



# Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Corporate Plan And Integrated Risk Management Plan  
2015 - 2019



PREVENTING | PROTECTING | RESPONDING



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# 1. Foreword

## Welcome to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Corporate Plan 2015-2019 which includes our Integrated Risk Management Plan.

We are very pleased to be jointly introducing this important document, which sets out high-level details of what Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) intends to achieve over the next 4-years, and the approach that will be taken to ensure that our ambitious plans become a reality.

There is no question that the period between now and 2019 will be challenging. In recognition of that fact, councillors on Royal Berkshire Fire Authority reviewed and reset their policy direction in 2014. The new policy agenda that emerged from that review was communicated in the form of 6 Strategic Commitments by Fire Authority members to their constituents across Royal Berkshire. The Commitments in question provided a clear mandate for change – a mandate intended to increase the contribution made by RBFRS to people across the county leading safe and fulfilling lives, whilst, at the same time, balancing the Fire Authority’s budget in increasingly difficult financial circumstances.

With the Fire Authority’s Commitments in place, 2015 became a year for planning how they would be delivered. This document summarises the results of that planning activity. Annual Action Plans will follow, which will contain specific and detailed information about what will be achieved in each of the 4-years between now and 2019.

We hope that you find the content of this document interesting and informative, and we are keen to hear your views about it. Please let us know what you think, or ask us any questions by contacting us via our website [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk).



**Councillor Colin Dudley**  
**Chairman**

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority



**Andy Fry**  
**Chief Fire Officer**  
**and Chief Executive**

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service





## 2. Your Fire And Rescue Service

**Our key responsibility is to make sure we provide an effective fire and rescue service for communities across Berkshire. Our service is provided by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, and your Chief Fire Officer Andy Fry and his team are overseen by the Fire Authority, who are ultimately accountable to you as residents and business owners.**

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority is a Combined Fire Authority, which means it is made up of twenty five elected councillors from the six unitary authorities in Berkshire (Bracknell Forest, Slough Borough, Reading Borough, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Wokingham). The Chairman is Councillor Colin Dudley, of Bracknell Forest Council. You can find out more about the Fire Authority via the link: [www.rbfrs.co.uk\\_authority.asp](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk_authority.asp)

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 provide the main legal basis and outline the statutory responsibilities and powers of the Fire Authority. In 2012, the Government launched a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets out the Fire Authority's main responsibilities and these are shown below:

### **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Is Required To:**

- Contribute to safer communities by developing an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) to identify, assess and mitigate all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks faced by the communities of Berkshire
- Work in partnership with the people of Berkshire and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver a capable resilient service
- Be accountable to you for our actions and decision making
- Have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard you expect for an important public safety service
- Provide assurance to you and to Government on financial, governance and operational matters and on national resilience capability

### **The Civil Contingencies Act 2004**

This Act was created in response to the threat from terrorism, as well as a number of other civil emergencies that occurred during the early 2000s. It imposes a number of duties on us to assess the risk of an emergency occurring and to maintain plans for responding to a wide range of emergencies and ensure business continuity.

### **How We Are Accountable To You**

The Department for Communities and Local Government issued guidance in May 2013 requiring us to provide an annual statement of assurance to deliver accountability and transparency on financial and operational matters, which is a requirement under the National Framework. Every year, we provide a statement of accounts to show the annual costs of what we do and this is supported by publication of everything we spend above £500. We also provide and publicise an Annual Statement of Assurance to show what we have done to ensure good business practice, high standards of conduct and sound governance. These documents are available on our website [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk)

### **Government Intervention Action**

In May 2013, the Government published a protocol to explain how it would intervene in the running of a fire authority if there were specific concerns or evidence that a fire and rescue service was failing.

To date there have been no formal interventions in the running of a fire and rescue authority.

## 3. Our Commitments To You

**Our mission is to enable the people of Royal Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives. By assessing the current political environment, understanding our statutory and legal responsibilities, and by considering the social and economic factors affecting the residents of Royal Berkshire, we have set six outward facing commitments, shown below, which describe how we think we can achieve our mission.**

### The Strategic Commitments

#### 1. We will educate people on how to prevent fires and other emergencies, and what to do when they happen.

In order to fulfil this commitment, members of the Fire Authority will set challenging targets and carefully monitor progress on their delivery. We will also focus, alongside our officer colleagues, on the following priority areas for improvement:

- Effective information sharing with other organisations, to ensure that our resources are targeted effectively at those most at risk
- Joining-up prevention activity with other organisations, so that every professional contact with vulnerable people addresses as many risk factors as possible
- Increasing capacity for volunteers to deliver prevention services

#### 2. We will ensure a swift and effective response when called to emergencies.

In order to fulfil this commitment, members of the Fire Authority will set evidence-based emergency response standards and monitor performance against them. We will also focus, alongside our officer colleagues, on the following priority areas for improvement:

- Increasing the resilience of the Retained duty system
- Employing flexible crewing arrangements
- Increasing the fitness and health of firefighters
- Sharing emergency response resources with other fire and rescue services
- Using new technology to make firefighting and other emergency response activity safer and/or more effective

#### 3. We will ensure appropriate fire safety standards in buildings.

In order to fulfil this commitment, members of the Fire Authority will set targets for inspections of fire safety standards in buildings and monitor progress on their delivery.

- We will also focus, alongside our officer colleagues, on increasing the installation of sprinklers and other fire suppression systems in buildings
- Effective information sharing with other organisations, to ensure that the Service's Risk-Based Inspection programme is as well-targeted and effective as possible

#### 4. We will seek opportunities to contribute to a broader safety, health and wellbeing agenda.

By fulfilling this commitment, we intend to achieve a broad range of positive outcomes, including those associated with:

- Public safety
- Reductions in crime and disorder
- Aspiration, attainment and pathways to employability of young people
- Public health

In order to fulfil this commitment, members of the Fire Authority will, alongside officer colleagues, focus on the following priorities:

- Working with colleagues from South Central Ambulance Service and colleagues from other public sector organisations to support improvements in arrangements for responding to medical emergencies in Royal Berkshire
- Working with councillors and officers from local authorities and the NHS in Royal Berkshire, to maximise the contribution that RBFRS is able



to make in achieving important safety, health and wellbeing outcomes, associated with local government priorities and NHS priorities

- Working with councillors and officers from local authorities, and colleagues from other public sector organisations in Royal Berkshire, to help secure ‘pathways to employment’ for 16-24 year olds
- Working with the Thames Valley Police and Police Crime Commissioner to maximise the contribution that RBFRS is able to make in delivering elements of the Commissioner’s Police and Crime Plan

**5. We will ensure that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides good value for money.**

In order to fulfil this commitment, we will set budgets that are aligned to organisational priorities. We will scrutinise the way in which these budgets are spent, with a particular emphasis on successful delivery of projects and achievement of performance targets. We will also focus, alongside our officer colleagues, on the following priority areas for improvement:

