

Summary of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06

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. 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 became a precepting Authority on 1st April 2004. This enables the Authority to raise its own revenue through the levy of the council tax. The service is funded partly by income received from council tax payers, the remainder being funded by Government grant. The budget for 2005/06 is set at £29.48 million. This equates to just £36.68 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.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment

CPA is the method used by the Audit Commission, on behalf of the Government, to assess the Fire Authority. It aims to identify both the Fire Authority's strengths and weaknesses by examining in detail nine themes. These range from leadership and priorities through to future plans, thereby enabling a corporate assessment to be made. The Fire Authority underwent the CPA in February 2005 and awaits the final report in August 2005. The results of this inspection will be published on the Brigade's website when available.

How Have We Performed?

Under Best Value requirements, the Brigade must demonstrate its performance against 26 nationally set performance indicators (BVPIs).

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

"It is pleasing that we continue to do well in what are important performance indicators for any fire service. Those are fires involving properties and vehicles (BVPI 142ii), which are down, malicious false alarms attended (BVPI 146ii), which have fallen and confining fires in dwellings to the room of origin – all risks (BVPI 144)."

Chairman of the Fire Authority, Councillor Terry Mills, said : *"These figures show that our community-based approach to fire safety education is working well."*

The service will continue to set challenging new targets for each of the 26 performance indicators. The full range of results for 2004/05, 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.

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, are abandoned and set on fire.
- Do you know the consequences of using tealights and night-lights incorrectly ?

Best Value Reviews

The Brigade has aligned its Best Value review programme with the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). The review programme now consists of seven new Best Value reviews that comprise the IRMP year two-action plan and the eight reviews that comprised the year one-action plan. All of the year one reviews are due for implementation by April 2005. The remaining project is reliant on national and regional initiatives not yet reported on. 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

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FIRE AUTHORITY

PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING