has commenced in this area but at present some procedural difficulties are impeding progress.	No financial implications.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Increasing use will be made of collaborative procurement arrangements.	Procurement and Facilities Manager	Collaboration issues are being developed. For example, involvement in the national uniform project which may be the subject of a private finance initiative bid.	No financial implications.
Savings and efficiency targets will be set for each area of procurement.	Procurement and Supplies Officer	This area is dependent on the formulation of an over-riding strategy for procurement.	No financial implications.

SPECIAL APPLIANCES REVIEW

A Best Value review was undertaken to examine the provision and deployment of the Brigade's special appliances. This was completed in October 2000. The object of the review was to improve the delivery of service to the people of Berkshire.

What are Special Appliances?

These are appliances that deal with the less common and more complex incidents, which a standard fire appliance is not designed to cope with. Such appliances are :

- Fire / rescue boat.
- Rescue Support Vehicle.
- Aerial appliances.
- Chemical Incident Unit.
- Incident Control Unit.
- Emergency Feeding Unit.
- Operations Support Unit.

What the Review Identified

The review identified several recommendations. However, the plan to implement these recommendations resulted in a trade dispute between the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and the Combined Fire Authority.

An extraordinary meeting of the Combined Fire Authority Urgency Committee was held on 26 April 2001. A revised proposal was submitted which was accepted by the FBU and led to the dispute being settled.

The proposal involved revisiting the findings of the review in a broader perspective, including fire cover and crewing levels. A working party was established to carry out this work.

Below is a progress report on that plan.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Incident control unit (ICU) to be transferred from Stn 3 Dee Road to Stn 13 Windsor, to reduce switch crewing in the Reading area.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Completed - ICU transferred to Stn 13 on 1 November 2001.	No financial implications
Remove aerial ladders (ALP / HP) from predetermined first attendance's (PDA's).	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Against FBU national policy, agreement reached to review attendances on a risk-assessed basis. Review of attendances will now form part of the Authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP).	No financial implications
Provision of new fire rescue boat, enhanced training and equipment.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	New fire rescue boat now in the Brigade and full water safety strategy implemented. Boat training due for completion this summer.	Not available at time of going to press.

ACTION POINT	LEAD OFFICER	PRIORITY	FINANCES
Chemical incident unit (CIU) to be transferred to Stn 17 Slough.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Further review indicated that Slough was not the optimum location for this unit and suggested alternatives. Re-location of this unit will now be delayed pending the introduction of a national mass decontamination strategy and associated appliances.	No financial implications
Upgrade of second pump at Slough to water tender ladder (WRL) status (increasing the crew from 4 to 5).	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Interlinked with the re-location of the ICU to Slough. No longer necessary so dropped from action plan.	No financial implications
Loss of one rescue support vehicle, moving the remaining vehicle to Whitley Wood, Reading with primary crew status.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Dependent upon the introduction of rescue pumps currently undergoing trial. Number and location of rescue support vehicle's (RSV's) will now be addressed through the Authority's IRMP.	
Upgrading of rescue equipment to provide six strategically placed rescue pumps.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	A trial of two rescue pumps currently underway. Implementation of this action point will follow from a successful trial period.	
Removal of emergency feeding unit (EFU) from the vehicle fleet. Alternative arrangements to provide catering on the incident ground to be implemented.	Senior Divisional Officer (Service Delivery)	Completed - EFU dis-established on 31 March 2003 on the introduction of alternative arrangements. Emergency feeding provision now contracted to Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service.	

COMMUNITY SAFETY

COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2003 /2006

The community safety plan is a long term plan covering the period 2003 - 2006. It will be reviewed annually.

The focus of the modern Fire Service has shifted from that of firefighting to prevention of emergencies in order to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and damage to property that occur across the country. There will always be a need for a professional, well trained and effective Fire Service that will respond to emergency calls within a moments notice. However, Fire Service activities are being directed towards prevention, and public awareness programmes to reduce deaths and reduce injuries and damage to property to a level that is acceptable.