- Developing shared service arrangements with partner organisations to deliver effective frontline services at lower cost
- Developing arrangements for sharing buildings with partner organisations, with a particular emphasis on sharing with other blue-light services
- Exploring opportunities to exploit advances in technology (such as the rollout of Super-Fast Broadband across Royal Berkshire) to support flexible working arrangements and improve service delivery

- Increasing the profitability of our trading company
- Seeking opportunities to charge for services and facilities where appropriate
- Securing sponsorship

**6. We will work with Central Government to ensure a fair deal for Royal Berkshire.**

Members of the Fire Authority have made this commitment to reflect the importance of ensuring that the interests of residents and businesses in the county are taken into consideration by Central Government during the process of developing and setting fire policy – including that associated with funding arrangements. By fulfilling this commitment we will ensure that Government Ministers and civil servants properly consider circumstances in Royal Berkshire when developing and setting policy. In order to fulfil this commitment, we will proactively and reactively lobby Central Government – both directly and through the Local Government Association – to influence fire policy decisions that will affect people in Royal Berkshire. We will:

- Engage effectively in the debate on future governance arrangements for fire and rescue services
- Engage with and influence the approach to delivering the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Project (ESMCP) – a project to provide a new communication system for the three emergency services and other public safety users

## 4. RBFRS Vision 2019 - A Picture Of The Future

**We deliver our regulatory and statutory services through Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS). To make sure RBFRS can deliver the Authority's mission over the next four years it will need to make changes to the way it is set up and how its delivers services.**

The Vision 2019 set out below has evolved over the last eighteen months and has been informed by the views of Members, senior managers and RBFRS staff who put forward hundreds of ideas through the Staff Engagement Programme we ran last year. Vision 2019 is intended to assist you, our staff, Members, and partners see a single 'big picture' of what the future will look like when we have delivered our policy commitments. It has also been intended to help our staff understand what delivering the Vision will mean for them at an individual and team level.

The Vision has been written as if RBFRS is already in 2019 and are taking stock of where the Service is, and reflecting on the journey taken to get there.

### Rbfrs Vision For 2019

It's now April 2019.

Over the last 4-years, RBFRS has been through a significant programme of change, to deliver against commitments made by members of the Fire Authority in 2014. In overall terms, the change programme was intended to ensure that the Service successfully delivered a broad range of important outcomes for communities across Royal Berkshire, whilst balancing its budget in the face of significant downward financial pressure. The programme was developed in line with three themes:

1. A service delivery theme – Fire stations at the Heart of Communities
2. A service support theme – Capacity, Capability and Resilience
3. A cultural theme – One Team Working collaboratively for the people we serve

So, what's been the impact of the change programme in question?

### Service Delivery - Fire Stations At The Heart Of Communities

In 2019, many of Royal Berkshire's fire stations are operating as hubs at the heart of local communities and, in doing so, enabling people to lead safe and fulfilling lives.

Following a strategic refresh of the IRMP in 2015, and a subsequent, significant programme of investment, the buildings are in locations and are being used in ways that are tailored to meet local need. Some stations are new; others have been redeveloped; and many of the remainder have been refurbished. Much of the refurbishment work has been managed at local level, through the Service investing in, and supporting, 'self-help' projects. This 'self-help' concept has also been extended to include some routine maintenance and cleaning. People now feel much prouder of their fire stations than they used to.

The design of the buildings and the facilities they incorporate vary. Some are stand-alone fire stations, whilst others are buildings in which RBFRS staff are co-located with colleagues from the police and/or ambulance service. All have facilities in which community engagement activity is regularly taking place (which has required creative thinking in some cases) and many of the facilities in question are available for general community use. Accommodation for firefighters on wholtime stations is configured for the various duty systems they now work – some stations have retained the traditional 2-2-4 shift pattern, whilst others have seen new arrangements introduced.

Fire station management teams enjoy much more autonomy than they used to have. They are supported by, and work alongside, other members of the RBFRS team (including the Service's volunteers), as well as local communities,

elected representatives and partner organisations to develop and deliver ‘local IRMPs’ – plans for providing services that are aligned to the risk-profile of their area. This means that the structure of community safety activity is different on different stations, to reflect the diversity of communities across Royal Berkshire.

Of course, all ‘local IRMPs’ are linked to the Service’s Strategic IRMP, so that they contribute to agreed Strategic Objectives. They also all include statutory prevention, protection and response activity. Beyond that though, their focus is determined by local circumstances, and risk is considered from a much broader perspective – as are the range of services provided to manage it.

For example:

- If it is identified that vulnerable older people in the area are at risk. With support from Community Safety specialists, as well as colleagues from local authorities and the NHS, these risks are being addressed through carefully-targeted home safety, welfare visits and other interventions. These interventions don’t just deal with fire risk, but the whole range of risks that can reduce the chances of older people being able to live happy, healthy and independent lives
- Where there are problems with particular types of business premises, with support from specialist Protection officers, these are being tackled through the risk-based inspection programme
- If cultural issues in the local community are generating risk again, with support from the central Community Safety team, and by working alongside elected representatives and partner organisations, community engagement activity is addressing these risks
- Where there are specific road safety issues in the area, then these are being addressed by carefully-targeted community engagement activity
- If there is a risk of people drowning in nearby lakes or rivers, then the Local IRMP is tackling this risk, at the times of year when it makes most sense to do so

- Where levels of petty crime and/or anti-social behaviour involving young people are high, the Service is being commissioned by other organisations to deliver FireBreak courses. These courses employ the Service’s trusted brand, and are being used to engage the young people involved, and encourage them to take different, more positive choices
- If there is a risk that local people might not receive life-saving medical care quickly enough, then South Central Ambulance Service is commissioning Co-responding schemes to enable firefighters to provide the help needed
- In areas where young people have relatively low aspiration, and poor future employment prospects, the Service is being commissioned to use its inspiring brand to engage them through the FireEd-up initiative, to improve their life chances
- Where the health of local communities needs to be improved, the Service is delivering various initiatives under the FireFit banner – which capitalises on the physically fit and healthy brand of the Service. Some of these are formal programmes commissioned by Public Health professionals, and focus on specific issues such as childhood obesity. Others involve much less formal approaches, such as RBFRS PTI’s running FireFit Bootcamps for local people who want to take part on a ‘pay and play’ basis

Although not all activity involving members of the RBFRS team in communities around fire stations will be undertaken by people who actually work on the stations, it feels to local people as if all the activity in question is anchored to their fire station, and that is why the buildings are regarded as such important community assets.

As with many of the changes we have made, the shift in focus to positioning fire stations at the heart of communities hasn’t come without its challenges. There have been tensions along the way and some mistakes have happened, but the prize has made the journey worth it.

