

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

Member Role Description

June 2024



INTRODUCTION

This document should be read alongside the Member and Officer Protocol and Member Charter and is linked to the Member Scheme of Allowance and Fire Authority Terms of Reference. It contains the role description for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members and specific Member appointed roles. All Member roles listed below are appointments made annually at the Annual Fire Authority meeting held in June, Extraordinary meetings; or, whenever a vacant position becomes available mid-year.

- Member of the Fire Authority
- Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Fire Authority Committees
- Lead Members
- Member Champions
- Honorary Member Champion
- Local Government Association Fire Commission Representative;
- Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Representatives; and
- Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group Representative

For clarity, where the document refers to Fire Authority this means Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA).

FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBER - ROLE DESCRIPTION

1 Accountabilities

- To Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and Royal County of Berkshire
- All Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct and Member / Officer Protocol.

2 Role and Functions of all Councillors

- To represent the interests of the population of the whole area of the Fire Authority
- To represent the views and interests of the constituent Unitary Authority and its communities on the Fire Authority
- To liaise with other Elected Members, principal authorities, officers and partner organisations to ensure Strategic Commitments of the Fire Authority are identified, understood and supported
- To be a channel of communication to the community on Fire Authority strategies, policies, services and procedures
- To be an advocate for the Fire Authority

2.1 Making decisions and overseeing Fire Authority performance

- To attend and participate in Fire Authority meetings, and appointed Committees and Working Groups reaching and making informed and balanced decisions, and overseeing performance
- To adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision-making
- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of Fire Authority services.

2.2 Representing the Authority (subject to appointment)

- To represent the Fire Authority on outside bodies as an appointee of the Fire Authority
- To represent and be an advocate for the Fire Authority on local and national bodies and events

2.3 Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- To promote and support good governance of the Fire Authority and its affairs
- To provide leadership and promote citizenship as a representative of the Fire Authority

2.4 Personal and role development

- To participate in opportunities for development provided for members by the Fire Authority in line with the Member Development Strategy.

3 Rights and Duties

- Councillors will have such rights of access to documents, information, of the Fire Authority as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (section 100B)
- Councillors will not make public, information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Fire Authority or the subject of the information, or divulge personal information or information given to them in confidence to anyone other than a Councillor or officer entitled to know it without consent.
- For these purposes, “confidential” and “exempt” information are defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
- Councillors will adhere to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Member Code of Conduct, Member and Officer Relations Protocol.

4 Allowance

- All 20 Fire Authority Members receive a Basic Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

FIRE AUTHORITY CHAIR (AND VICE-CHAIR) ROLE DESCRIPTION

5 Chair - Role and Purpose of Activity

5.1 The Fire Authority Chair as the elected leader and as a symbol of the Authority's democratic powers are required to:

- To uphold the democratic values of the Authority
- To be the elected representative' figurehead for the Authority and be the principal political spokesperson for the Authority
- To be recognised as a media contact in liaison with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Communications and Engagement Team
- To provide leadership in building a political consensus around the Authority's policies
- To provide strong, clear leadership in the coordination of policies, strategies and service delivery
- To represent the Authority at civic and ceremonial functions
- To chair meetings of the Authority in line with its Standing Orders
- To brief Group Leaders and other political representatives of the Fire Authority, ensuring they are aware of issues and risks
- To ensure learning and development of all Fire Authority Members via Group Leaders and political representatives

5.2 Managing and leading the work of the Authority

- To ensure the work of the Authority meets national policy objectives
- To advise and mentor other Authority members in their work; to prepare and manage an annual work programme for the Authority to meet its legal and statutory obligations (e.g. budget setting, Community Risk Management planning etc.)

5.3 Participating in the collective decision making of the Authority

- To work closely with other Authority members to ensure the development of effective Authority policies and the budgetary framework for the Authority, and the delivery of high-quality services to the local community
- To accept collective responsibility and support decisions made by the Authority once they have been made

5.4 Working with officers to lead the organisation

- To liaise with the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive, and other appropriate officers, on a regular basis
- To work with employees of the Authority in relation to the strategic commitments and direction of the Authority

Vice-Chair

5.5 To fulfil the duties of the Chair in his/her absence

- To assist the Chair in specific duties as and when required
- Therefore, to understand and carry out the Chair's job purpose as set out above.

5.6 Allowance

- 7.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF A COMMITTEE

6. Committee Chair

6.1 Provide leadership and direction

The Committee Chair are required to:

- To provide confident and effective management of meetings to facilitate inclusivity, participation and clear decision making
- To demonstrate integrity and impartiality in decision making in accordance with legal, constitutional and policy requirements
- To delegate actions to sub committees and Working Parties as appropriate

6.2 Promoting the role of the Committee

- To act as an ambassador for the Committee, facilitating understanding of the role
- To act within the constitutional requirements to oversee the functions of the committee fairly and correctly
- To ensure thoroughness and objectivity in the Committee, receiving and responding to professional advice in the conduct of meetings
- To promote and support good governance by the Authority

6.3 Effective meeting management

- To set agendas containing clear objectives and outcomes for the meeting
- To ensure that the necessary preparation is done beforehand
- To ensure that all participants have an opportunity to make an appropriate contribution
- To report on progress against the work programme to the Authority.

6.4 Committee Vice-Chair

- To fulfil the duties of the Chair in his or her absence
- To assist the Chair in specific duties as required.

6.5 Allowance

- 6.5.1 The Chair of Committees are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

LEAD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

7 Lead Member Appointments

7.1 The structure of the Fire Authority allocates the following Lead Member roles:

- Collaboration
- Community Risk Management Plan
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development
- Finance; and
- Strategic Assets and Sustainability.

7.2 Role and Responsibilities

7.2.1 Collaboration Lead

- The Collaboration Lead is one of two appointed representatives onto Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee meetings and is the sole Member attendee from RBFA that attend Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group meetings.
- Attend briefings with Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Area Manager Collaboration and Policy.
- Chair Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee and Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group on a rotational cycle with Thames Valley blue light partners. See Paragraph 11 and 12 for a detailed role description of Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee representatives, and function of Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group.

7.2.2 Community Risk Management Plan Lead

- Attend briefings with Head of Corporate Services.
- Promote Fire Authority consultations to local community alongside Communication and Engagement Team
- Serve as a liaison between the community and Service to increase community awareness.

7.2.3 Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead

- To attend quarterly RBFRS EDI Network meetings, these are internal meetings held with employees from across the Service to support and promote RBFRS EDI objectives
- To foster positive cultural relations and encourage shared learning at all levels within the Service/ Authority.
- To review the EDI action plan and objectives in Quarterly Performance Reports provided to Audit and Governance Committee.
- To represent the Authority in external EDI initiatives and partnerships.
- To stay informed in emerging trends and best practice in diversity, equity and inclusion and hold officers to account on cultural improvements.
- Promote cultural awareness and sensitivity.

7.2.4 Finance Lead

- Attend briefings with the Head of Finance and Procurement.
- Chair Budget Working Party meetings
- Attend external committee meetings / Board as a key stakeholder (organised by Berkshire Unitary Authorities)
- In liaison with Head of Finance and Procurement provide budget and other financial updates to Committees and Fire Authority

7.2.5 Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead

- Attend briefings with Head of Finance and Procurement, Head of Business and Information Systems and Head of Assets.
- Chair Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group meetings

7.2.6 In addition Lead Members are required to:

- To understand appointed area of business within the Fire Authority.
- To be involved in the content of the annual report to be presented to the last Fire Authority meeting of the Municipal Year.
- To provide assurance to the Management Committee and / or Fire Authority that recommendations and decisions arising from the business area are

sound and evidence based, have followed appropriate processes, and are aligned to strategic commitments / policy direction.

- To attend conferences/seminars relevant to area of business.
- To be a recognised media contact directed via Communication and Engagement Team.

7.3 Allowance

7.3.1 Lead Member appointments are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

ROLE OF MEMBER CHAMPION

8 Member Champion

8.1 The structure of the Fire Authority allocates the following Member Champion role:

- Community Safety Champion

8.2 Roles and Responsibilities

8.2.1 The Member Champion role is to:

- To arrange regular briefings with Area Manager Prevention and Protection for an update on area of business:
- To develop the content of annual report on area of business
- To encourage and support positive relationships between Fire Authority, the Service and community.
- To raise awareness of the Service's prevention and protection activities to business and community of Berkshire via the following initiatives:
 - Fire Safety advice provided on rbfrs website to community (www.rbfrs.co.uk/your-safety/safety-at-home/)
 - Safe and Well visits to eligible residents
 - Free online Fire Protection sessions aimed at landlords, businesses and carers (Fire Safety in the Workplace and Adults at Risk Programme)

8.3 Allowance

8.3.1 Member Champions are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

ROLE OF HONORARY MEMBER CHAMPION

9 Armed Forces Honorary Member Champion

9.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- To act as an advocate for Armed Forces.
- To attend Armed Forces Board, Veterans Hub meetings and events.
- To represent the Fire Authority at such meetings.

9.3 Allowance

- 9.3.1 Honorary Member Champions do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) FIRE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE

10 Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission Representative

10.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- To attend and actively engage and participate at LGA Fire Commission meetings, representing and advocating for the Fire Authority.
- To report LGA's priorities and policy lines in relation to fire to the Fire Authority.
- To attend conferences and other events initiated by the LGA in relation to fire.
- To read and understand all LGA Committee papers in advance of any meetings, and to keep abreast of all developments locally and nationally in relation to the policy areas covered by the LGA.

10.2 Allowance

10.2.1 The Local Government Association Fire Commission representatives do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance.

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE (TVFCS) JOINT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE(S)

11 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee Representatives

11.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- Two seats / representation are required on Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee.
- Two TVFCS Joint Committee meetings are held within the Municipal Year and an annual Member and Officers Workshop.
- Two substitute members are appointed on an annual basis and are required to attend meetings in the absence of primary Member (as and when required).
- On a rotational annual basis between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA), Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), Chair TVFCS Joint Committee meetings (please refer for item 6, Committee Chair roles and responsibilities and Joint Committee terms of Reference)
 - When appointed as Chair of TVFCS Joint Committee - To liaise on the content of annual reports on work undertaken and progress of TVFCS for consideration by the Fire Authority.
- To uphold and adhere to the principles set out in the TVFCS Inter-Authority Agreement
- To attend and actively engage at TVFCS Joint Committee meetings providing strategic direction for TVFCS
- To attend conferences and workshops organised by TVFCS and Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities (RBFA, BMKFA and OCC)).
- To monitor the performance of TVFCS
- To recommend the annual Budget and any other relevant report to the Fire Authority for approval.

11.2 Allowance

- 11.2.1 Thames Valley Fire Control Service appointments do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowances except for when Royal Berkshire Fire Authority chairs the Joint Committee, which is reflected in the Scheme of Allowances.

THAMES VALLEY COLLABORATION STEERING GROUP

12 Thames Valley Steering Group Representative

12.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Collaboration Lead Member (See Item 7.2.4) sits on Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group. One seat / representation from Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) is required on Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group.
- On a rotational annual basis between five Blue light partners, (Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, Oxfordshire County Council/Fire and Rescue Service, Police and Crime Commissioner and South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust) Chair Steering Group meetings.
- To uphold and adhere to the principles set out in the Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group Terms of Reference.
- To attend and actively engage at meetings providing strategic overview of project status and future plans.
- To provide overall guidance, challenge and direction on the successful implementation of projects.
- To attend conferences and workshops organised by Thames Valley Blue Light partners.
- To publish annual reports on work undertaken of the progress of Thames Valley Collaboration.

12.2 Allowance

- 12.2.1 Thames Valley Steering Group representation do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance.

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Charter of Support



The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority fully supports the aims of the Service to deliver all elements of the Services' Vision. We will stand with the Service in creating a safe environment for staff to thrive, providing the best public service possible for the communities of Royal Berkshire.

To support this:

- **We put the interests of our communities first.**
- **We work together to achieve our vision and objectives.**
- **We act with integrity, being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.**
- **We are all committed to creating a safe, dignified and trustworthy Service.**
- **We treat everyone with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.**
- **We are positive visible role models, continuously demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.**
- **We are all accountable for our own actions and behaviours, and will challenge behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.**
- **We will prioritise the wellbeing and expertise of staff, since without them we can do none of the above.**