The Fire Service has a major part to play in the community. Guiding the Local Government Associations activities are the seven shared priorities for public services :

- Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities
- Promoting the economic vitality of localities
- Meeting local transport needs more effectively
- Transforming our local environment
- Creating safer and stronger communities
- Raising standards across schools
- Improving the quality of life of older people and of children, young people and families at risk

The Fire Service has the potential to play a key role in working towards many of these goals and to contribute to community strategies aimed at improving community well being.

The vision of the new commitment to neighbourhood renewal is that within 10 - 20 years no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live. The poorest members of our society should not suffer different conditions and services from what the rest of the population accepts as the norm. The main part of the approach to change this position is the establishment of local strategic partnerships (LSPs) with a clear set of targets for action in the key areas of crime, employment, local economies, health, poor

housing, physical environment, education and skills. The Fire Service has been identified as an integral member of an LSP. As a member, the Fire Service has the opportunity to form fundamental partnerships both with the groups who attend and the wider community.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will work in partnership at local level with the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors to help ensure that the different services and initiatives support each other. The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Community Safety Plan outlines the measures planned over a three year period to achieve its vision for the people who live, work or travel through Berkshire. It compliments the Brigade's Strategic and Best Value Performance Plan and incorporates local priorities whilst taking account of the priorities of partner organisations.

COMMUNITY SAFETY VISION

The outcomes we want from our service is :

- A Safer Berkshire

Also as a result of our community activities we want :

- All members of the community feeling safe
- All employees fully embracing community safety activity
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service fully involved in key partnerships
- All members of the local community fully aware of the fire service in terms of its services available and its opportunities for employment

- To reduce the number of injuries due to accidental fires in the home*
- To reduce the number of accidental fires in the home*
- To reduce the number of hoax calls*
- To reduce the number of deaths and injuries from non-fire emergencies**
- To reduce the number of malicious fires**

* These are also Best Value Performance Indicators – past performance and specific targets for these indicators are included in the section on ‘Our Performance’.

** These are the Brigade’s new local performance indicators for which future specific targets will be set during 2003/04.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AIMS

The community safety plan supports the Brigade’s strategic aims and in particular the plan’s aims are :

- To work with partners and the community to reduce the number of deaths, injuries and damage to property caused by fires, road traffic accidents and other emergencies that occur within Berkshire.
- To make Berkshire a safer place by allocating time, effort and resources to educate the public and in consequence community safety to become a core activity for all personnel employed by the Combined Fire Authority.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- To reduce the number of emergency calls received*
- To reduce the number of property and vehicle fires*
- To reduce the number of non-property (grassland, refuse etc ...) fires*
- To reduce the number of fire deaths due to accidental fires in the home*

COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY – THE MAIN THEMES

To achieve its vision, aims and targets outlined in this Community Safety Plan, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will concentrate its activities around four main themes of preventing accidents and accidental fires, reducing deliberate fires and antisocial behaviour, working with young people and increasing community involvement. These themes will also deliver performance against the Government's long term national targets for the Fire Service of :

- Reducing the incidence of accidental fire-related deaths in the home by 20% averaged over the 5 year period to 31 March 2004 compared with the average recorded in the 5 year period to 31 March 1999.
- Reducing the number of building fires in England and Wales by 10% by March 2004 from the 1998/99 baseline.

- Reducing the number of deliberate fires in England and Wales by 30% by March 2009 from the 1998/99 baseline. The first milestone is to arrest the upward trend in deliberate fires so that the number of cases reduces to the 1998/99 baseline by March 2004.

The key themes complement each other and can also complement the priorities of potential partners working to improve safety in the community. For example activities focused on working with young people can prevent accidents and reduce deliberate fire setting whilst at the same time can improve alternative education opportunities, prevent truancy or reduce local costs of fire and antisocial behaviour.



COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY – MAIN THEMES

THE MAIN THEMES EXPLAINED

PREVENTING ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTAL FIRES

Working in partnership to prevent accidents and preventing accidental fires occurring in people’s homes, property and the local environment. Statistics have shown that the majority of people who lose

their lives in fires die in their own home. The groups identified as most at risk from fire typically exhibit the following characteristics :

CHARACTERISTIC	GROUPS AT RISK
Household Composition	At greatest risk are households with children. Elderly households have fewer fires but show a greater proportion of casualties.
Smoking	The incidence of fires in households with one or more smokers is still high.
Financial Stability	Households where residents are experiencing financial difficulties have been shown to be at greater risk.
Tenure	Residents who rent property are statistically more at risk than owner-occupiers.
Drinking	Risks are higher where people drink heavily.
Property Condition	Homes that are in poor condition relative to those nearby are more at risk.
Disability	Households where one or more occupiers has a limiting disability are at greater risk.

Activities to prevent accidental fires will include :

- Fire safety awareness campaigns
- Providing safety advice and education to at risk groups
- The offer of home and property risk assessments
- Campaigns to promote the installation and maintenance of smoke detectors
- Campaigns to promote the benefits of installing domestic sprinklers in high risk properties

In addition to campaigning to prevent accidental fires occurring in properties Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will aim to prevent other accidents and non-fire emergencies through education and raising awareness of risks. Working in partnership such activities will aim to promote the following :

- Road Safety
- Water Safety
- Rural Area Safety
- Firework Safety
- Reducing the number of unwanted calls from automatic fire alarms

REDUCING DELIBERATE FIRES AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Working in partnership to reduce deliberate fire setting and hoax calls by addressing the causes and highlighting the consequences of such antisocial behaviour.

In August 2002 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the report "The Burning Issue: Research and strategies for reducing arson" which highlighted four broad categories of causes of arson. These categories include youth disorder, malicious – attack against a person or group of people, emotional expression and criminal intent. The growing problem of hoax calls has the effect of delaying the availability of fire crews to respond to genuine emergencies, placing the community and firefighters at unnecessary risk.

Activities to reduce deliberate fire setting, hoax calls and antisocial behaviour will include :

- Investigating all incidents of arson and challenging those making hoax calls.
- Raising awareness in the community of the problem of arson and hoax calls and encouraging the reporting of such antisocial behaviour.
- Working with young people to prevent their participation in arson and the temptation to make hoax calls.
- Working with young people who have, or who are at risk of taking part in deliberate fire setting or making hoax calls, confronting them with the consequence of their actions.
- Working within Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to reduce criminal activity e.g. reducing levels of vehicle crime and consequently vehicle fires.
- Working with partners to minimise potential targets for arsonists such as abandoned vehicles, excess refuse and derelict buildings.
- Working with businesses to highlight and prevent the risk of arson.

- Sharing information with partners to identify hotspots of activity, identify trends and formulate joint intervention strategies.

WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The Fire Service has a tradition of working with young people. Children are naturally attracted to the sight of a fire engine and are fascinated by a visit to a fire station. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service intend to build on this relationship to ensure that young people are safer and better citizens through safety education and the transfer of the firefighters core skills of risk awareness, team work and self-discipline. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service will continue to work to ensure that all members of the community can access its services but by working with young people in particular it may be possible to prevent accidents occurring later in life and also to make early interventions to reduce any tendencies towards deliberate fire setting and antisocial behaviour.

Activities will include :

- Working in partnership to ensure safety of very young children through for example :
 - Providing home safety advice to families with young children
 - Warning of the dangers of leaving very young children unattended
 - Promoting the proper use of child seats in vehicles
- Developing schools safety information packages for all key stages of the national curriculum.
- Counselling children who have a fascination of fire through the Young Firesetters Prevention Scheme.
- Supporting summer schemes for young people such as Junior Citizen Schemes.
- Developing Young Firefighter Units (Fire Cadets) throughout Berkshire.