From the perspective of those who now work for the Service, there is significant buy-in for the approach being employed – not least because many of the things happening on fire stations are

rooted in ideas that staff themselves came up with during an engagement exercise in late 2014.

Beyond that, people in support functions can see that, whatever their role, they are contributing to enabling people across Royal Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives...and that really means something!

For people who actually work on the fire stations, life has changed a lot too. The broader role that firefighters now have means that they are busier than ever – but busy doing more rewarding work that they believe in, because they have more ownership of what they spend their time doing and can see that it really meets the needs of local communities. For wholetime firefighters this has improved morale, and for their RDS colleagues, not only has morale improved but recruitment and retention rates have risen significantly. Why? Well because the reward package has become so much more attractive – both in financial terms and, more importantly for many, because they are now experiencing the enormous emotional reward that comes with being given many more opportunities to save lives in their community.

And what of the change that local people have experienced? They now see their fire station as a really important, and integral, part of community life - rather than just a building from which fire engines emerge occasionally on 'blues-and-twos'. Of course, firefighters need to be available to deal with emergencies when they happen and that remains really important, but, to local communities, their fire station means so much more to them than just that.

### **Service Support – Capacity, Capability And Resilience**

In order to facilitate the shift to fire stations operating at the heart of communities, the approach to providing support services has changed significantly.

People in service support departments are now really customer-focused. They recognise that their role is to meet the legitimate needs of customers – whether external customers in communities, or internal customers in the shape of other members of the RBFRS team. They understand that their

role is primarily to support and facilitate, rather than to centralise and control, and now deliver much more value with the resources at their disposal.

Although, as with Service Delivery, in overall terms the number of people in support departments has reduced, some departments and functions have grown to provide the capacity necessary to support other partner organisations. The first really significant example of this emerged in early 2015 when the Thames Valley Fire Control Service opened. Other examples followed, where RBFRS was able to demonstrate that it could provide really good support services for other public sector partners.

Capability in support departments has also been increased. The main way this has been achieved is, again, through sharing resources with, or across, other public sector organisations. This means we have access to the high levels of expertise necessary to run support functions really well, but more efficiently, because we don't have to pay for it all ourselves. An early example of this approach was put in place in 2014, when a shared procurement function was established with Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service.

This different approach to the provision of support functions has also made them more resilient. Instead of a model involving small departments and, in some cases, individual members of staff providing essential support, we have moved to an approach involving larger, and therefore more resilient, support teams working across multiple organisations.

### **Culture – One Team Working Collaboratively For The People We Serve**

Back in 2014, it was clear that the RBFRS was going to have to deal with a very difficult set of circumstances. It was equally clear that, if it was going to deal successfully with the circumstances in question, people in the Service would need to combine their experience, expertise and energy as 'one team' – a cohesive high-performing team working collaboratively for the people they served. The Fire Authority had set a new direction in the shape of six high-level Commitments to their constituents, and it was now for the professionals

to translate these Commitments into real change on the ground.

Four years on and there has been a real shift in culture – the way things are now 'done around here' is significantly different from how they used to be.

Despite the fact that some really difficult, and at times unpopular, decisions have been taken over the last four years, levels of trust within the Service are generally high. Why? Because people have been genuinely involved in the change process, and they have been invested in, as has the process itself. This was recognised when the Service achieved Investors in People accreditation in 2017.

The process of engaging the RBFRS team started in 2014, when a communication exercise took place to explain why the Fire Authority had reset its policy direction and what it was intended to achieve. This was followed by a second engagement exercise during which staff put forward ideas intended to deliver the Fire Authority's agenda. These ideas were then used to inform a plan for WHAT would be done to develop the Service over the years ahead. When the plan was published, members of the RBFRS team recognised it as their plan, owned it, and took responsibility for its successful delivery.

A third phase of staff engagement then took place, to develop a set of leadership and team behaviours – details of HOW people thought all members of the RBFRS team should behave as we took forward the change programme. These behaviours were then used to support recruitment, professional development and performance appraisal – they became part of the Service's DNA.

Much of the bureaucracy that was evident in 2014, and which was slowing the Service down and making it a frustrating place to work at times, has been stripped away. Trust is much more important than bureaucracy now, and the need to try and control things from Headquarters has been substantially replaced by a focus on support and facilitation of activity at a local level.

With this extension of trust has come the need for accountability – people are expected to practice accountability and are held to account. Good performance is rewarded and sub-standard performance addressed. That's the deal: the Service will invest in developing members of the team, and trust them to do a good job – it's then for team members to get on and deliver.

### **Conclusion**

The plan developed in 2015 to deliver what's been achieved so far was certainly both ambitious and challenging. The success that's resulted has been due to various factors, but by far the most important of these is that the process of putting the change programme together and then delivering it involved engaging the experience, expertise and energy of the whole Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service team – one team working collaboratively for the people we serve.

By positioning fire stations at the heart of communities and re-shaping service support arrangements to facilitate this approach, we are now delivering better outcomes for people in Royal Berkshire than ever before, and that's something of which we should all be very proud indeed.

# 5. Enabling Safe And Fulfilling Lives – Our Integrated Risk Management Plan

## What Is Integrated Risk Management Planning?

**Integrated Risk Management Planning is how we safely and effectively manage risk to ensure we achieve our mission for Royal Berkshire – Enabling the people of Royal Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives.**

The term Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) comes from the Government's Fire and Rescue Service National Framework document and means all fire and rescue authorities have a legal duty to produce and consult on a plan that identifies and assesses all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the communities of Royal Berkshire. Our duty extends to assisting with incidents in other counties and nationally. The term 'foreseeable' means we must consider and plan for a wide range of incidents. This range includes those we routinely deal with, such as fires and vehicle accidents to incidents that thankfully occur less frequently, such as terrorist attacks and large scale flooding.

With limited numbers of people and equipment, we have to make judgements on how best to deploy these resources and the IRMP process takes an overview of the full range of risks to ensure it has plans to manage all of them in an effective and efficient way. In simple terms, IRMP ensures that we have the right resources, in the right place, at the right time in order to address the risks, which threaten our communities. We do this by following a five-step process.

### Step 1: Assessing Risk

Within the context of IRMP, risk is the likelihood of an event causing harm and the severity of that harm. Our role is primarily to deliver effective Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response services to reduce risk. Our work to reduce fires and fire-related deaths and injuries makes a major contribution to reducing risk in the community and making Royal Berkshire safer.

We analyse what creates risk in Royal Berkshire based on an analysis of:

- Communities and households
- Deprivation and employment
- Different building types, from high to low risk, including future house building projects and local planning initiatives
- The transport networks and infrastructure, including road, rail, air and river
- The environment including adverse weather conditions

This analysis is based on data and information from a range of sources, including:

- Historical incident data
- From partner organisations, such as education, health, crime and social care
- The Community Risk Register, which is maintained for the Thames Valley area
- The national risk assessment produced by the government

### Integrated Risk Modelling

We have recently invested in new risk mapping and modelling software that will enable us to better picture the risks, and will allow us to better integrate Prevention, Protection and Emergency Response services to ensure the best allocation of those services to meet the needs of the community.

