

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Summary of the Best Value Performance Plan 2008/09



www.rbfrs.co.uk or you can request a printed copy from Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, 103 Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4FS.

Aims

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) 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 recognised as such.

Our Funding

The Fire Authority, which is a precepting Authority, runs the service. This enables the Authority to raise about half its revenue through the levy of the council tax paid by the council taxpayer. The remaining half is funded by Government grant. The budget for 2007/08 is set at £32.444 million, equating to a Band D Council tax precept of £52.54.

Preventing

The Fire Authority comprises 25 elected members appointed from the six unitary authorities in the County. For details of your local members, please contact Lynda Kenyon, the Fire Authority's Committee Manager, on 0118 932 2288.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

CPA is the method used by the Audit Commission, on behalf of the Government, to assess Fire Authorities. It aims to identify a Fire Authority's strengths and weaknesses by examining in detail nine themes. These range from leadership and priorities through to future plans, resulting in a corporate assessment.

The Fire Authority underwent its first CPA in February 2005. The full report is available on the RBFRS website at www.rbfrs.co.uk. Subsequent assessments in 2006 & 2007 have confirmed that the Fire Authority remains in the 'improving well' category when reviewed against: Direction of Travel, (to assess progress against targets), Use of Resources (to examine cost-effectiveness and value for money) and Service Delivery (looking at operational performance). The results of these assessments can be published on the Audit Commission and RBFRS websites.

How have we performed?

Under Best Value requirements, RBFRS must demonstrate its performance against 34 nationally-set Best Value Performance Indicators.

Iain Cox, RBFRS Chief Fire Officer, said: "Once again the figures for property and vehicle fires show a progressive downward trend. The challenge for the coming year will be to further increase the number of dwellings that have a working Smoke Detector."

The service continues to set challenging new targets for each of the performance indicators. The full range of results for 2007/08, compared against our previous years' performance, and that of similar fire and rescue services, will be in the full Best Value Performance Plan available by the end of June.

Protecting

Performance Links to Community Safety

Community safety continues to be the key focus for RBFRS. Both operational fire crews and specialist teams work with the community to prevent accidents and accidental fires, reduce antisocial behaviour and make local neighbourhoods safer.

You can also **do your bit** to help us. For example:

- Do you have a correctly-sited, functioning smoke detector at home?
- Do members of your family know what to do, should fire affect your home?
- Do you know that smoking materials in the home still contribute significantly to fires in the home?
- Consider your car security. Stolen cars often become involved in accidents, are abandoned and set on fire.
- Do you know the consequences of using tealights and night-lights incorrectly?
 - Replace any worn or taped-up electrical cables and leads on electrical goods and do not overload sockets.

Best Value Reviews

The Best Value Review Programme continues to be aligned with the RBFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). In July 2007 the Fire Authority approved the five year IRMP for 2007/08 – 2011/12 (now, in part, subject to judicial review). The 2007/08 action plan is ongoing and contains five key review projects that form the first year of the five year IRMP. Currently RBFRS is consulting on the 2008/09 action plan. The IRMP work continues to be published annually as a separate consultation document and also within the Corporate plan.

Contacting Us

If you have any queries or comments, please contact the Performance Review department on 0118 932 2000 or by e-mail at performrev@rbfrs.co.uk.

Responding