- Developing diversion schemes based on fire service activities for young offenders or those identified as at risk of offending.
- Supporting partnership schemes aimed at promoting safe driving.
- Developing and co-ordinating Princes Trust and Duke of Edinburgh award schemes.
- Developing projects for young volunteers to learn about risk and deliver safety messages in the community.

INCREASING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service’s community safety initiatives are aimed at all sections of the community. Approximately eight per cent of Berkshire’s population is from a minority ethnic background and multi - language leaflets are distributed where appropriate.

The Brigade continues to promote the development of a workforce that is more representative of its diverse communities. Delivery of fire safety messages to members of ethnic communities supports the development of positive relationships and that the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service serves everyone who lives, works or travels through Berkshire, irrespective of cultural differences, age or financial status.

Engaging further with the community will help to reduce accidents, fires and antisocial behaviour, attract and recruit young people from the local community and improve relations between fire crews and local neighbourhoods. Community safety will therefore assist to break down barriers as well as save lives.

Activities aimed at increasing Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service’s community involvement and assisting in achieving a safer Berkshire include :

- Fire station open days.
- Events supporting local charities held at fire stations and in the community.

- Visits to schools and community groups by Fire Service personnel.
- Career information and awareness events.
- Developing projects in partnership with sports organisations to provide activities for young people.
- Developing partnerships with local neighborhood watch schemes.
- Working in local strategic partnerships improving the quality of neighborhoods.
- Working in local crime and disorder partnerships reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.
- Developing community projects with voluntary organisations.
- Developing community projects with local businesses and encouraging their employees to spread safety messages to their families and friends.

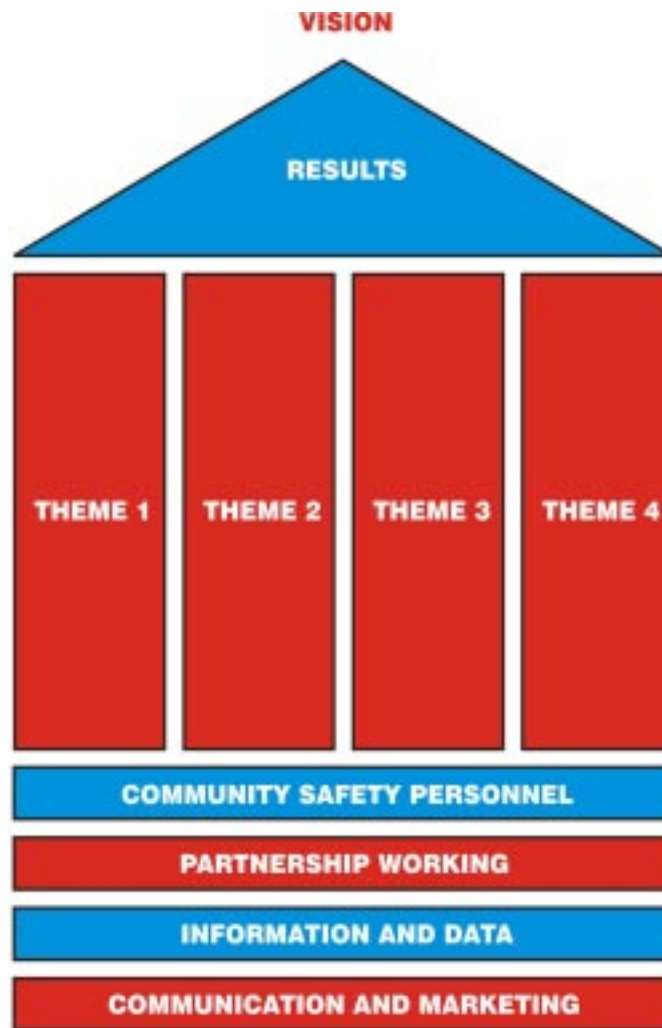


TWO OF THE COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY TEAM WITH THE COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY DEMONSTRATION VEHICLE.

BUILDING CAPACITY - SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

As community safety continues to be the Fire Service's key focus, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is building its capacity to support its developing strategy and activities. The four main themes of the community safety strategy will be underpinned by

sufficient, well trained community safety personnel, developing partnerships, communicating and marketing and by ensuring data and information systems are in place.



SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY SAFETY STRATEGY

PEOPLE - COMMUNITY SAFETY PERSONNEL

Specialised teams based at Brigade headquarters co-ordinate and deliver community safety activities. The following posts exist within the Community Safety department :

Community Safety Manager Divisional Officer

Unitary Authority Liaison

Community Safety Officer Assistant Divisional Officer
(Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead and Bracknell)

Community Safety Officer Assistant Divisional Officer
(Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire)

Community Education Team

Community Safety Officer Non-Uniformed Officer
Community Safety Advisor Leading Firefighter
(Seconded)

Community Safety Advisor Non-Uniformed Assistant
Community Safety Advisor Non-Uniformed Assistant

Youth Projects Team

Community Safety Officer Station Officer
Community Safety Advisor Non-Uniformed Assistant
Community Safety Advisor Non-Uniformed Assistant
Community Safety Non-Uniformed *(1/2 post)*

Administrative Assistant
Communication & Marketing Non-Uniformed *(1/2 post)*
Assistant

Two community safety officers are responsible for liaison and joint working with unitary authorities and associated partnership schemes. The Community Safety Youth Team will develop new schemes for young people aimed at promoting safety and reducing antisocial behaviour as well as co-ordinating existing projects.

The Community Safety Education Team promotes safety in the community through visits to community groups, organising conferences, attending community events and fetes, participating in summer schemes such as Junior Citizen and co-ordinating campaigns such as electric blanket testing days. The team has just taken ownership of a new safety demonstration unit which will assist greatly in communicating the safety message.

In addition fire station personnel throughout Berkshire work to a structured annual programme to

implement safety initiatives targeted at the communities in their specific area. In order to achieve their objective, station personnel use a variety of methods which include targeting high risk properties or members of the public, leaflet distribution, talks and visits and hot spot campaigns e.g. targeting a local area following a rise in the number of emergency incidents.

The Community Safety Education Team supports fire station personnel to develop and deliver their community safety programmes and training is available to all personnel to ensure that safety messages are delivered as effectively as possible.

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

In addition to keeping all Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service personnel informed of community safety activities, the community safety team will work with the corporate communication assistant to seek press and media support to extend the community safety message to as wide a range of people as possible.

The use of television, radio and print media will differ depending on the target audience. In reality a marketing mix will normally prove to be the most effective approach to ensure that different safety messages are received by different target groups e.g. Two-Ten FM / Star FM will be approached in an attempt to target young potential offenders who may be inclined towards arson. BBC Berkshire may be approached to give safety advice to older age groups.

Further advertising opportunities will include placing safety messages on buses travelling throughout Berkshire, utilising highly visible advertisement lorries which in addition to touring local neighbourhoods can be parked at strategic locations on the Berkshire's main road network and placing articles in local publications.

There are a number of safety campaigns co-ordinated by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's National Community Fire Safety Centre (NCFSC). Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service supports these campaigns and press releases and initiatives are implemented in a planned and systematic manner throughout the year.

The NCFSC events for 2003/04 include :

- National Chip Week
- Kitchen Fire Safety Campaign
- DIY Safety Campaign
- Electric Blanket Safety Campaign
- Adult Learners Week
- Deaf Awareness Week
- Child Safety Week
- Fire Prevention in the Countryside Campaign
- Student Fire Safety Campaign
- Age Concern Week
- Smoke Alarm Maintenance Campaign
- Firework Safety Campaign
- Health and Safety Week

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is totally committed to working in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors and all sections of the community to ensure that safety concerns are addressed in the most effective manner. Examples of effective partnerships include :

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

Community safety strategies are a requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It requires police areas to produce, in partnership with their local authority and other local agencies, a plan to reduce crime and disorder in that area. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is playing an increasingly greater role in local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. For example it works with its partners to reduce deliberate fire setting of abandoned vehicles, which, if left unchecked, could escalate leading to the local neighbourhood degenerating with a further escalation of crime.