To compliment this we use other software tools such as MOSAIC, which categorises households based on residents' characteristics and by using data sets, such as those describing levels of deprivation, which help us to gather information



and make informed judgements to build a picture of risk across the county.

All of this enables us to target not only the traditional incidents we have attended in the past, but also to contribute in the future to the wider social and health agenda, and embed these activities into our prevention strategy.

We have a legal duty to carry out inspections of properties where we know there are risks, e.g. industrial premises, hotels, business premises etc. Our buildings database maps these premises, and highlights those deemed our inspection priorities.

The analysis of all past incident types shows that dwelling fires and vehicle accidents are the highest risk. The following table is based upon the current analysis of risk for each incident type:

Incident type	Risk Level
Vehicle accidents (Road Traffic Collisions)	High
House fires and vehicle fires	High
Water incidents	Medium
Medical Incidents	Medium
Other property fires	Medium
Hazardous materials incidents	Medium
Rescue or release from machinery	Medium
Grassland, woodland, crops	Medium
Outdoor structure fires	Low
Animal assistance incidents	Low
Miscellaneous incident types	Low

Our database maps all: buildings, incidents, casualties and attendance times, enabling us to analyse and predict risk. In addition, the information collected is available through a data terminal on every fire engine, helping to keep our firefighters safe.

**Step 2 – Managing The Risk**

We do not manage these risks alone. We are part of a network of fire and rescue authorities and

organisations working together at a county level, across the Thames Valley and at a national level.

We work in this way to meet the Government's expectations of fire authorities and to meet our statutory responsibilities. The Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004 requires us to meet 'all normal requirements' for several of the duties it sets out. There is no national definition of normal requirements and no nationally recognised response standard. It is for each local authority to decide what normal requirements are for their local area. In RBFRS, we have interpreted this to mean those incidents that we routinely attend.

The Fire Service National Framework for England was published in 2012 and sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for the fire and rescue authorities in England. It demands that we identify and assess 'foreseeable risks' for Prevention, Protection and Response activities. 'Foreseeable' is something that you know about in advance. 'Reasonably foreseeable events' are the ones that are set out in the previous paragraph and we classify them as 'normal' events. These include house fires, vehicle fires, train crashes, factory fires, and flooding. Risks that are 'foreseeable' but happen rarely we classify as 'beyond normal'. These include terrorist attacks or a commercial aircraft crash.

Practically, what this means is that we have identified an extensive range of incident types that we would normally be able to manage, with some help as necessary from other bordering fire and rescue services. However, other factors influence this, such as the commitment for resources that we can sustain.

We are able to respond and contain an incident or incidents of:

- One incident that requires 10 fire appliances for over 48 hours
- Two incidents that require 6 fire appliances to be involved simultaneously or within 48 hours of each other
- One or more incidents with more than 4 fire appliances deployed continuously for up to 96 hours.

These scenarios would be classified as 'normal', however, any incident/s greater or longer than this may require additional resources to cope and would be classified as 'beyond normal', such as the flooding across the Thames Valley in 2014 and the Swinley Forest fire in 2011.

### National

At a national level, fire and rescue service arrangements are co-ordinated under the Fire and Rescue Service Coordination and Advisory Framework. This framework coordinates the provision of support and advice to fire services and central government during incidents that are 'beyond normal', of national significance and require national coordination.

### Thames Valley

Within the Thames Valley area, the Local Resilience Forum manages risks. This forum is a requirement under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and requires emergency responders to assess the risk of an emergency, occurring, to maintain and publish plans for dealing with the emergency and arrange to warn and inform the public.

### Royal Berkshire Fire And Rescue Service Our People

We manage risk using our firefighters, support staff, our fire engines, specialist vehicles and equipment.

Our Wholetime duty system firefighters are available at stations spread across the county, 24/7 and 365 days per year and can be mobilised to an incident at a moment's notice. They are complemented by our on-call firefighters who are based at stations in more rural locations and are likewise ready to leave their place of work, or home and attend emergencies from their local station, when they receive the call. Officers have a dual role; part of their role is to manage areas of the organisation such as fire stations, prevention, protection and training. The other part of their role is to respond to emergency incidents and ensure a greater degree of command and control is applied to larger and more complex incidents.

Our new Thames Valley Fire Control Service control room located at Service Headquarters receives

999 calls, mobilises fire engines and co-ordinates emergency incidents. This state-of-the-art control room manages the emergency calls for Royal Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire fire and rescue services.

We have a number of staff working in front line services, such as prevention and protection, roles and in a range of managerial and administrative roles such as health and safety, operational support, human resources, and other business support functions.

Our work is also supported by a number of volunteers who give up their spare time to deliver valuable work in the community.

Our fire engines, specialist vehicles and equipment are deployed at fire stations across the county as shown on the map on page 20 and 21.

### Managing The Risk Through Prevention

Our priority is always to prevent emergencies from happening in the first place. We deliver a wide range of prevention activities and initiatives often in partnership with other agencies. Some of these are outlined here:

Home fire safety checks (HFSCs) target groups of people considered most vulnerable and therefore, most at risk. A HFSC will fit smoke detectors or check smoke detectors if they have already been fitted, as well as provide safety and well being messages.

We work closely with Thames Valley Police to identify and target arson and other fire related crime. We also work with street wardens and other partners to identify potential risk areas for anti-social behaviours and to deliver safety education to at risk groups. We also refer people to our partners when necessary.

Working in partnership with the six unitary authorities, we engage in a range of community activities with, for example:

- Pre-schools and infant classes
- People with sensory needs and specialist learning needs
- Stroke victims, elderly groups and people with limited mobility

- Those whose first language is not English
- Families in children's centres
- Community Safety Partnerships

We coordinate and organise activities across Berkshire to support various national campaigns such as 'Fire Kills', the National Road Safety Campaign, and the organisation and coordination of a display stand at the Royal County of Berkshire Show.

We engage with young people to encourage positive behaviours, we also develop their communication and leadership skills through the four young firefighter units based at Crowthorne, Maidenhead, Whitley Wood and Hungerford fire stations.

We have recently developed a further programme of new and exciting initiatives for fitness education (FireFit), and are developing programmes designed to support employability and personal development (Firebreak and FirED Up).

### **Managing The Risk Through Protection**

Our approach to Protection centres on enforcement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. We enforce the Order by undertaking an annual risk based inspection programme of business premises and auditing the safety arrangements they have in place. Premises are included in this programme based on the risk they present to those that work in or visit them.

