

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Headquarters · 103 Dee Road · Tilehurst · Reading · Berkshire · RG30 4FS  
Telephone Reading (0118) 945 2888 Facsimile (0118) 959 0510

Your reference:

My reference: RBFA/DRW  
(please quote on all correspondence)

When calling ask for: David R Weller

Direct Line: (0118) 932 2288

Date: 30 November 1998

Dear Member

## AGENDA FOR MEETING OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

I have pleasure in attaching your Agenda for the meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to be held on Tuesday 8 December 1998 in the Council Chamber at Slough Borough Council, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough commencing at 6.30pm.

The Town Hall is situated on the main A4 (Bath Road) in Slough as shown on the location plan reproduced overleaf. Parking should be available at the front of the building. If not then additional parking is available at the rear of the Town Hall which is accessed from Montem Lane. For those Members approaching from the M4 motorway and turning right on to the A4 at the Tuns Lane/Bath Road traffic signals, you are unable to cross the Bath Road to gain access to the Town Hall. It is therefore necessary to continue eastbound to the Wellington Street/William Street roundabout and rejoin the A4 westbound. The entrance to the Town Hall is just after the first set of traffic signals on the left (marked with an "X" on the plan).

For those Members who are familiar with the road network in Slough there is an alternative route to the Town Hall. Leave the motorway at junction 6 and proceed down Tuns Lane (A355) towards Slough Town Centre. Turn right at the first roundabout into Church Street which becomes Chalvey Road at the first set of traffic lights. Continue along Chalvey Road and turn left into Ledgers Road at the next set of traffic lights. Proceed along Ledgers Road to the traffic lights and turn left on to the A4 Bath Road. The entrance to the Town Hall is to be found on the left (marked "X" on the plan).

The Chief Fire Officer has also asked me to remind Members that students from the current Brigade Training Course will be attending the meeting as observers and have been invited to meet Members prior to the meeting in the Council Chamber where refreshments will be served.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David R Weller'.

David R Weller  
Committee Administrator

To: All Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Headquarters · 103 Dee Road · Tilehurst · Reading · Berkshire · RG30 4FS  
Telephone Reading (0118) 945 2888 Facsimile (0118) 959 0510

**MEETING:** **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**

**DATE AND TIME:** **Tuesday 8 December 1998 at 6.30pm**

**VENUE:** **Slough Borough Council, Town Hall, Bath  
Road, Slough, Berkshire**

## NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above meeting at the time and date indicated, when it is proposed to deal with the business set out in the attached Agenda.

D C H Williams  
Clerk to the Authority

**To: MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
J C G Brooks (Chairman), D Ball, P A Barnett, Mrs C Bateson, J J Connolly, R J Day,  
T P Dredge, J M B Egan, C J Goodall, B W Gardner, Mrs M Gliksten,  
A Gregory, A B V P Hickley, D W Liddiard, T Mills, J Morris, Mrs K Newbound,  
B J S Patman, Dr L Silverman, A W Spratling, T N Stephens, R Turner  
R G Vernon-Jackson, D H Veakins, R J Webb

**Briefing Meetings:**

Conservative Group: 6.00 pm - Committee Room 3  
Labour Group: 6.00 pm - Mayors Conference Room  
Liberal Democrat Group: 6.00 pm - Committee Room 1

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**For Further Information regarding this meeting, please contact:  
David R Weller (0118) 932 2288**

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**8 DECEMBER 1998**



**AGENDA**

**PART I AGENDA**

**PAGE NO.**

- 1 Councillor William (Bill) J E Onions and Firefighter  
Nick Hinkson

-

**CONSTITUTIONAL ITEMS**

- 2 Membership of the Fire Authority 1
- 3 Minutes: Wednesday 16 September 1998 - Copy attached 2
- 4 Minutes of Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee 12
- 5 Appointment of Member to Personnel Committee 13
- 6 Petitions and Questions from the Public under Standing Orders 8 & 9 -
- 7 Chairman's Communications (if any) -
- 8 Questions from Members under Standing Order 10 (if any) -
- 9 Notices of Motion under Standing Order 12 (if any) -

**ITEMS FOR RESOLUTION**

- 10 SSA for Fire Service Special Services 14
- 11 1998/99 Budget Monitoring 16
- 12 Media Protocol 21
- 13 Improving Local Services Through Best Value 24
- 14 Service Guarantees and Customer Care Cards 31
- 15 Business Priorities 1998/99 43

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- 16 Budget 1999/2000 51

17	Firefighters' Pension Scheme	53
18	Collaboration Initiatives with Other Fire Brigades and Emergency Services: Progress Report	57
19	Expansion and development of Community Safety Principle: Progress Report	59
20	Delivery of Brigade Services: Progress Report	73
21	Disposal of Steel Breathing Apparatus Cylinders	75
22	Implications of Health and Safety Improvement Notice: Progress Report	77
23	Medical Retirements - Half Yearly Report	79
24	Fire and Incidents of Interest	80
25	Dates/Venues for Future meetings of the Fire Authority	

*To note that future meetings of the Fire Authority have been arranged on the following dates:*

*Special Meeting - Thursday 17 December 1998 in the Council Chamber at Reading Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Centre, Reading commencing at 9.00am.*

*Next Ordinary Meeting - Wednesday 3 February 1999 at Frank Hutchings Memorial Hall, Harts Hill Road, Thatcham commencing at 6.30pm.*

26	Exclusion of the Public	85
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## **PART II AGENDA**

27	Part II Minutes -Wednesday 16 September 1998 - Copy attached	86
28	Part II Minutes of Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee	87

**AGENDA ITEM 2: MEMBERSHIP OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date: 8 December 1998**  
**Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**To report a change in the Member representatives of Bracknell Forest and Wokingham District Councils.**

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

**Members are invited to NOTE the appointment of Councillors R Turner and D H Veakins as Members of the Fire Authority.**

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**There are no financial implications.**

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 The Clerk has been advised that Mr P J Edwards, one of the representatives from Wokingham District Council on the Combined Fire Authority has resigned.
- 2 The District Council's Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 28 October 1998 appointed Mr R Turner as the replacement representative.
- 3 Bracknell Forest Borough Council has informed the Clerk that Mr D H Veakins has been appointed by the Bracknell Forest Borough Council as the replacement for the late W J E Onions.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Letter from Wokingham District Council dated 30 October 1998.  
 Letter from Bracknell Forest Borough Council dated 24 November 1998

**Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288**

**AGENDA ITEM 3                      MINUTES - 16 SEPTEMBER 1998**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD AT THE WHITLEY WOOD FIRE STATION, WHITLEY WOOD ROAD, READING ON WEDNESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 1998 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 8.30PM**

**Present:**        **J C G Brooks (Chairman), D Ball, P A Barnett, Mrs C Bateson, J J Connolly, R J Day, T P Dredge, J M B Egan, Mrs M R Gliksten, C J Goodall, B W Gardner, A Gregory, A B V P Hickley, J Morris, B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman)] A W Spratling, T N Stephens, R J Webb**

**Apologies:**    **P J Edwards, D W Liddiard, T Mills, Mrs K Newbound, W J E Onions,**

**4.01/98                      MINUTES: 9 JUNE 1998**

The Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on Tuesday 9 June 1998 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following comment:

3.15/98:            Emergency Special Service Calls - Issues and Implications of Levying Charges

Members were advised of the action taken by the Unitary Councils in support of the resolution agreed at the last meeting. The Chief Fire Officer in thanking Members for their support reported that he would now be having discussions with the Clerk to the Authority to determine how this subject should be approached at national level. In response to a request the Chief Fire Officer agreed to circulate a copy of the letter to all Members of the Fire Authority.

