

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>16 MARCH 2026</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025-26 QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025)</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	<b>FRANK LONG, GROUP MANAGER INTELLIGENCE RISK AND PERFORMANCE MANAGER</b>
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>EXEMPT INFORMATION</b>	<b>PART I</b>
<b>ACTION</b>	<b>TO NOTE</b>

## 1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To provide Audit and Governance Committee with an overview of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) third quarter (October - December 2025) performance for the 2025-26 financial year.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Audit and Governance Committee

- 2.1 **NOTE** the performance against Service Provision and Corporate Health measures for the targets agreed by the Fire Authority for 2025-26.
- 2.2 **NOTE** the progress made on the priority programmes.
- 2.3 **NOTE** the position of corporate risk.
- 2.4 **DISCUSS** and **AGREE** any further actions, if appropriate.

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### 3. REPORT

- 3.1 The quarterly performance report supports the Performance Management Framework which provides structure and governance that will enable RBFRS to measure, monitor and manage outputs and outcomes in a timely manner, allowing the organisation to respond and make informed decisions to ensure that statutory obligations and the Fire Authority's Strategic Commitments are successfully delivered.
- 3.2 Following data capture, review and analysis, evidence is reviewed by the Strategic Performance Board (SPB) whose purpose is to lead, support and monitor the effective delivery of the Strategic Objectives by monitoring and reviewing performance across four Quadrants.
- 3.3 Informed by these processes, key data and highlights have been extracted and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and are presented in this report for scrutiny at the Audit and Governance committee.
- 3.4 The attached report provides an overview of performance for the third quarter (Q3) for the 2025-26 financial year. It reports performance in four key areas, Service Provision, Corporate Health, Priority Programmes and Assurance. A brief synopsis for each of the quadrants is set out below:
- 3.5 **Quadrant one - Service Provision** - This section presents data and information which will allow members to monitor how RBFRS are doing at delivering its statutory obligations and any internal services provided between teams, departments and functions.
- 3.6 We responded to 1,937 emergency incidents in Q3, an increase of 170 compared to the same quarter last year. This sees Royal Berkshire below the national average for incidents at 7.7 incidents per 1000 population compared to English average of 11 incidents per 1000 population.
- 3.7 There were no fire related fatalities in Q3, and fire-related casualties were especially low this quarter, with only two counted. This may indicate success through prevention activity including education and safe and well visits within the community.
- 3.8 Both Primary and Secondary deliberate fires also reduced, possibly linked to targeted fire safety initiatives, community engagement activity, and proactive prevention strategies. Secondary fires in particular were extremely low with just 17, down from 63 and 70 in the previous two Quarters respectively. The weather conditions are also likely to have played a role in this.
- 3.9 The report includes a Secondary fires benchmarking chart on page 13, taking data from the HMICFRS data platform and based on MHCLG datasets. In

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addition, using the same source, we know that against other services Berkshire attended a small proportion of deliberate secondary fires, well below England average per population. Recorded as a rolling 12-month total, we see 29.3 deliberate fires per population.

- 3.10 A total of 1,462 Safe and Well visits took place in Q3. Where Agency/Partner referrals saw a decline in requests from Windsor and Maidenhead through Q2 and early Q3 the service responded by introducing more Adults at Risk (ARP) sessions which led to an increase in referrals in December.
- 3.11 An increase in False Alarms in Q3 was investigated due to call handling and the categorisation where 'call challenge' has or has not been utilised. In addition, there were a few repeat offending premises identified by crews. After a rise in October, the months of November and December returned to lower levels aligning to the previous pattern.
- 3.12 Q3 saw call handling, turnout and travel all on a slight uplift with the response standard. The call handling component of the Response standard is at highest point after fluctuating during the previous year in December 2024.
- 3.13 Q3 overall saw a steep decline in availability at Crowthorne which saw appliance availability drop from an average of 50.7% during October and November to 20.7% in December. Lambourn, Maidenhead and Mortimer were also affected by staffing availability. On-call appliance availability remains below target but is forecast to improve in Q4 due to new recruits, returning staff, and additional dual-contract personnel.
- 3.14 **Quadrant two - Corporate Health** - This section brings together all data, information and measures from across the organisation, which will allow members to monitor how RBFRS are managing key resources, e.g. People and Finance.
- 3.15 The top three reasons for sickness absence this quarter were Mental Health, Musculoskeletal Health (MSK) and Respiratory. These reasons will fluctuate quarter on quarter and will also be impacted by seasonal factors. The levels of days lost to sickness and percentage of working time lost to sickness has increased this quarter from 4.9% in Q2 to 6.3% in Q3. The increase in sickness from Q2 to Q3 has increased consistently for the past five years. Details on some of the reasons for this are outlined within the text for Corporate Measure 23: Percentage of working time lost to sickness across all staff groups.
- 3.16 It should be noted that RBFRS Green Book and Control sickness levels are below national average whilst Wholetime staff sickness is above national average.
- 3.17 Finance information is provided with a commentary and balance sheet, we saw 93.9% of our spend subject to competition with details of the waivers

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provided within Corporate Measure 27: Percentage spend subject to competition.

- 3.18 Although reporting below target (82% with a target of 100%), we saw an improvement in performance relating to our published retention schedules. By having clear schedules and the ability to effectively apply them, we reduce risks around data management and data protection legislation.
- 3.19 **Quadrant three - Priority Programmes – CRMP (external facing) and Culture Plan (internally addressing organisational development and improvement with the strands of Governance and Structure, Communications, Systems, People and Place).** This section will allow members to monitor progress of work designed to deliver a defined outcome which is different to, or improves on current working practices, policies and procedures in support of delivering against the strategic commitments and Corporate Plan 2023-27.
- 3.20 In Q3 most major projects and significant work packages were on track. The CRMP remained on track with no significant movement. Within Priority 3 we saw the work around Appliance Availability return to green from amber in Q2, as work on the new leave policy and other measures linked to crews being extracted for training and other requirements.
- 3.21 The Strategic Asset Investment Framework sits within Places pillar, as our working environment and the things we use can influence our behaviours and therefore our culture. Workstreams linked to our 'Fleet: Other Ancillary Vehicles' is now showing Amber for being on track. As with 'Fleet: Fire Appliances' which has been amber for on track since Q1. There have been supply chain delays outside of our control. For assurance, the budget has been ringfenced (therefore remaining green), we can provide an update to members once we have a clearer position from suppliers. This delay was an identified risk and currently does not impact on RBFRS' ability to deliver critical services to the public.
- 3.22 The only workstream which is showing as red is Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), there has been some work, however this is not sufficient to move to amber. Tangible activities exploring gaps and actions required to prepare Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services (TVFRSs) for full adoption of Emergency Services Network (ESN) have taken place paving the way for adequate project planning with support from ESMCP.
- 3.23 **Quadrant four - Assurance** - This section provides an assessment of corporate risks that may impact on service delivery. This section will also include data and information from audit monitoring and an update on the HMICFRS Action Plan.
- 3.24 Members will note that there have been some changes in risk scoring, and a change in new and closed risks within the service delivery risks. This reflects

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work of the Intelligence, Risk and Performance team in training and working with mitigation and treatment owners to support their review of the current register.

- 3.25 Strategic risks relating to Organisational capacity and Industrial Action both increased as we assessed our position with the national picture, changes in senior leadership and our capacity to meet internal and external organisational demands.
- 3.26 In Service Delivery four risks have been “closed”. Three of these have current risk levels which have dropped below our risk appetite level (which escalates them to our corporate risk register). These will continue to be monitored in line with our improved review of the whole organisational risk register on a regular basis.
- 3.27 A new risk relating to Retention Schedules was added. This reflects our Q3 narrative for our corporate measure (as outlined in paragraph 3.16 above), that we need to improve our schedules and their application to ensure we manage our risks appropriately.
- 3.28 There are several new audit actions this quarter, they relate to differing areas including risk and service plans as well as payroll provider. We completed two actions in quarter three including completing a training needs analysis for risk management training across the business.

## **4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

- 4.1 Prevention: We will reduce the risk to our communities through our partnership duties and prevention education activities, ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.2 Protection: We will support those with responsibility for premises to understand their duties in ensuring the safety of all people using buildings covered by the Building Safety Act 2022 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, whilst ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.3 Response: We will ensure that our people are trained and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.
- 4.4 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.

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4.5 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

4.6 People: We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 This report provides RBFS financial information under the corporate health quadrant.

### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report Insert Text

### **7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This report provides RBFRS equality and diversity information under the corporate health quadrant.

### **8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 This report provides RBFRS corporate risk information under the assurance quadrant.

### **9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None for the purpose of this report

### **10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

10.1 This report provides information on RBFRS performance measures and targets, as such there are no identified areas for collaboration.

### **11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

11.1 The Chief Fire Officer, Chief Finance Officer, Senior Leadership Team were consulted in the compilation of this report.

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### 12. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 Annual Plan 2025-26.Link: [Fire-Authority-Annual-Plan-2025-26-FINAL.pdf](#)

### 13. **APPENDICES**

13.1 Included with main report.

### 14. **CONTACT DETAILS**

14.1 Frank Long, Group Manager Intelligence Risk and Performance Manager,  
07774215664