We currently split the risk based inspection programme into four categories:

- Sleeping Unfamiliar (e.g. hospital, hotels etc.)
- Sleeping Familiar and Licensed Premises (e.g. blocks of flats, night clubs etc.)
- Public Unfamiliar (e.g. libraries, leisure centres etc.)
- Workplace Familiar (e.g. offices etc.)

We plan to conduct 2,200 audits per year.

We have legal powers to inspect, advise, direct and where necessary, enforce actions to be taken by those who are responsible for ensuring the safety of others in case of fire. Any enforcement action is reasonable, proportionate and dependent upon the level of risk.

We also respond to building regulations and licensing consultations from Local Authority Building Control on fire safety building regulations issues for new developments, along with licensing. We carry out about 1,400 building regulation consultations and 230 Licensing Act consultations across the county.

In the event of a fire in a premise, we carry out a Post Fire Inspection that enables us to assess how the fire safety arrangements worked in practice. After the inspection, we may issue a notice of improvements regarding fire safety standards and fire safety management.

Fire Investigation is a valuable tool, which can be used to shape the future of fire prevention strategies, both locally and nationally. Where arson or deliberate fire setting is suspected, we carry out Fire Investigation with the police. This may result in the prosecution of offenders, which acts as a deterrent.

We will quickly deal with any complaint from a member of the public regarding fire safety arrangements in a premise, assessing potential risks and taking relevant, proportionate action.

### **Managing The Risk Through Operational Response**

Our approach to emergency response is to ensure we have the right numbers of firefighters and fire engines, at the right place, at the right time, delivering the right standard of response. We have a legal duty to respond to a range of emergencies, such as fires, transport accidents, collapsed structures and mass decontamination, but also attend other incident types such as water rescue, animal rescue, hazardous chemical spills, lift rescues, machinery entrapments, and trench collapse. These are all deemed part of our normal response.

Our current attendance standards state how quickly we try to arrive at the highest risk incident types. The current standards in place throughout Berkshire are:

- We have an optimum response, where we are committed to attending an incident within 8 minutes for the first appliance and 10 minutes for the second appliance for dwelling fires

- We have a standard response, where we are committed to attending in 10 minutes for the first appliance and 12 minutes for the second appliance for dwelling fires
- Higher risk localities, where it is predicted that appliances will not reach dwelling fires within the standard response, we will prioritise for Prevention initiatives
- We are committed to making an initial attendance to vehicle accidents (Road Traffic Collisions), with the necessary resources to commence extrication of casualties, within 11 minutes

We will be reviewing these standards as part of priority project 1 (see page 18) to ensure they are fit for purpose.

### Step 3 - Our Resources

The map on page 20 and 21 shows our current resources. The findings from our four priority projects may impact on our resources and how we deploy them in the future.

### Step 4 - Measuring And Assuring

Our IRMP plan covers the period 2015-2019 and will be monitored on a regular basis and formally reviewed every year when existing risks will be reassessed, new and emerging risks assessed, incident data analysed, performance information will be updated and changes to our response to risk will be considered.

Our strategic commitments and associated strategic objectives provide a basis for the outcomes we wish to achieve and the outputs we need to measure our effectiveness. The performance monitoring section of this Corporate Plan details the measures along with the governance arrangements we have in place.

### Step 5 - Shaping The Future – Actions

#### National gap analysis

The Corporate Management Team work with Fire Authority members to look at what future requirements might be needed in an attempt to capture all potential and any new corporate and community risks. They then carry out a risk assessment to identify any new threats and if any are classified as 'beyond normal', we will ensure

that any gaps are identified and communicate them to the relevant government department.

#### Local gap analysis

The approach outlined in the previous paragraph helps identify new 'normal' risks and will enable us to improve our service to the public. Having analysed the risks, and set out the current community risk management arrangements and resources available to manage risk, it is possible to identify where the gaps in our delivery are. This analysis showed the following gaps:

- The suitability of our current attendance standards and, therefore, possible station and appliance disposition and associated crewing arrangements
- Difficulties in attracting and retaining on-call staff
- Partner engagement for health and social care initiatives and improved information sharing
- Partner engagement for crime and disorder initiatives and improved information sharing
- The effectiveness of the current 'risk inspections' programme conducted by the Prevention department
- The integration of new technology: Appliances, equipment and new systems of work

#### Priority Projects 2015-19

Based on the results of the gap analysis, we intend to initiate work or build upon ongoing work in the following key projects:

#### Project 1: Response (response standards, station locations and crewing arrangements)

- Review, clarify and revise our current attendance standards and their underpinning principles
- Review optimum station locations and their suitability for purpose considering planned changes to the infrastructure across Royal Berkshire. This could mean the building of new fire stations in new locations or renovating our existing stations
- Review all current shift patterns and appliance crewing arrangements, and deliver and implement new arrangements when agreed

- Explore the possibility of sharing locations and resources with bordering fire and rescue services or other emergency services

**Project 2: Response (Use of technology)**

- Review our current specialist appliances and their suitability for purpose in the light of rapidly developing technology
- Explore the possibilities of sharing resources with neighbours
- Explore emerging technology and its impact upon operational systems of work and crewing arrangements and implement new systems where possible

**Project 3: Prevention**

- Review our current Prevention initiatives delivered with partner agencies and better integrate them with Protection and Response initiatives, delivering a broad range of new initiatives to improve the health and well being of our communities
- Carry out risk mapping to deal with the risks associated with:
  - the vulnerable (elderly, deprived, hard to reach)
  - schools and education (young, unemployed, particular risk)
  - health (drink/smoking related, heart/lung disease, obesity)
  - crime and disorder (arson, driving related, drug risks etc)

**Project 4: Protection**

- Review our risk based audit programme and utilise collected data to allow us to continually review 'risk' premises and enable us to deliver a more focused and targeted risk based audit programme
- This review will allow us to utilise information from a number of other intelligence gathering sites and data sets to deliver initiatives that deal with new and emerging issues in the future

It will be a requirement of project outcomes and options to provide value for money, and to align with the projected budgets for 2015 to 2019.

**How Can You Get Involved?**

As previously stated, we have a duty to consult on our Integrated Risk Management Plan, so this is now your opportunity to give us your views and opinions:

- Do you have any views on our approach to the identification and measurement of risk?
- Do you have any comments or views on our approach to managing risk or are there any areas we should include or focus on?
- Have you any views or comments on the four priority projects or is there anything else we should include within them?
- Have you any comments or views on any other aspect of the plan?