**4.02/98                      MINUTES - URGENCY COMMITTEE: 20 JULY AND 18 AUGUST 1998**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 2 - not reproduced) being the Part I Minutes of the Urgency Committee meetings held on Monday 20 July and Tuesday 18 August 1998.

**NOTED**

**4.03/98 MINUTES - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: 9 JULY AND 18 AUGUST 1998**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 3 - not reproduced) being the Part I Minutes of the Personnel Committee meetings held on Thursday 9 July and Tuesday 18 August 1998.

**NOTED**

**4.04/98 PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Authority noted that no petitions or questions had been received from the public under Standing Orders 8 and 9.

**4.05/98 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman had nothing to report.

**4.06/98 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The Authority noted that no questions had had been received from members under Standing Order 10.

**4.07/98 NOTICES OF MOTION**

The Authority noted that no Notices of Motion had been received under Standing Order 12.

**4.08/98 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 8 - not reproduced) to extend the delegated powers of the Personnel Committee to enable them to decide all personnel matters which did not have major policy or financial resource implications for the Authority.

**RESOLVED:** That the powers delegated to the Personnel Committee be extended to include the following:

- I to agree corporate personnnel policies, unless there are major policy or resource implications for the Authority when the Committee shall consider and recommend to the Authority.
- ii to approve the Authority's response to consultation on Local and National Council negotiations affecting Conditions of Service.

#### **4.09/98 SERVICE GUARANTEES AND CUSTOMER CARE CARDS**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 9 - not reproduced) of the results of monitoring the Brigade's service guarantees in accordance with the decision made at the Authority meeting on 9 June 1998. At that meeting the Authority affirmed the existing policy of Service Guarantees and the issue of Customer Care Cards to users of the service to obtain feedback from the public on the Brigade's services.

In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Brigade was actively targeting malicious calls which included action being taken by the Brigade, in cooperation with Thames Valley Police, to track down the hoax calls.

**NOTED**

#### **4.10/98 COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 10 - not reproduced) of the implications of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), on the Fire and Service Complaints procedure.

At its meeting on 9 June 1998 the Authority approved a Complaints Procedure which advised complainants of their right to refer a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. However Officers of the Brigade had now ascertained that a Combined Fire Authority was not a local authority for the purpose of the Act and it was therefore inappropriate to incorporate a reference to the Local Government Ombudsman in the Complaints Procedure.

The Clerk reported that it was his intention to raise the matter with the representative from the Home Office at a meeting of Fire Authority Clerks on Friday. In the meantime any complaints received would be dealt with by the Chief Fire Officer.

**NOTED**

**4.11/98 MODERN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: IN TOUCH WITH THE PEOPLE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 11 - not reproduced) of the recent publication of a Government White Paper that would have a major impact on the way in which Councils, and to a lesser extent this Authority, was run.

The Clerk reported that he had studied the document to see what sections would apply to a Combined Fire Authority(CFA). As no specific references were found he would raise the matter at the forthcoming Clerks meeting and report back to a future meeting if necessary.

**NOTED**

**4.12/98 1998/99 BUDGET MONITORING**

The Authority was informed of revenue and capital expenditure against budget up to the end of July 1998, the revenue budget was underspent by £837,000 whilst little capital expenditure had taken place.

The current revenue underspend was caused by timing factors and it was anticipated that expenditure would not be significantly underspent by the end of the year. A summary of the reasons for the underspend was set out in paragraph 2 of the report (not reproduced)

**NOTED**

**4.13/98 1998/99 CAPITAL BUDGET**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 13 - not reproduced) to proceed with the approved capital programme and more specifically with the capital schemes detailed in the report.

Members were reminded that before expenditure could be incurred on a capital project a detailed scheme and financial appraisal had to be approved by the Authority. The appraisal forms in respect of the schemes identified in the report were therefore presented as an Appendix (not reproduced)

**RESOLVED:** That the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to proceed with the following capital schemes:

- i Vehicle Mounted Display System
- ii Replacement of Breathing Apparatus Cylinders
- iii Conversion of Fire House Heating System - Feasibility Study
- iv Increase Training Centre Accommodation - Feasibility Study

#### 4.14/98 1999/2000 BUDGET

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 14 - not reproduced) of the preliminary indications of budget requirement for 1999/2000, budget pressures, likely SSA and government comprehensive spending review and the proposed budget process and timetable and were requested to determine the way forward for consideration of the budget for 1999/2000.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix A (not reproduced) which set out the statement of budget indications for 1999/2000 whilst Appendix B (not reproduced) detailed the SSA and budgets for the six constituent authorities and the amounts included for the Fire Service.

Appendix C (not reproduced) set out the time-table for the budget process which required the previously established Budget Working Party to meet twice in November to consider budget requirements and submit recommendations to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 8 December 1998.

In response to a question as to whether it would be possible for efficiency savings to be achieved by combining with adjoining Fire Authorities, the Chief Fire Officer reported that he would be producing a five year Strategic Plan for the Brigade. Its preparation would include working in close co-operation with other Brigades and emergency services and it was his intention to present a report on strategic targets and collaboration initiatives to a future meeting of the Authority.

#### **RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 Officers be asked to present a report on detailed budget requirements indicating the implications of setting a budget at the following overall levels:
  - (a) £19.1m (last year's SSA plus 3.6%)
  - (b) £19.6m last year's budget plus 3.6%)
  - (c) £20.0m (last year's budget plus 5.6%)
  - (d) £20.6m (last year's budget plus 5.6% plus growth)
- 2 In order for the Authority to judge the level of expenditure included in current budgets and proposals for growth, budgets be categorised as follows:

Category	Definition
1	Statutory minimum level of service below which the Fire Authority would be open to successful legal challenge.
2	Statutory services currently provided at a higher level than that which would be open to successful legal challenge.
3	Discretionary services for which there is a specific existing Fire Authority commitment.
4	Discretionary services outside Category 1 provided without an explicit Fire Authority commitment.
3	Initial considerations of budget requirements be referred to the Budget Working Party to consider and present recommendations to the Fire Authority at its meeting on 8 December 1998.
4	The proposed budget process and timetable be approved and actioned accordingly.

**4.15/98 REPORT ON HER MAJESTY'S TERRITORIAL INSPECTOR'S VISIT**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 15 - not reproduced) on the outcome of the recent visit to the Brigade by Her Majesty's Territorial Inspector of Fire Services.