Local Strategic Partnerships

A local strategic partnership (LSP) is a single body that brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together to improve the quality of life

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is involved in the local strategic partnerships which are developing throughout Berkshire. By working in partnership to achieve its own objectives for the community it can also assist partners to achieve their own aims and objectives and assist in community strategies focused on improving education, the environment, the local

economy, reducing crime and making neighbourhoods safer and better places to live, work or travel through.

Local Public Service Agreements

Specific local public service agreements (LPSAs) can be found in the section on 'Our Performance'.

Unitary Authorities throughout Berkshire are developing LPSAs – agreements which set out the local authority's commitment to deliver specific improvements in performance and the government's commitment to reward those improvements.

LPSAs apply to County Councils, Unitary Authorities, Metropolitan Districts and London Boroughs only but they will require assistance from partners to boost current levels of performance. Hence Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is entering into partnership with West Berkshire District Council to prevent accidents and accidental fires occurring in the home, with Reading Borough Council to reduce the instances of arson and hoax calls and with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to reduce antisocial behaviour.

Corporate and Social Responsibility

Today companies are managing their business processes to have an overall positive impact on society. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is seeking to work with companies embarking on community projects. There have been initial successes in forming partnerships with those seeking to fulfill their corporate and social responsibility and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is working with Kidde Plc to develop an information technology based schools education package.

DATA AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS AND SHARING

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service uses a statistical analysis programme capable of identifying activity trends. This allows the Brigade to target resources towards any specific problem area, for example education and awareness campaigns to reduce vehicle arson where this has been shown to be an increasing or significant issue. This proactive approach enables the Brigade to tackle problems before they escalate. Statistics on the number of incidents attended by the Brigade are drawn electronically from the incident register in the command and control centre. These are then compared on a month by month basis with the previous year's statistics.

Understandably it is not always possible to develop a solution that will demonstrate immediate results. A multi-agency approach, for example, involving the police and unitary authorities, is often needed to solve complex social problems and with the assistance of its effective information gathering systems Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service can work with its partners to ensure that resources are directed to areas where they are most needed.

EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE : METHODS OF MEASURING AND EVALUATING SUCCESS

Community safety performance will be measured against agreed standards to reveal when and where improvement is needed. The community safety team monitor the success or failure of each initiative. Progress is scrutinised at management team meetings where statistical evidence is used and any emerging trends are examined to determine appropriate responses. The continuous evaluation process means that the organisation can learn valuable lessons which are used to inform subsequent activities.

The following evaluation methods are used to determine the success of community safety initiatives :

End Impact : the number of deaths, injuries, fires or financial loss

Behavioural Change : the number of people who

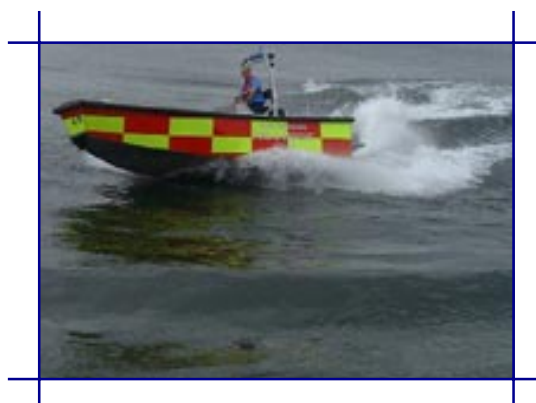
have bought a smoke detector as a result of a fire safety campaign

Awareness / Knowledge : the number of people who have seen and can remember information from safety campaigns

Programme Outreach : percentage of population getting the message (through media campaigns in press, radio etc.), percentage of schools visited etc.

CONCLUSION

Real progress is being made to reduce the number of fires and the associated fire deaths and injuries that all too often occur as a result. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service is establishing many partnership arrangements to improve performance even further and it is proving that it can contribute to broader community strategies aimed at making the communities of Berkshire better and safer places in which to live, work and travel through.



THE BRIGADE'S NEW WATER RESCUE BOAT BEING PUT THROUGH ITS PACES IN A TRAINING SESSION

THE FINANCIAL PICTURE

The service is funded partly by Government grant, based on Formula Spending Share, with each Unitary Authority receiving a financial allocation according to the size of its tax-paying population. The remainder of the funding comes from the council tax, paid by

Berkshire householders to their unitary authorities. The revenue budget for 2002/03 was set at £23.890 million. The budget for 2003/04 is £26.164 million.

	2001/02 Outturn £000	2002/03 Probable Outturn £000	2003/04 Estimate £000
Firefighting & Rescue Operations	19,411	20,665	21,922
Fire Safety	1,266	1,419	1,839
Corporate & Democratic Core	412	460	475
Firefighters' Pensions	3,211	3,157	3,365
NET COST OF SERVICE	24,300	25,701	27,601
Interest, reversal of capital charges etc	(1,880)	(1,811)	(1,437)
NET COST MET BY CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES	22,420	23,890	26,164

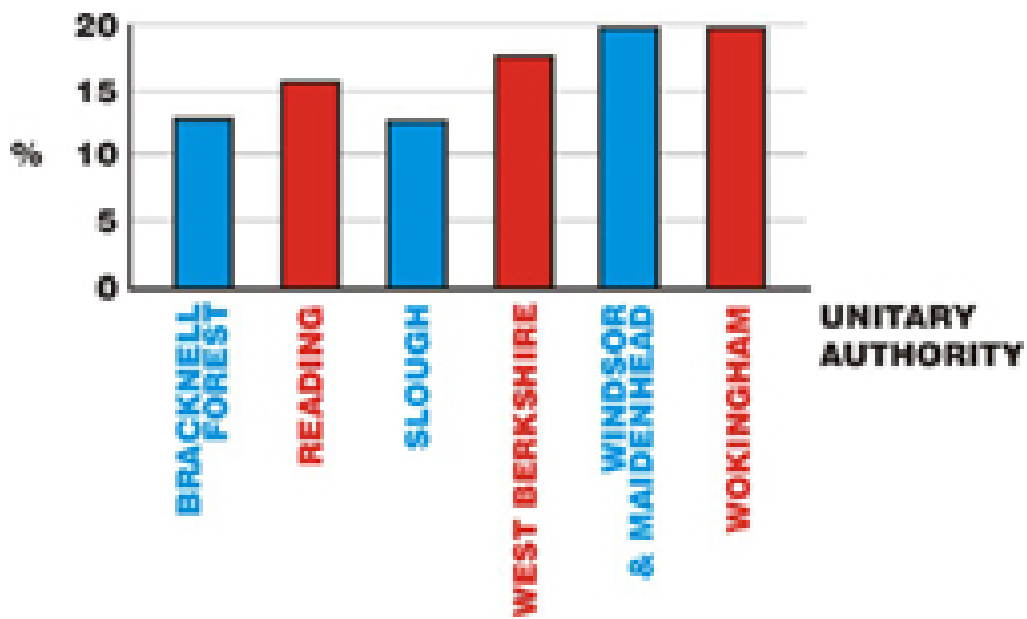
Budget allocations are finalised around three months prior to the start of the financial year. Best Value reviews recommend action plans, many of which will have funding implications.

Examples of how capital funding has been allocated and linked to strategic priorities for the forthcoming financial year are as follows :

INVESTMENTS 2003/04

	£000
Water Tender Replacements	445
Planned Maintenance	421.5
Secondary OSU	145
HQ Stage 2 Development	100
Second 4 Wheel Drive Pump	78
Premises Security	56
Voice over IP	50
IT Strategy Implementation	45
Water Bowser	45
Firehouse Refurbishment	35
Emission Control Programme	22.5
Laptops	16
Upgrade Digital Phone Lines	15
TOTAL	1,474

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMBINED FIRE SERVICE FUND 2003/04



EVEN WHEN THE FLAMES HAVE BEEN PUT OUT, FIREFIGHTERS HAVE TO SPEND A LONG TIME WORKING TO ENSURE THAT A FIRE WILL NOT RE-IGNITE.

INSPECTION AND REVIEW

The Brigade can be scrutinised at any time by Her Majesty’s Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI), who also act as the Best Value review body and by the Audit Commission.

The Audit Commission ensure that the contents of the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) comply in all significant respects with legislation and statutory guidance. The BVPP 2002/03 was approved by the Audit Commission when the audit letter was presented to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority in December 2002. The overall conclusion of this audit letter highlighted the following key messages :

“It is acknowledged that against an agenda of competing national and local priorities, the Authority has continued to deliver quality services overall.

A key challenge for the Authority will be to build on the sound performance management processes which are in place to demonstrate that service improvements are being secured.

The issues relating to the national dispute are noted and in an environment of limited capacity, it is important that the Authority remains focused on maintaining performance and developing processes as far as practicable.”

The audit letter made a number of recommendations. These have been identified below together with the progress that has been achieved to date.

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE
Performance management	The Authority should improve links between the strategic aims and objectives, the service aims and objectives (including community safety) and the performance targets.	<p>The Performance Review department will take an overview of the production of the corporate plan, and where feasible, integrate the different elements of the document.</p> <p>The Brigade has adopted the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM). This work will improve the links between the strategic aims and objectives, the service aims and objectives (including community safety) and the performance targets. The results will be incorporated into the planning process.</p>
	The Authority should regularly monitor departmental business plans, for example, the directorate policy groups could monitor the progress of proposed actions within the relevant plan on a quarterly basis to ascertain whether they are being achieved.	The strategic plan will be monitored at the appropriate level and any significant deviation or slippage from the plan will be reported to the next tier of management.

ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE
Best Value	The Authority should ensure it reviews the guidance issued and the new review methodology to ensure reviews are effective and the process is consistently applied to current reviews.	The Performance Review department will review in-house guidance in the light of any new external guidance issued. The Brigade will also review the effectiveness of the review methodology used.
	In cases where progress against particular points slip or where actions lose their relevance the Authority should ensure that alternative targets are established in order to continuously drive forward improvement.	Best Value reviews and progress on completed reviews will be monitored at the appropriate level and any significant deviation or slippage from the plan will be reported to the next tier of management.

In January 2002 HMFSI conducted an assessment of the Brigade. A summary of the findings was published in the BVPP 2002/03. A number of these findings were highlighted as requiring attention. These have been identified overleaf together with the progress that has been achieved to date.

FINDINGS IDENTIFIED AS REQUIRING ATTENTION	PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE
Opportunities to work smarter or reduce commitment levels should be identified to try and reduce high staff workloads.	Management reviews are underway (based on EFQM) which will streamline the process of management, review the remit of meetings etc.
The level of temporary posts was deemed excessive.	This is now part of the monthly download from Firewatch to PB Views and is monitored by the Brigade's management.
Community safety documentation will need to be reviewed and improved.	The FB151 and FB151a forms have been introduced. The FB151 form is an aide for initiative planning ensuring that the campaign is set against community safety Best Value performance indicators. The FB151a form is an evaluation and monitoring tool. Station community safety plans are entered onto the Brigade's intranet to allow for the sharing of good practise.

HOW TO CONTACT US

This plan can be printed without prior permission and hard copies are available on request from the address below.

Further information on any aspect of this plan can be obtained from the Performance Review department on 0118 932 2000 or at performrev@rbfrs.co.uk.

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service headquarters is based at :

103 Dee Road,
Tilehurst,
Reading,
Berkshire,
RG30 4FS.

www.rbfrs.co.uk





**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**