We value your views, ideas, and opinions, and there are a number of ways that you can contact us and be involved:

- You can respond to the IRMP consultation on our website [www.rbfrs.co.uk](http://www.rbfrs.co.uk)
- You can write to us with your comments, ideas or views at Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, IRMP Consultation, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 7SD
- You can email us at [irmp@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:irmp@rbfrs.co.uk)
- You can telephone 01189384331 asking for the Group Manager (IRMP)
- You can attend Fire Authority meetings, dates are available on our website
- You can visit your local station and discuss any issue you have with the duty crew
- You can attend a fire station open day to find out more. You can join our team by becoming a volunteer. More information can be found on our website
- You can follow us on social media – both Twitter and Facebook

# Resource Map for RBFRS

**KEY**

- 2013/14 responses<sup>1</sup> (number on Station ground)
- Fire engine
- Wholetime Duty System or 24/7
- Retained Duty Sytem or On call (DC = Dual Contract means firefighters are working as both wholetime and retained.)

35 (57)  
 X 8 (2DC)  
 X 1

157 (111)  
 X 12 (4DC)  
 x 1

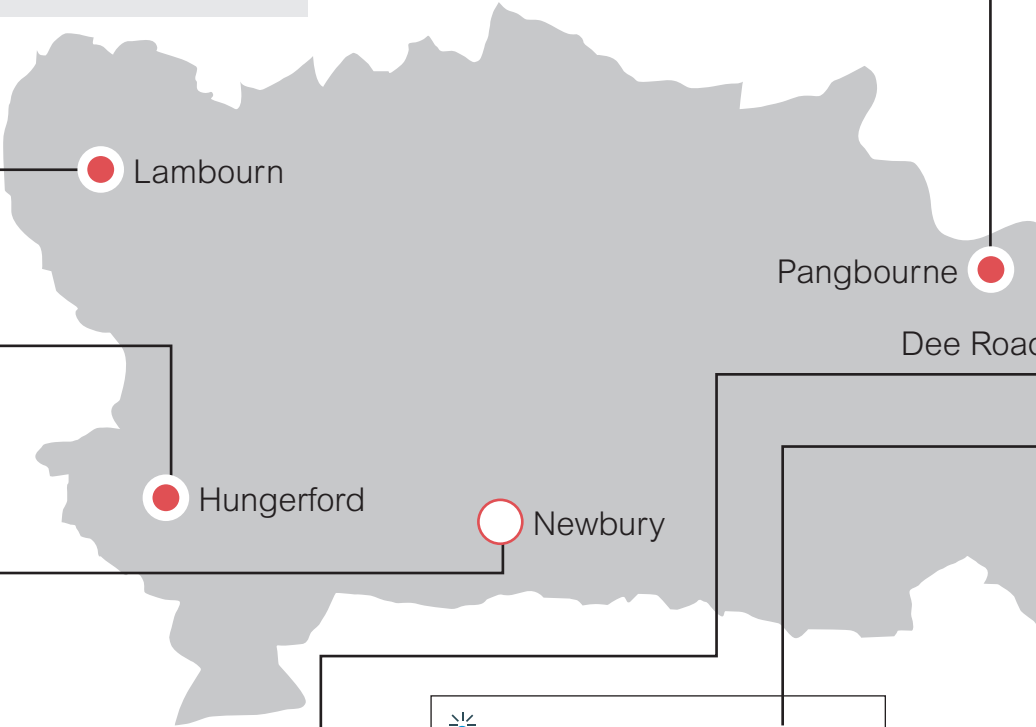
774 (749)  
 X 43 FF (4DC)  
 X 2

728 (606)  
 X 23  
 X 1

501 (336)  
 X 34 (2DC)  
 X 1  
 1 Aerial Appliance  
 1 Hazardous Material and Environmental Response Unit  
 1 Incident Response Unit  
 1 Operational Support Unit

29 (49)  
 X 9 (1DC)  
 X 1  
 1 Water Bowser

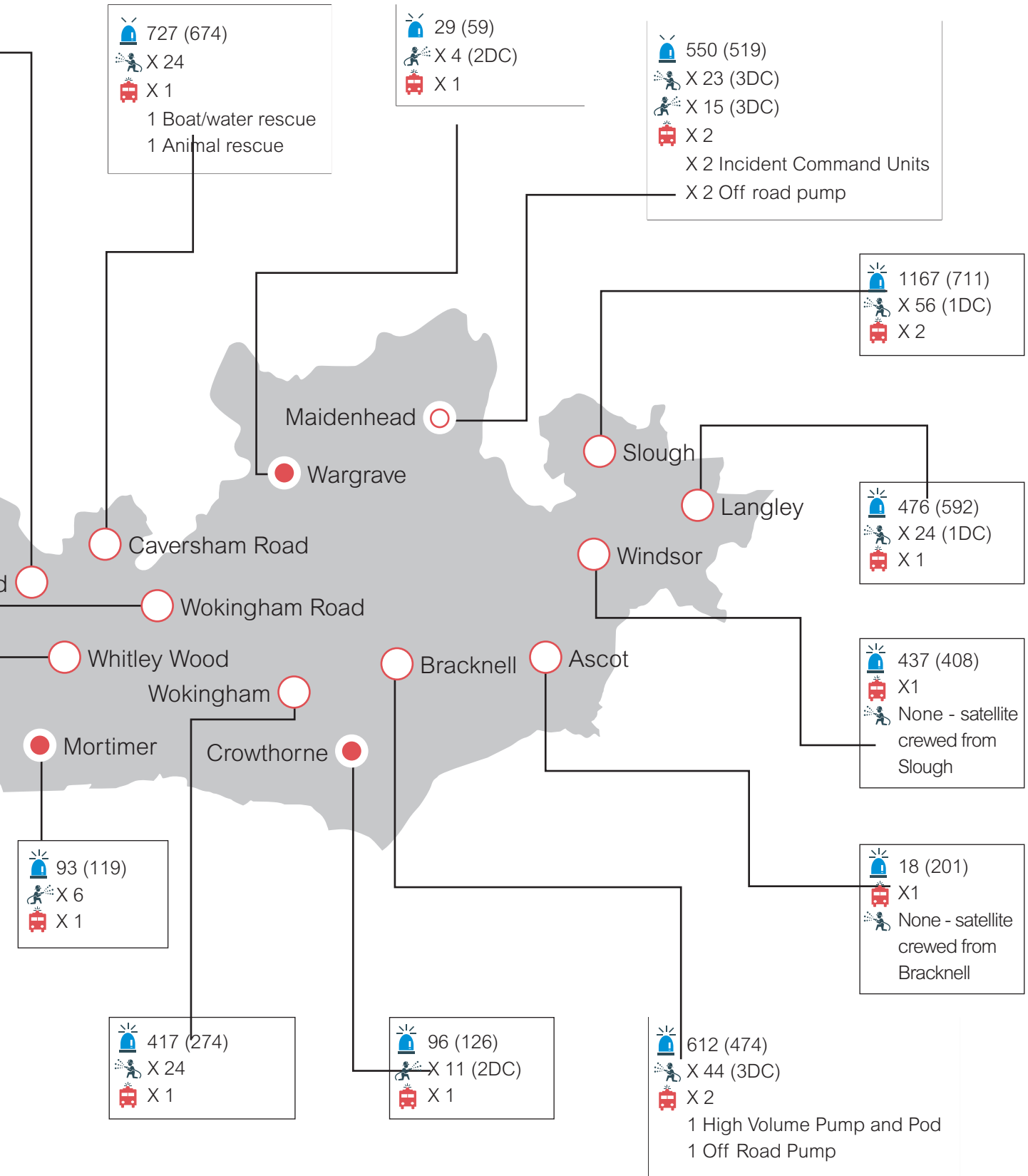
643 (611)  
 X 26 FF (1DC)  
 X 1  
 1 Heavy Rescue Unit