**NOTED**

**4.16/98 BUSINESS PRIORTIES 1998/99**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 16 - not reproduced) on the progress being made against the Brigade's objectives. The report had been presented in accordance with the decision made at the Authority's meeting held in June 1998.

**NOTED**

**4.17/98            IMPLICATIONS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT  
NOTICE: PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 17 - not reproduced) of the continued progress made by the Chief Fire Officer in implementing the plan agreed with the Health and Safety Executive to discharge the Improvement Notice issued to the Authority in January 1997.

Members were advised that the recently appointed Health and Safety Advisor would take up her post on 21 September 1998 and Firefighter Dymond, who had been undertaking the role on a temporary basis, would return to operational duties. The Chairman, on behalf of the Authority, wished to place on record his thanks to Firefighter Dymond for all his hard work.

**NOTED**

**4.18/98            URGENT REPLACEMENT OF OPERATIONAL FIRE TUNICS**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 18 - not reproduced) of the unforeseen need to urgently replace fire tunics issued to operational staff as part of their personal protective equipment and the need to consider a "lifing policy" for such equipment.

The total cost of replacement fire tunics required to date was £26,000. Due to the savings incurred through current staff vacancies and the relatively low summer call-out due to the unseasonal weather, it was likely that this expenditure could be met from within the 1998/99 revenue budget.

Dependant upon the outcome of tests currently being carried out on a different design of tunic, it was possible that further costs in the region of £27,000 might be incurred. Should this prove necessary a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Authority.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the Brigade had entered into early discussions with a manufacturer at last week's Fire Conference on the possible method of alternative supply of fire tunics. This included the feasibility of introducing Total Care leasing arrangements being discussed which may well overcome the problem of supplying new fire tunics.

**NOTED**

**4.19/98            DISPOSAL OF REDUNDANT OPERATIONAL FIRE TUNICS**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 19 - not reproduced) to the disposal of redundant fire tunics to the fire service of Malawi.

It was reported that the gift of 200 redundant fire tunics would greatly enhance the firefighting ability of the Malawi fire services. The fact that these tunics failed to meet the required level of protection in the United Kingdom (as reported in Minute No. 4.18/98) was not seen as an obstacle to their useful continuation of life in these circumstances.

The Clerk confirmed that providing the Malawi Fire Service was aware of what the problem was no obligation would be placed on the Authority in the event of a Malawi fire-fighter being injured whilst wearing one of the fire tunics. The cost of carriage would not be met by the Brigade and ways of achieving this by other means were currently being explored.

**RESOLVED:** That, subject to the Malawi government being advised of the reasons why the fire tunics had been made redundant, and no costs being incurred by the Brigade, they be presented as a gift to the fire service of Malawi.

**4.20/98            ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 1997/98**

It was reported (Agenda item 20 - not reproduced) that the Annual Report had been published and would be given a wide circulation.

The format of this year's report had been changed to reflect the new status of the Fire and Rescue Service following the creation of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority. The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that next year's report would be published in three parts.

**NOTED**

**4.21/98            FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - FIRES AND INCIDENTS OF INTEREST**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 21 - not reproduced) of the fires, incidents and activities of interest since June 1998.

In speaking to the report the Chief Fire Officer drew Members' attention to the activities of the Community Safety Team working in partnership with Yellow Pages.

In response to a question as to whether it was the Brigade's intention to ask for the road layout to be reviewed following the unfortunate accident in Wokingham the Chief Fire Officer replied that once the report of the current Police inquiry had been received the matter would be considered.

Members wished to place on record their thanks to all those personnel who helped out following the freak weather conditions in Lower Earley on 13 June 1998.

## **NOTED**

### **4.22/98 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated:

	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Paragraph</b>
23	Part II Minutes: 9 June 1998	11
24	Part II Urgency Committee Minutes 20 July and 18 August 1998	1 & 11
25	Part II Personnel Committee Minutes 9 July and 18 August 1998	1 & 11
26	Appeal Against Dismissal	1

*Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Fire Authority meeting held on Wednesday 16 September 1998.*

### **4.23/98 PART II MINUTES: 9 JUNE 1998**

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 1998 were approved.

### **4.24/98 PART II URGENCY COMMITTEE MINUTES: 20 JULY AND 18 AUGUST 1998**

The Part II Minutes of the Urgency Committee were received.

**4.25/98            PART II PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MINUTES: 9 JULY AND  
18 AUGUST 1998**

The Part II Minutes of the Personnel Committee were received.

**4.26/98            APPEAL AGAINST DISMISSAL**

The Authority noted the outcome of an Appeal by a fire-fighter.

**AGENDA ITEM 4:** **MINUTES OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AND  
URGENCY COMMITTEE**  
**To:** **Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date:** **8 December 1998**  
**Officer Contributing:** **Clerk & Monitoring Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**To advise Members on meetings of the Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee that have taken place since the last meeting.**

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

**Members are invited to NOTE the report.**

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**There are no financial implications.**

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 The following meeting has taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting in September:  
Urgency Committee - Wednesday 11 November 1998
- 2 A copy of the Part I Minutes can be obtained from David Weller on (0118) 932 2288.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Contact Officer:** David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

**AGENDA ITEM 5:**

**APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERSONNEL  
COMMITTEE**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 8 December 1998  
**Officer Contributing:** Clerk & Monitoring Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To appoint a Labour Member as a replacement for the late Mr W J E Onions on the Personnel Committee.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE:** That ..... be appointed as a Member of the Personnel Committee.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 Following the untimely death of Councillor W J E Onions it will be necessary to appoint a Labour Member to replace him on the Personnel Committee. A Labour member is required to retain proportionality on the Committee.
- 2 Members are therefore asked to consider who they wish to appoint and resolve accordingly.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Contact Officer:** David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

**AGENDA ITEM 10: SSA for FIRE SERVICE SPECIAL SERVICES**

**To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date: 8<sup>th</sup> December 1998**  
**Officer Contributing: Clerk and Monitoring Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise the Authority of the response to the representations made by the Authority to gain additional SSA for emergency special services

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority are invited to **NOTE** the position and consider what further representations they wish to make; in particular they will wish to consider the resolution of Reading Borough Council to the effect that combined Fire Authorities should be placed on the same financial footing as metropolitan Fire and Civil Defence Authorities and **RESOLVE** accordingly.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Without additional SSA and increased Government Grant any spending by the Authority in excess of SSA will fall on the constituent Unitary Councils.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

1. On the instructions of the Authority, the Clerk wrote to Members of Parliament for the Berkshire constituencies and to the Unitary Councils, seeking support for the Authority's argument that the Standard Spending Assessment should have regard to those emergency special services, which the Brigade provides but does so without being able to recoup its costs, though in theory the powers are available.
2. Mr. David Rendel M.P. and Mrs Theresa May M.P. provided copies of follow-up correspondence which they had with Ministers, while Mr. Martin Salter M.P. visited Dee Road and was briefed by the Authority's Chief Officers.
3. Miss Hilary Armstrong M.P. Minister for Local Government and Housing argues that in setting the national total of SSA's for the fire service, the provision of special services is one of the functions that is already taken into account. The Minister is of the view, therefore, that the Government are already doing what the Authority wants.
4. In a longer and more considered reply Mr. George Howarth M.P. Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office stated that as a result of the Comprehensive Spending Review, fire authorities will get an increase in the fire service element of SSA's of £143.6m (3.5% per year on average) over the next three years, including 3.6% more for 1999/2000. On the

question of the provision of special services for which the Authority can charge, Mr. Howarth stated that this had been reviewed in 1970 and 1985 and no further review was planned. Nor was there any proposal to levy insurance companies. They pay their taxes in the normal way and a levy would amount to double taxation. It was planned to review the whole SSA regime after the 1999/2000 grant settlement but as part of a three year research programme. At present SSA is distributed on the basis of population, fire, false alarm and certain special service calls, firefighter's pensions and fire safety. Since 1995-96 special service calls to road traffic, rail and air accidents and spillages and leaks have been included with fire and false alarm calls in the funding formula.

