

# Summary of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05



This document is intended to supplement the Best Value Performance Plan by providing a summary of the full plan, which is published annually under the Local Government Act 1999. The full plan will be available by the end of June. If you would like a copy please visit the Brigade's website at [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk). A hard copy is also available from... **Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Brigade Headquarters, 103 Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 4FS.**

## 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 recognised as such.

## Our Funding

The service is run by the Fire Authority, which will become a precepting Authority from 1st April 2004. This will enable the Authority to raise its own revenue through the levy of the council tax. The service will thus be funded partly by income received from council tax paid by Berkshire householders, the remainder being funded by Government grant. The budget for 2004/05 is set at £28.60 million. This equates to just £35.58 per head of the County population per year.

The Fire Authority comprises 25 elected members appointed from the six unitary authorities in the County. For details of your local member, please contact David Weller, the Fire Authority's committee administrator, on 0118 932 2288.

## How Have We Performed?

Under Best Value requirements, the Brigade must demonstrate its performance against 31 nationally set performance indicators (BVPIs).

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service's Chief Fire Officer, Iain Cox, reports :

*"I am delighted that we continue to do well in what are important performance indicators for any fire service. Those are the number of house fires (BVPI 142ii) which are down, calls to malicious false alarms (BVPI 146) which have fallen and the number of false alarms caused by automatic detection (BVPI 149) which continue to fall.*

*One key area on which the service will need to focus greater attention to improve performance, is in*

*its efforts to confine accidental fires in dwellings to the room of origin in both towns and residential areas (BVPI 144c) and rural village areas (BVPI 144d)."*

Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Terry Mills, said : *"The reduction in numbers of house fires is particularly encouraging. These figures show that our community-based approach to fire safety education is working well. We will continue to work with our fire crews to confine accidental fires in dwellings to the room of origin and in general to reduce the overall number of fire calls."*

The service will continue to set challenging new targets for each of the 31 performance indicators to improve performance across the Brigade. The full range of results for 2003/04, compared against our previous years' performance, and that of similar brigades, will be in the full Best Value Performance Plan available by the end of June.

## Performance Links to Community Safety

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

The Brigade continues to monitor its resources effectively to meet the challenges posed by Best Value. We seek continuous improvement and will continue to set new targets for each of our performance indicators to demonstrate ongoing improvement over the next 12 months.

You can also 'do your bit' to help the Brigade. 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, and are abandoned and set on fire.
- Do you know the consequences of using tea lights and night lights incorrectly ?

## Best Value Reviews

The Brigade has updated its Best Value review programme to accommodate the requirements of its Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The review programme now consists of eight Best Value reviews that comprise the IRMP action plan. Those areas under review will be scrutinised using the four criteria of challenge, compare, consult and compete.

## Contacting Us

If you have any queries or comments, please contact the Performance Review department by telephone on 0118 932 2269 or by email at [performrev@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:performrev@rbfrs.co.uk).



**... A Safer Berkshire**