Retained
  Wholetime / Retained
  Wholetime

<sup>1</sup>ORH Validation report Fig 3 15/12/14  
<sup>2</sup>2013/2014 data - Scorecard  
<sup>3</sup>FireWatch contracts 19/5/15





## 6. Managing our Resources

**This section includes the main strategies that describe how we will shape, develop and use our resources in the future.**

### 6.1 Our People

This strategy describes the model and approach we will take to develop culture, behaviours, processes and leadership practice to deliver the Strategic Commitments. It forms the basis of our organisational development programme which aims to deliver new ways of working which reflect contemporary best practice and help us build capacity, capability and resilience in the organisation and with our partners.

We recognise that our workforce are our greatest asset and that it is their commitment that allows us to deliver excellent services to the people of Berkshire, enabling them to lead safe and fulfilling lives. There are a number of core principles and aspirations underpinning the Organisational Development Programme which support the three key themes of:

- Service Delivery - Fire Stations at the Heart of our communities
- Service Support – Capacity, Capability and Resilience
- Culture – One team working collaboratively for the people we serve

### What We Want To Achieve

The Organisational Development Programme will deliver a range of related projects that will deliver a cultural change across the organisation and include:

- A clear vision which is relevant to individuals and supported by a common set of behaviours which are at the centre of how we work
- A clear employer 'brand' which helps improve engagement and attract people into the organisation whose values, aspirations and behaviours are in line with our culture
- A complete review of Human Resources policy and practice to support devolved decision

making and responsibility with accountability

- A reward and recognition package that helps us attract and retain the people we need to succeed
- Achievement of the Investors in People Standard
- A programme of core skills development that makes sure staff from across the organisation have an understanding how to manage, develop and lead people, can show good financial practice and understand what is needed for good governance
- A long-term leadership development programme that makes sure our leaders are trustworthy and that future talent is identified and encouraged
- A clear training and development plan that makes sure we have got the right resources to develop the skills, capability and resilience that we need
- A long-term strategic workforce plan supported by good processes which will stretch from pre-employment and youth engagement through promotion to retirement
- A clear focus on performance and customer service throughout the way we work
- An organisational structure which encourages innovation, ownership and excellent performance
- A clear view of the values and the culture we aspire to and tools to embed these behaviours into all of our core processes
- A competency framework explaining what skills and behaviours we expect
- Internal communications tools that mean we can easily share and exchange information across the organisation
- Appropriate methods for measuring workforce performance and engagement levels
- An easy way for staff to feedback ideas on how we can change and improve the service we offer

The Organisational Development Programme is organised into 4 projects:

- Employer Excellence
- Leadership and Learning
- New Ways of Working
- Engagement

## 6.2 Our Finances

Like all public services, we are committed to delivering value for money across the services we provide. The majority of our funding comes from three sources:

- Council Tax
- Central Government Funding
- Business Rates

Most of our funding, comes from Council Tax, followed by Central Government funding with Business Rates contributing the smallest amount.

We have already seen an annual reduction of around 10% in Central Government Funding for the last couple of years since 2013/14, and we expect this annual reduction to continue through to 2019.

In Berkshire, we are in the fortunate position of experiencing reasonable economic growth, which means while we are committed to maintaining our council tax precept at £60.66, an increase in the number of houses being built across the county means we will see an increase in council tax funding.

It is a similar picture with non-domestic properties and we also see an increase in funding from Business Rates.

Based on current information, we are predicting the net effect of these funding changes will mean we will have £2.5M less from existing funding sources to deliver our services by 2019.

Profits from our Social Enterprise trading company will be invested in community safety related activity, which will compliment and extend our core, statutory, prevention, protection and response roles.

## Medium Term Financial Plan

Our medium term financial plan is designed to ensure we can deliver our mission of enabling the people of Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives, and is divided into Revenue and Capital expenditure.

### Revenue

Our biggest area of revenue expenditure is the cost of our people. During the four year period of this corporate plan we will restructure many of our support services, and continue to reduce costs by broadening our use of shared services with other blue-light services and local authorities. We will off-set some of the reduction in funding from traditional sources by working with new and existing partners to generate income by selling new services using existing staff.

### Capital

Our capital expenditure includes money spent on Premises, Vehicles and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Due to the financial uncertainty and increased austerity of recent years, we have prioritised our expenditure on maintaining frontline services. This financial prudence means we now have some reserves that we can spend on delivering three important invest-to-save capital programmes that will support delivery of the three key themes.

### Premises

Our Stations are ageing and maintenance costs will rise significantly if we do nothing. We will invest in our Stations to make sure they offer fit for purpose facilities that are easily maintained. We will continue our commitment to working with other blue-light services to identify opportunities for co-location. To help deliver this programme of work we will pursue new, additional sources of funding.

### Vehicles

We will review the type and number of operational vehicles we use, identify the most cost effective way of supplying these vehicles and seek to share resources where we can to minimise cost.

### ICT

We will invest in information and communication technology that will help improve efficiency and resilience, and generate capacity at a lower cost in the future.

# 7. How we Plan and Monitor Performance

**There are two cycles of strategic planning and performance management which we go through to plan our activities and gather information to help us decide if we need to make any changes to our priorities.**

## The Strategic Planning Cycle

Every year we look at lots of different sources of internal and external information to help us decide what is most important for us to tackle in the future; this annual cycle gives us the chance to look at what progress is being made, think about and agree where more or less effort might be needed and create plans for delivery.