5. The Authority's case has also received support from the Unitary Councils. West Berkshire's Public Protection Committee passed a comprehensive resolution, supporting the Authority's case and agreeing to lobby the Home Office, DETR, LGA and local MP's. Slough Borough Council passed a resolution seeking legislative change to make all special services a statutory duty, to be provided without payment. Reading Borough Council, while supporting the Slough resolution, went further and passed a resolution, seeking legislative change to make combined Fire Authorities separate precepting Authorities akin to Police Authorities and the Metropolitan Fire and Civil Defence Authorities. This is a proposal which the Authority will need to consider.

In the short-term, however, it is clear that the Authority's case has fallen on stony ground. There will be no changes to the SSA formula and no increase in grant. Any spending by the Authority above SSA will become a charge on the constituent Unitary Councils, to be met from balance and/or savings in other services for which the Unitaries are directly responsible.

## **E. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Minute 3.15/98 Fire Authority 9<sup>th</sup> June 1998  
Correspondence between Mr. David Rendel MP and Mrs Theresa May MP and Miss Hilary Armstrong MP, Minister for Housing and Local Government and Mr. George Howarth MP Under secretary of State at the Home Office

**Contact Officer:** Clive Williams Clerk and Monitoring Officer (01491) 671631

**AGENDA ITEM 11: 1998/99 BUDGET MONITORING**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 8 December 1998  
**Officer Contributing:** Treasurer  
 Chief Fire Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To inform the Authority of revenue and capital expenditure against budgets up to the end of October 1998.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to RESOLVE that to the extent that the anticipated underspend of £250,000 is not required to meet any unbudgeted pension scheme deficit it be reserved to finance the Operational Risk Intelligence System (ORIS).

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The revenue budget was underspent by £985,000 at the end of October. An underspend of approximately £250,000 for 1998/99 is currently anticipated. This may be used to finance the Operational Risk Intelligence System (ORIS) if the project slips into the next financial year and there has been no priority call on available funds to meet any unbudgeted pension scheme deficit. Little capital expenditure has taken place to date.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION****Revenue**

- 1 Revenue expenditure to October 31 against budget is shown in Appendix A.
- 2 The underspend of £985,000 is explained by the following major factors:
  - Pensions are underspent to date by £296,000 as there have been few retirements early in the year. The current surplus will be required to pay transfer values to other brigades. It should be noted that several senior officers have the option to retire later this financial year.
  - Employee budgets are underspent to date by £326,000. The Fire-fighters pay award of 5.6% takes effect from November 7th. This will cost about £60,000 above the estimated award of 4.5%. The summer has been relatively wet, avoiding heavy usage

of retained staff to date. A full-year saving of approximately £250,000 from vacancies is anticipated.

- Premises costs are £100,000 below budget due to seasonal factors and the scheduling of planned maintenance.
- Spending on Supplies is expected to increase by £60,000 over the year, due to the increased insurance costs previously reported to the Authority. These will be funded from increased investment income.
- A saving of approximately £25,000 on Debt Charges is anticipated as expenditure on capital schemes has been delayed. Only one half-year instalment of debt repayment will be necessary this year. In addition, interest rates are falling and it is anticipated that loans will be taken out as late in the year as possible to secure the lowest possible rates. This saving will be used to fund a Management Information System for crewing levels, a Document Control system, a touchscreen for the Vector training system and 4 PCs.
- Income is ahead of target as a system of prepayment for courses at the Training Centre has been introduced. Sponsorship income of £120,000 has been added to this budget. Corresponding expenditure of £58,000 on employees and £62,000 on supplies has been added to the appropriate budgets.

- 3 The current revenue underspend is mainly caused by timing factors. It is anticipated that the underspend at the end of the financial year will be £250,000 on employees. The first call on any underspending will be to meet any unbudgeted pension scheme deficit. By mid-January 1999 the Fire Authority BCA for next year should be known and by the end of February the likely pension scheme deficit can be firmed up. Paragraph 5 below sets out an appropriate use for any savings which may be available, which would ensure that the top priority Operational Risk Intelligence System was installed in Fire Brigade vehicles next year.

### **Capital**

- 4 Capital expenditure is shown in Appendix B. There has been no capital expenditure on Fire Authority schemes to date.
- 5 The Operational Risk Intelligence System is now unlikely to go ahead during this financial year due to changes in the specification. As it is not possible to carry-forward Basic Credit Approval into next year, it is suggested that the appropriate method of financing the ORIS project next year may be to carry-forward the projected revenue underspend of £250,000 to fund the project. This will enable the BCA thus released this year to be used to finance two of the fire appliances that were to have been leased. This will produce long-term revenue savings.

- 6 It is anticipated that the cost of the Willow and Ivy Wall at Whitley Wood will now rise to £52,000 from £45,000 following the receipt of tenders. The Chief Fire Officer has approved this additional expenditure under his delegated powers.
- 7 The feasibility study into extending the Training Centre will not go ahead at present as opportunities for sharing and developing training facilities with other brigades are to be explored as part of the collaboration process set up by the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review.
- 8 There has been £39,000 expenditure on County schemes slipped from last year. Reading BC will fund these as part of the closedown of the County Council. Full details will be reported to members when all slippage has been agreed with Reading BC.

## **E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1 Agenda and Minutes, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority: 18 December 1997

Contact Officer: Andrew Vallance, (0118) 932 2251

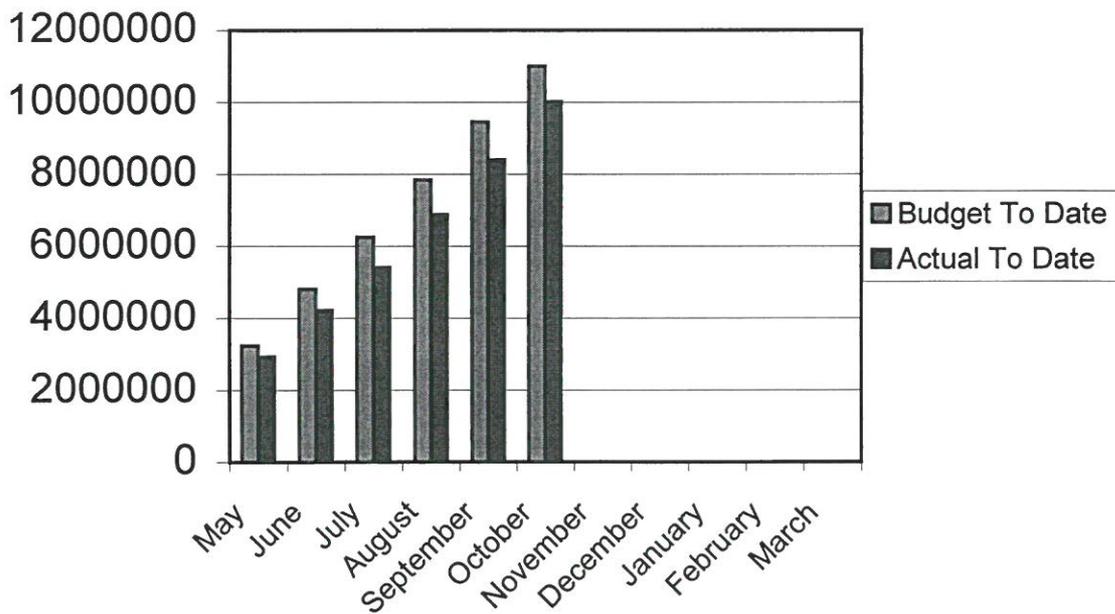
**Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**

**Financial Position at 31st October 1998**

**Revenue**

	Budget to October 98	Actual to October 98	Over(Under) spend	Annual Budget	Forecast
Employees	8,100,901	7,774,371	(326,530)	13,796,473	13,628,418
Premises	413,997	313,987	(100,010)	805,016	805,016
Supplies	984,843	919,458	(65,385)	1,496,108	1,619,163
Contracted	66,532	58,349	(8,183)	114,100	114,100
Transport	424,971	351,285	(73,686)	780,111	780,111
Debt Charges	32,417	0	(32,417)	55,595	30,595
Income	(306,279)	(354,575)	(48,296)	(333,018)	(453,018)
Investment	(34,986)	(69,542)	(34,556)	(60,000)	(120,000)
Revenue Funding Of Capital	0	0	0	0	250,000
Pensions	1,309,418	1,012,893	(296,525)	2,245,615	2,245,615
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,991,814</b>	<b>10,006,226</b>	<b>(985,588)</b>	<b>18,900,000</b>	<b>18,900,000</b>

**Net Revenue Expenditure to 31st October 1998**



**Appendix B****Capital Schemes**

	Original Budget	Actual	Revised Budget
Operational Risk Intelligence System	180900	0	0
Fire Appliances (see paragraph 5)	0	142000	260000
Replace Steel Breathing Apparatus	46000	0	46000
Willow Wall, Whitley Wood	45000	0	52000
Firehouse Feasibility Study	10000	0	10000
Training Centre Feasibility Study	10000	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>291900</b>	<b>142000</b>	<b>368000</b>

Basic Credit Approval available 353000

**AGENDA ITEM 12: MEDIA PROTOCOL**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 8 December 1998  
**Officer Contributing:** Chief Fire Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek the Authority's approval to the Media Protocol, attached as Appendix 'A'.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE** that the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority adopt the Media Protocol, (Appendix 'A' to the report)..

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 The work of the Brigade is frequently reported in the Media and officer comments are sought. Officers of the Brigade also seek to promote specific activities, eg Fire Safety Week, Community Fire Safety Issues or to put a local perspective on national or regional issues.
- 2 The Media will seek to report matters being discussed at Fire Authority meetings and seek comments from the Chairman or party spokespersons. Similarly, the Authority may actively seek to promote policies or comment on national or regional issues.
- 3 It is important that the Authority, and it's officers have a consistent approach to communications to ensure that the Authority's priorities, vision and style are understood. It is also important that this communication is timely and open, honest, and provided in an appropriate and interesting way. It must also avoid promoting a particular individual member or a particular political party or group. To assist this a draft Media Protocol (Appendix 'A') has been prepared for Members consideration and approval.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Contact Officer:** David Noonan, Director Central Services (0118) 932 2250

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
MEDIA PROTOCOL**

- 1 News Releases-** should be used to promote the brigade in a pro-active, positive way
- a Any news release issued on behalf of the brigade or the Fire Authority must:
- comply with the Government's code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity
  - be produced by or through the Press and Public Relations Officer
  - be on official Brigade News Release paper
- b News Releases must be:
- current
  - reflect newsworthy items
  - factual
  - objective
  - explain in plain English, matters of existing or evolving policy/provide information about services or events and/or offer explanations of specific actions
  - relevant to the work of the Brigade or Fire Authority, either singly or with partner organisations
- c News releases must not:
- promote individual members of the Authority
  - include material designed to affect public support for a particular political group or party
  - contain material which is disparaging of a particular political party or group or their individual members
- d Bearing in mind the above, News Releases may be issued regarding a decision or policy of the Fire Authority. The Chairman may only be quoted in such releases when stating the agreed policy.
- e The Chairman or Vice-Chairman (in the Chairman's absence or with his/her agreement) may use a news release/media briefing to publicise on behalf of the Fire Authority:
- the launching of a new project or scheme
  - the launching of a newly-agreed policy
  - a decision of the Fire Authority
  - information to show how the Fire Authority has reacted promptly to an event

- f News releases will be copied promptly to:
- the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Party Spokespersons
  - appropriate officers
  - the Fire Brigades Union, Unison, Non-uniformed JCC and Stations
- g All news releases issued on behalf of the Fire Authority will contain contact telephone numbers for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Party Spokespersons
- h There may be occasions when it is appropriate to involve local Members, eg regarding projects being carried out in the area they represent. In this case, local Members may be quoted with the permission of the Chairman.
- i Professional advice on all matters relating to links with the media is available from the Press and Public Relations Officer.
- j The Chief Fire Officer or other Principal Officer, in consultation with the Clerk to the Fire Authority, will be ultimately responsible for determining, in light of the code, if any Statement or News Release may be published.

## 2 Speaking to the Media

The Chairman or Vice-Chairman should be, as far as possible, easily and readily available to speak to reporters about:

- decisions taken by the authority
- new policies
- projects which have political foundation
- launches of initiatives, equipment and activities

Officers, too, have an important role in promoting the Brigade:

- joining with and supporting Members to help promote new initiatives and policies
- providing professional/technical information
- giving the media information about the day-to-day work of the Brigade

However, officers must not:

- answer queries of a political nature
- speculate as to the outcome of agenda items prior to meetings of the Fire Authority

**AGENDA ITEM 13: IMPROVING LOCAL SERVICES THROUGH BEST VALUE**

**To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date: 8 December 1998**  
**Officer Contributing: Chief Fire Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**To advise the Authority of the implications of the Best Value aspects of the Government's White Paper 'Modern Local Government - In Touch with the People' and seek its approval to the Outline Project Plan and Methodology (Appendix 'B').**

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

**The Authority is invited to note the report and RESOLVE to adopt the Outline Project Plan and Methodology, attached as Appendix 'B'.**

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**There are no financial implications at this stage.**

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 At its meeting of 27 April the Urgency Committee considered the Government's consultation paper 'Modernising Local Government - Improving Local Services Through Best Value' which dealt with achieving value for money. The proposed legislation based on the paper will have major implications for the Fire Service, and consequently addressing those issues is one of the Authority's strategic objectives. The report attempts to identify the main implications for the Fire Authority and the Brigade and present an outline project plan for Member's approval.
- 2 The Best Value proposals contained in the White Paper 'Modernising Local Government - In Touch with the People' will have a major impact on the British Fire Service, unlike Compulsory Competitive Tendering which the Bill seeks to replace. A number of Officer seminars have been organised nationally on the implications for the Fire Service and the attached paper, Appendix 'A', attempts to summarise the situation so far.
- 3 The Chief Fire Officer has set up a small officer working group to prepare the Brigade for Best Value. It is comprised of key officers representing all four directorates and is chaired by the Director of Central Services. The working group have identified an Outline Project Plan, Appendix 'B'. Officers are working closely with Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association (CACFOA), District Audit, the Fire Service Inspectorate and other brigades and as this work develops it

is probable that the Project Plan will be amended. The Queens speech on 24 November 1998 confirmed that Best Value will be included in the Government's legislation programme this session. It is intended that regular reports will be brought to Authority to keep it informed of progress and to seek its approval for policy decisions.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1 Consultation Paper 'Modernising Local Government - Improving Services Through Best Value'.
- 2 Agenda and Minutes - Urgency Committee 27 April 1998
- 3 Government White Paper 'Modernising Local Government - In Touch with the People'.

**Contact Officer:** David Noonan, Director Central Services (0118) 932 2250

## IMPROVING LOCAL SERVICES THROUGH BEST VALUE

### IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIRE SERVICE

- 1 Members are probably familiar with the Best Value proposals particularly as to their effect on the constituent councils. This briefing paper attempts to identify the impact on the Fire Service and draws upon, not only this Brigade's officers' interpretation of the White Paper, but also the experience of fire brigades who have been involved in the Best Value Pilots. Three brigades have been involved in the Pilots. Two of those, Lincolnshire Fire Brigade and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service have participated as part of their County Council initiative. The Mid and West Wales Fire Brigade has participated as a Combined Fire Authority. It is intended that Best Value will replace CCT legislation. The major impact on the Fire Service is that it will affect the whole Brigade, not just the support services, unlike the current legislation. Consequently it will have a direct impact on operational firefighters and how front line services are delivered.
  
- 2 Best Value will place a duty on the Authority to deliver services to clear standards by the most effective, economic and efficient means available. The Fire Authority will be required to establish authority wide objectives and performance measures. It will need to agree a programme of fundamental performance reviews and set it out in a local performance plan. All areas will need to be reviewed over a period of four to five years. Selected areas of expenditure will be the subject of fundamental performance reviews, which should challenge their purpose, compare performance, involve consultation with the community and compete, when appropriate, with others. The Authority will need to set and publish its performance and efficiency targets in a Local Performance Plan which will also report in subsequent years on achievement of targets. The performance reviews will be subject to independent audit/inspections and certification. The results of these external audits, and measures necessary to deal with any shortcomings, will be included in the Local Performance Plan. Serious failure could result in intervention by the Secretary of State.
  
- 3 The Brigade has set up a working party to assess the implications of Best Value for the Brigade and Authority chaired by the Director of Central Services. The working party includes key officers such as the Brigade Management Accountant and the Audit & Projects Manager, as well as senior officers from the four Directorates. Their tasks are to :
  - i identify a draft Programme of Fundamental Performance Reviews
  - ii identify performance targets
  - iii identify performance indicators and associated monitoring mechanisms
  - iv prepare a draft Action Plan

- 4 The Brigade is working closely with other fire brigades to develop a common approach to addressing the proposed legislation. Specific areas that are being looked at are performance indicators. As part of this process the Audit Commission will develop 'general health' indicators, mainly centering around financial performance. The Home Office are due to issue a number of key indicators reflecting the effectiveness and quality of the fire service. The Brigade is currently working to identify 'local indicators' to measure our performance. This work is being undertaken with other brigades so that indicators can be identified which will enable meaningful comparison to be made. The District Audit is currently developing a database comprising statistics which brigades provide for CIPFA and the Home Office, which will enable comparisons to be made with other brigades of similar size.
- 5 The Fire Service have also set up a Benchmarking Club under the direction of the Chief and Assistant Chief Officers Association (CACFOA) with the involvement of the Home Office Fire Department, the Fire Service Inspectorate, District Audit and the Local Government Association. The objectives of benchmarking are to provide an objective external focus to identify opportunities for continuous improvements in service delivery and resource utilisation, enable comparison on procedures, services and cost, assess value for money, aid planning and performance monitoring and to help raise awareness of service targets and working methods. CACFOA have identified management structures, hydrant maintenance, health & safety, occupational health, legal services and transport maintenance as the initial topic areas. As with the District Audit's database, membership of the Benchmarking Club is likely to involve a nominal fee to cover costs.
- 6 The Fire Service has also run a number of officer seminars/conferences on Best Value in the Fire Service, drawing heavily from the three brigades which are involved in the pilot process. Their experience would indicate that a number of measures need to be taken.
  - a Keep elected members informed and involved. This is essential as responsibility for running the Fire Service rests with the Fire Authority
  - b Keep staff informed and involved. This is essential as all members of the service will ultimately be involved and good information will help dispel suspicion and create proactive involvement, as well as identifying any targets and ways to improve services.
  - c Select the first area for review with care. Though the White Paper advises authorities to prioritise the weakest areas for performance review first, pilot authorities which adopted this approach identified that this had a demotivating effect on staff in those areas. Other advice was that, where possible, for the first year it was advisable to select clearly defined areas, but to adopt an holistic approach.

- d Consultation: There is a requirement to consult with users, taxpayers, local communities and staff. This consultation needs to be objective and auditable. The requirement to be objective does pose some problems in a service held in such high esteem by the public. Most 'users' of the service are extremely grateful and lack objectivity. The analysis of the Customer Care responses illustrates this point. To ensure that samples are representative and consultation is objective and auditable it will probably be necessary to engage in professional market research, possibly in conjunction with the constituent authorities.
- e Competitiveness: It is acknowledged by the Home Office and District Audit that competition will not be relevant for front line service delivery and many of the uniformed support areas, as no competition exists. The Brigade and Service must not be complacent in this area as the Fire Service Inspectorate and District Audit will place great emphasis on comparison with other brigades.

7 The proposed legislation is not as prescriptive as Compulsory Competitive Tendering and the processes involved are to a large extent uncharted territory. In these circumstances brigades run the risk of rushing in quickly and expending resources on an inappropriate approach, or alternatively holding back until a clear picture emerges and running the risk of not having completed the necessary work by April 2000. This Brigade, by working closely with other brigades, District Audit, and the Fire Service Inspectorate, plans to avoid both pitfalls, ie avoid unnecessary use of resources yet meet the Government's objectives by the due date. The significance of the formation of the Audit and Project Team as part of the recent restructuring of the Brigade, has already become apparent as these manoeuvres will underpin the Best Value process (along with Health & Safety etc) both during preparation and to provide the eventual necessary reassurances to Members and Officers that the principle is being applied.

## BEST VALUE OUTLINE PROJECT PLAN

### Objectives

Best Value Framework will be introduced on 1 April 2000 to include:

- i Programme of Fundamental Performance reviews (5 year Strategic Plan)
- ii Identify targets
- iii Identify performance indicators and associated monitoring mechanisms
- iv Identify consultation methodology

	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	Establish Project Management Methodology	30 September 1998
2	Develop Outline Strategic Plan	December 1998
3	Establish Objectives & Performance Plan	September 1998- January 1999
4	Determine Programme of Fundamental Performance Review	January 1999- December 1999
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i Key Issues</li> <li>ii Programme of Service Review</li> <li>iii Consultation</li> <li>iv User Survey</li> <li>vi Audit Commission PIs</li> <li>vii Service PIs</li> <li>viii Local PIs</li> <li>ix Benchmarking</li> <li>x Competitive Tests</li> </ul>	
5	Local Performance Plan	January 2000- March 2000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i Targets &amp; Plan to Achieve</li> <li>ii Prepare</li> <li>iii Prepare Details &amp; Action Plan</li> </ul>	
6	Publish Local Performance Plan	April 2000
7	Service Review Implement	April 2000-March 2001
8	Independent Audit/Inspection Certification	2001-2002

Director Central Services

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
BEST VALUE  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY**

- 1 Manage the Project through the Project Team, Chaired by the Director of Central Services and developing clearly defined milestones and tasks.
- 2 Compare performance with the Shaw Family cluster based on latest CIPFA statistics to identify 'poorest performing', areas of functionality.
- 3 Collaborate with other Brigades via the Fire Service Benchmark Club and CACFOA.
- 4 Initial steps to be taken in establishing objectives by working with each key manager to:
  - i confirm functions of their Section
  - ii devise a method of measuring their Section's output

**AGENDA ITEM 14: SERVICE GUARANTEES & CUSTOMER CARE CARDS**

**To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date: 8 December 1998**  
**Officer Contributing: Chief Fire Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**To advise the Authority of the results of monitoring the Brigade's service guarantees and to seek the Authority's instructions on the frequency of future monitoring reports.**

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

**Members are invited to NOTE the contents of the report and RESOLVE: That the Chief Fire Officer be requested to present monitoring reports bi-annually at the June and December meetings of the Fire Authority.**

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**There are no financial implications.**

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 At the meeting of 9 June 1998 the Fire Authority affirmed the existing policy of Service Guarantees and issuing Customer Care Cards to users of the service to obtain feedback from the public on the Brigade's services. The Authority also asked for the results of the monitoring of the service guarantees to be reported to the September and December meetings.
- 2 The returned customer care cards have been analysed and the results of the analysis for the two quarters ending 30 June and 30 September 1998, together with the analysis for 1997/98 are attached as Appendix 'A'.
- 3 There has been a general rise in activity in the second quarter and Members will no doubt be pleased to note a reduction in the number of malicious false alarms. Unfortunately there has been a rise in the number of complaints, but most arose out of relatively minor incidents and indicated no emerging trends. A number related to noise at night from participants in the Bristol to Windsor canoe race - a matter which will be taken into account during the pre-event briefings in future years. On a positive note, the response from the service guarantee cards shows the Brigade continues to enjoy a very high level of public support and satisfaction.

- 4 With regard to the frequency of the monitoring reports, Members may be minded to review the matter - taking into consideration the process and time-scale for creation and whether comparisons over periods in excess of three months would be more meaningful. Previously, such reports had been submitted to Members on an annual basis but if this was felt to be too excessive a period, then six monthly reports could be an option.
- 5 Should, however, Members still wish to receive quarterly reports at each of the four meetings it may not be possible to produce a report in February for the quarter ending December due to the relatively short time between the end of the December and the date the report would need to be drafted.

## **E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1 Agenda and Minutes, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority: 9 June 1998
- 2 Agenda and Minutes, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority: 16 September 1998

**Contact Officer:** David Noonan, (0118) 932 2250

## ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

### Service guarantees - Performance Monitoring Report

This report covers the periods from 1st April 1997 to 31st September 1998. The information and data relates to three areas, General Brigade Statistics, Service Guarantee and Corporate Code of Courtesy statistics.

#### Section 1:

#### General Statistics

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
<b>Emergency telephone calls received</b>	22596	3649	4138	
<b>Small fires attended</b>	1799	310	585	
<b>Chimney fires</b>	116	12	8	
<b>Property fires attended</b>	2226	485	660	
<b>False alarms, good intent</b>	2350	392	423	
<b>False alarms, malicious</b>	957	247	221	
<b>Emergency special services</b>	1905	504	479	
<b>Non-emergency special services</b>	31	6	5	
<b>Rescues from fires</b>	N/A*	26**	29**	
<b>Rescues / releases at special service calls</b>	372	126	132	
<b>Estimated number of customer questionnaires provided</b>	2000	500	500	
<b>Customer questionnaires returned</b>	524	125	96	
<b>Letters of appreciation</b>	144	47	50	
<b>Customer complaints</b>	15	3	11	

\* Due to problems in data transfer with installation of new computing system reliable data is not yet available.

\*\*Data available at time of publication

**Section 2:****Code Of Courtesy****The Guarantee:**

- Quality of Service
- Fair Treatment
- Responsive Treatment

**Customer Opinion**

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998		1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998		1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998		1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Smart & professional service	242	0	37	0	41	0		
Helpful	242	0	36	1	41	0		
Overall satisfaction	242	0	36	1	41	0		

***Other Information***

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Number of complaints	0	2	6	

Section 3:Service Guarantee statistics

## The Guarantee:

To respond to all calls reporting a fire or suspected fire immediately

Service Monitoring

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Sampling level	22596	3649	4138	
Average number of emergency calls per 24 hour period	62	40	45	
Average time in seconds taken from answering call to despatching of crew	76	78	73	

Customer Opinion*Answering 999 calls*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	173	49	4	1	1
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	22	7	1	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	29	7	1	1	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Collecting information*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	150	61	10	1	1
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	21	6	1	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	27	5	4	1	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Reassuring and helping*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	169	41	10	2	1
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	23	8	2	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	29	7	4	1	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Other Information*

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Number of complaints	0	0	3	

**Section 4:****Service Guarantee statistics****The Guarantee:**

- To use approved skills, equipment and procedures
- To minimise damage to property
- To ensure security of property
- To investigate the cause of the fire

**Service Monitoring**

1st April 1997 - 31st March 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Not Applicable
Protecting surrounding risks	35%	18%	0%	0%	47%
Containing incident	53%	29%	0%	0%	18%
Extinguishing incident	53%	29%	0%	0%	18%
Minimising damage to property	29%	6%	12%	0%	53%
Security of property	18%	6%	6%	0%	70%
Investigating cause of fire	59%	23%	0%	0%	18%

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Not Applicable
Protecting surrounding risks					
Containing incident					
Extinguishing incident	Insufficient data available to produce relevant statistics for this period				
Minimising damage to property					
Security of property					
Investigating cause of fire					

1st July 1998 – 30th September 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Not Applicable
Protecting surrounding risks	0%	57.1%	28.6%	0%	14.3%
Containing incident	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%	0%	0%
Extinguishing incident	0%	28.6%	42.9%	0%	28.6%
Minimising damage to property	0%	0%	28.6%	0%	71.4%
Security of property	14.3%	0%	28.6%	0%	57.1%
Investigating cause of fire	0%	28.6%	42.9%	0%	28.6%

1st October 1998 – 31st December 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Not Applicable
Protecting surrounding risks					
Containing incident					
Extinguishing incident					
Minimising damage to property					
Security of property					
Investigating cause of fire					

**Customer Opinion***Dealing with the incident*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	205	31	1	1	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	33	4	0	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	34	7	0	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Protecting unaffected property*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	170	33	7	3	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	26	6	1	1	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	26	5	2	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Investigating the incident*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	169	38	13	1	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	29	5	1	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	25	10	3	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Clearing up after the incident*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	150	36	12	0	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	20	8	2	0	1
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	21	11	2	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Ensuring the security of the property*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	176	28	11	1	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	27	6	1	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	24	10	2	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Other Information*

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Number of complaints	4	1	1	

**Section 5:****Service Guarantee statistics**

The Guarantee:

To send two appliances to property fires

The first appliance to arrive;

- 5 minutes for major town centre / industrial complexes
- 10 minutes for suburbs and built up areas of smaller towns
- 20 minutes for other areas

**Customer Opinion***Dealing with the incident*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	205	31	1	1	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	33	4	0	0	0
1st July 1998 – 30th September 1998	34	7	0	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

*Other Information*

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Number of complaints	0	0	0	

**Section 6:****Service Guarantee statistics****The Guarantee:**

To provide information when requested by an occupier, regarding;

- Our investigation into the incident
- Location of the nearest Fire Station
- The number and type of appliance normally sent
- Details of preplans

**Customer Opinion**

*Keeping you informed and giving advice*

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	190	30	8	1	0
1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	31	4	2	0	0
1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	29	9	1	0	0
1st October 1998 - 31st December 1998					

***Other Information***

	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1997- 31 <sup>st</sup> March 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> June 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> July 1998 – 30 <sup>th</sup> September 1998	1 <sup>st</sup> October 1998 – 31 <sup>st</sup> December 1998
Number of complaints	0	0	0	

**Industrial Training****Company Experience**

1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Agreeing course specification	90	63	27	2	0
Value for money	89	61	18	3	1

**Company and Student Experience**

1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Giving you information before the course	76	72	40	4	2
Meeting course objectives	149	80	11	1	4
Course notes	115	103	22	3	2
Timetable arrangement	132	89	22	1	1
Meal or breaktime arrangements	141	86	16	2	0
Training facilities provided	151	77	13	2	0
Quality of instruction	178	63	3	1	1

**Additional Information**

1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	Yes	No
Was an Officer available to discuss special needs?	233	16
Were Officers knowledgeable & professional?	244	5
Were we helpful?	244	5
Were you pleased with the overall service provided?	241	8
Do you need further information about courses?	38	211

**Industrial Training****Company Experience**

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Agreeing course specification	25	16	4	1	0
Value for money	21	13	5	2	0

**Company and Student Experience**

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Giving you information before the course	18	16	12	1	3
Meeting course objectives	52	21	4	0	0
Course notes	42	28	7	0	0
Timetable arrangement	40	29	7	0	0
Meal or breaktime arrangements	46	24	5	2	1
Training facilities provided	58	16	3	0	0
Quality of instruction	62	14	1	0	0

**Additional Information**

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Yes	No
Was an Officer available to discuss special needs?	68	2
Were Officers knowledgeable & professional?	70	0
Were we helpful?	70	0
Were you pleased with the overall service provided?	70	0
Do you need further information about courses?	2	68

**Industrial Training****Company Experience**

1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Agreeing course specification	14	15	6	0	0
Value for money	12	17	5	0	0

**Company and Student Experience**

1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
Giving you information before the course	9	14	7	2	2
Meeting course objectives	30	20	4	0	0
Course notes	25	19	8	1	0
Timetable arrangement	24	24	6	0	0
Meal or breaktime arrangements	28	21	3	1	1
Training facilities provided	28	17	4	0	0
Quality of instruction	39	14	1	0	0

**Additional Information**

1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	Yes	No
Was an Officer available to discuss special needs?	51	3
Were Officers knowledgeable & professional?	54	0
Were we helpful?	54	0
Were you pleased with the overall service provided?	54	0
Do you need further information about courses?	5	49

**Fire & Safety Inspections**

1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
The time we took to answer your application, enquiry or request	7	14	7	4	0
Giving you information	12	17	3	0	0
Keeping appointments	11	15	3	1	0
Carrying out inspections	14	13	2	0	0
Seeking your involvement	5	23	3	0	0
The use of understandable correspondence	5	18	8	0	0
Explaining the procedure & timetable involved	12	13	4	1	0
Helping & advising you	13	16	3	1	0
Keeping you informed of progress	10	10	8	2	0

1st April 1997 – 31st March 1998	Yes	No
Have we made clear any future actions necessary?	29	4
Was the Fire Safety Officer knowledgeable & professional?	29	4
Were you pleased with the overall service?	29	4
Would you like us to contact you about our service?	0	33

**Fire & Safety Inspections**

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
The time we took to answer your application, enquiry or request	4	2	2	0	0
Giving you information	4	4	0	0	0
Keeping appointments	4	3	0	0	0
Carrying out inspections	3	2	1	0	0
Seeking your involvement	2	5	1	0	0
The use of understandable correspondence	2	2	2	0	0
Explaining the procedure & timetable involved	2	3	1	0	0
Helping & advising you	3	5	0	0	0
Keeping you informed of progress	2	4	0	0	0

1st April 1998 - 30th June 1998	Yes	No
Have we made clear any future actions necessary?	7	0
Was the Fire Safety Officer knowledgeable & professional?	7	0
Were you pleased with the overall service?	8	0
Would you like us to contact you about our service?	0	8

**Fire & Safety Inspections**

1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average	Poor
The time we took to answer your application, enquiry or request					
Giving you information					
Keeping appointments	Insufficient data available to produce relevant statistics for this period				
Carrying out inspections					
Seeking your involvement					
The use of understandable correspondence					
Explaining the procedure & timetable involved					
Helping & advising you					
Keeping you informed of progress					

1st July 1998 - 30th September 1998	Yes	No
Have we made clear any future actions necessary?		
Was the Fire Safety Officer knowledgeable & professional?		
Were you pleased with the overall service?		
Would you like us to contact you about our service?		