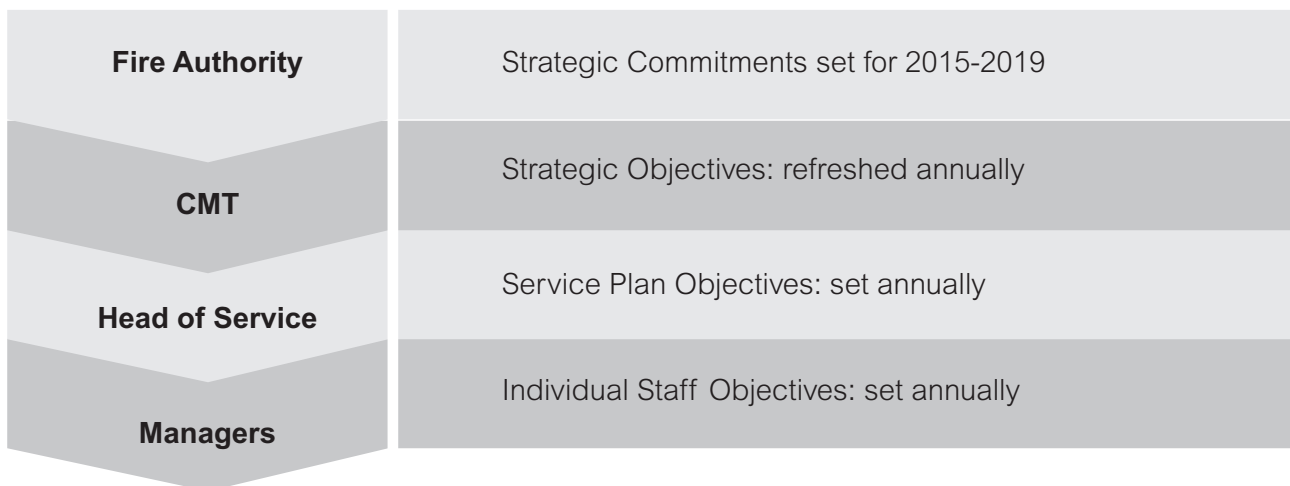
The Performance Management Cycle: The reason for monitoring performance is to make sure we achieve our mission to enable the people of Royal Berkshire to lead safe and fulfilling lives and deliver a value for money service.

In order to have a detailed picture of our performance to support decision making, we collect information from across the organisation and monitor it regularly through our Audit and Governance Committee, giving us confidence that we are delivering results. This cycle divides the year up into quarters, so we have four chances a year to look in-depth at progress.

## 7.2 Service Planning

Service Plans have been created to help us turn our Strategic Commitments into action and form part of the Strategic planning cycle. They are a record of all the tasks we need to carry out in a year to keep our organisation running and to improve it. The Plans say how each member of our staff will help us reach our goals.

**The following picture shows how Strategic Commitments flow down through RBFRS:**



### 7.3 How We Commission Work

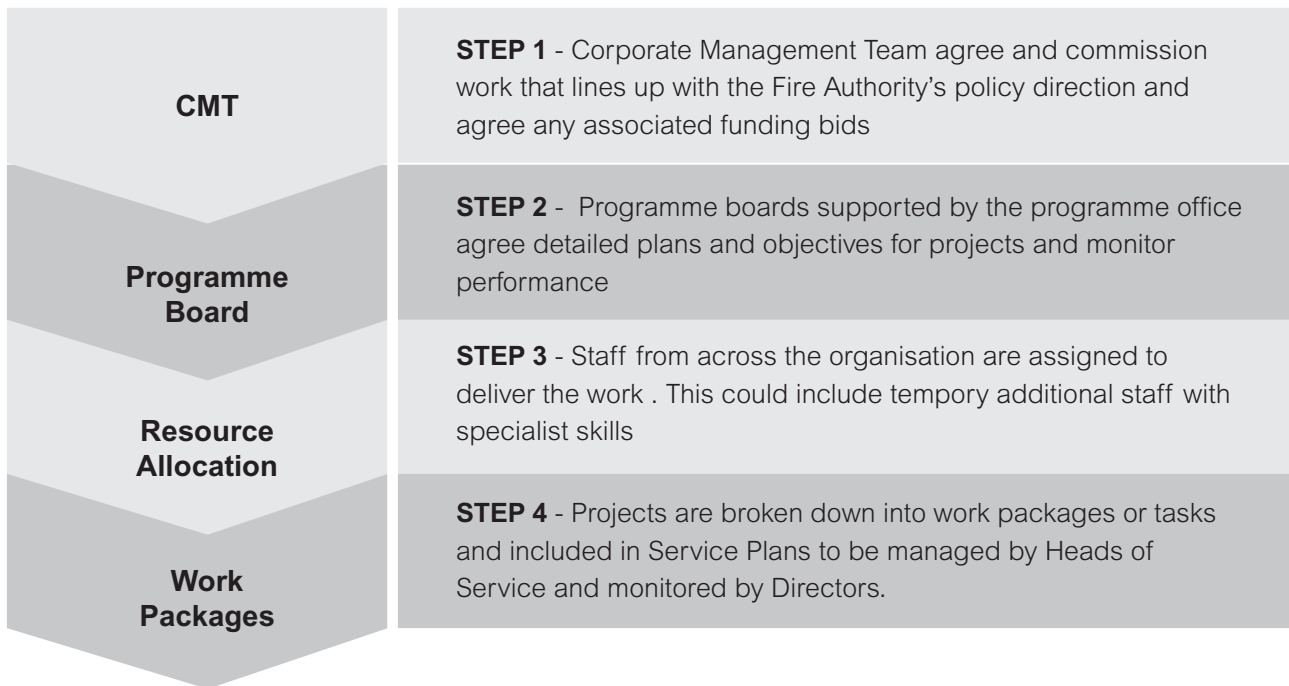
As part of the planning process, RBFRS officers have introduced a more structured and transparent way of commissioning work within the organisation. To ensure that projects are linked to delivering the Strategic Commitments, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) will commission all new work that cuts across the organisation which may require additional resources, e.g. people or funding.

### 7.4 How We Define Organisational Risk

There are internal and external factors and influences that make it uncertain, if and when, we will achieve our objectives. The effect this uncertainty has on our organisational objectives is “risk”. Our organisational risk management policy is designed to give a structure for monitoring and managing risk to ensure the level of uncertainty is minimised and organisational objectives are achieved.

Our Organisational Risk Management Policy is limited to managing risks that could affect the delivery of organisational objectives, and whilst this could include risk associated with Health and Safety, it is not intended to address the management of occupational Health and Safety risks or Community Risk which is described in Section 5 of this document.

The 4 step diagram below describes the commissioning process:



## 8. Assurance

**This final section outlines the main processes we have in place to provide assurance that we are delivering what we say we will to you - the residents of Royal Berkshire.**

### 8.1 Audit

Audit is an important part of giving ourselves, and you, confidence that our Service is being run properly and in ways that have been agreed between our Officers and Members.

The results of the audit programme help give us confidence that our business is being run in line with the law, government rules, good practice and meets organisational standards. This information helps make up the annual 'Statement of Assurance'.

### 8.2 Statement Of Assurance

The annual 'Statement of Assurance' gives us the opportunity to formally state how well we believe the finance, governance and operations of our Service are run. The statement also states how well the standards set in the law; the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (July 2012), have been met. We have to publish this statement every year and we do so in-line with government guidance to say if the necessary standards are being 'Fully', 'Substantially', or 'Partially' met. Our annual statement of assurance is available on our website.





**Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service**

Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD