

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Headquarters · 103 Dee Road · Tilehurst · Reading · Berkshire · RG30 4FS
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Your reference:

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

When calling ask for: David R Weller
Direct Line: (0118) 932 2288

Date: 3 July 2001

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 10 July 2001 in the Council Chamber at Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell** commencing at 6.30pm.

Easthampstead House is situated on The Ring and access to the car park is from The Ring. A map showing the venue is reproduced overleaf.

For Members travelling from the west of the County it is advisable to use the M4 Motorway, leave at Junction 10 and take the A329(M) sign posted Wokingham/Bracknell. The A329(M) then becomes the A329 which Members should follow passing over the first roundabout and continuing on the A329. As you approach the next roundabout (traffic lights) move over to the left hand lane and turn left under the railway bridge, taking the third exit (Skimped Hill Lane) at the next roundabout. Continue down this road until the next roundabout and take the second exit (Skimped Hill Lane) which then becomes High Street. At the end of the High Street turn left onto The Ring and follow the road round keeping to the right hand lane until you come to the Easthampstead House Car Park. From the Car Park walk up the steps and turn left. The entrance to Easthampstead House will be on your left.

For Members travelling from the east of the County it is suggested that you also use the M4 Motorway, leaving at Junction 10 and following the above instructions.

Yours sincerely

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: Annual Meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday 10 July 2001 at 6.30pm

VENUE: Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, 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. A buffet will be provided before the meeting.

D C H Williams
Clerk to the Authority

To: MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

Mrs C Bateson, J C G Brooks T Bucknell, T P Dredge, R A Flood,
E L Glasson, A Gregory, J P Green, E E Herbert, P Hingley,
Mrs V Howes O E Jeffrey, D W Liddiard, C Maskell, T D McCann,
D McCarthy, D Morgan, T Mills, J E R Mole, Mrs J Orton, D Parker,
M Pritchett, B J S Patman, A J Ross, D Wilson

Briefing Meetings:

Conservative Group: 5.45pm -Room 114 - First Floor
Labour Group: 5.45pm - Function Room - Fifth Floor
Liberal Democrat Group: 5.45pm - Marriage Room - Fourth Floor

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

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
TUESDAY 10 JULY 2001



AGENDA

PART I AGENDA

PAGE NO.

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1	Election of Chairman 2001/2002	-
	<i>To elect a Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year.</i>	
2	Election of Vice-Chairman 2001/2002	-
	<i>To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year</i>	
3	Apologies for Absence	-
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9	Questions from Members under Standing Order 10 (if any)	-
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**AGENDA ITEM 4: MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise on the District/Borough Council Member appointments to the Fire Authority.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **NOTE** the report.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the Strategic Plan

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1 Following the Elections in May the District/Borough Councils in Berkshire have appointed the following Member representatives to the Fire Authority. New Members are shown in **Bold Type**:

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (3)

R A Flood (Con), E L Glasson (Lab), T Mills (Con) - **No change**

Reading Borough Council (4)

Mrs J Orton (Lab), **P Hingley (Lab)**, **C Maskell (Lab)**, **D Morgan (Lib/Dem)**

West Berkshire Council (5)

J C G Brooks (Lib/Dem), O E Jeffrey (Lib/Dem), J E R Mole (Lib/Dem),
D W Liddiard (Con), T Bucknell (Con), **No change**

Slough Borough Council (3)

E E Herbert (Lab), A Gregory (Con), D McCarthy (Lab) - **No change**

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (5)

Mrs C Bateson (Con), Mrs V Howes (Lib/Dem), D Parker (Con), D Wilson(Con)
M Pritchett (Lib/Dem) - **No change**

Wokingham District Council (5)

John P Green (Con), T P Dredge (Lib/Dem), T D McCann (Lib/Dem),
B J S Patman (Con), A J Ross (Con) - **To be advised**

2 As present the Political Parties representation is as follows:

Conservative	11
Liberal/Democrat	8
Labour	6
Total	25

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letters confirming appointments received from District/Borough Councils in Berkshire

Contact Officers: Clive Williams (0118) 932 2284
David Weller (0118) 932 2288

AGENDA ITEM 5: MINUTES: 14 MARCH 2001

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD, TOWN HALL, ST IVES ROAD, MAIDENHEAD, BERKSHIRE ON WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2001 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 8.35PM

Present: J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bateson, T P Dredge, R A Flood, John P Green, A Gregory, E E Herbert, O E Jeffery, D W Liddiard, T D McCann, D McCarthy, T Mills, J E R Mole, Ms K Peak, A J Ross, D Wilson

Apologies: R J Day, E L Glasson, Mrs V Howes, J Morris, Mrs J Orton, D Parker, M Pritchett

1.01/01 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

The Chairman, on behalf of the Fire Authority, congratulated Mr Mike Clement-Green and Mr Olaf Baars on their recent appointment as Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer respectively.

1.02/01 MINUTES: DECEMBER 2000

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 13 December 2000, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

1.03/01 PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 3 - not reproduced) of the Personnel Committee, Performance Review and Audit Panel, Urgency Committee, Community Safety Panel and Fire Liaison Group meetings that had taken place since the last meeting. Members were advised that copies of the Part I Minutes were available from the Committee Administrator.

NOTED

1.04/01 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman had nothing to report.

1.05/01 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.

1.06/01 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

The Authority noted that no Questions had been received from Members under Standing Order 10.

1.07/01 NOTICES OF MOTION

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

1.08/01 DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 8 – not reproduced) to the dates for future meetings of the Fire Authority for the period September 2001 to June 2002.

RESOLVED: That future Fire Authority meetings be held on the following dates in 2001/2002, commencing at 6.30pm:

Wednesday 19 September 2001 at Slough Borough Council

Wednesday 19 December 2001 at Wokingham District Council (Budget Meeting)

Wednesday 13 March 2002 at Frank Hutchings Memorial Hall, Thatcham (subject to confirmation)

Wednesday 19 June 2002 (Annual Meeting) at Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (subject to confirmation)

1.09/01 STRATEGIC PLAN 2001-2006

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 9 – not reproduced) to the Strategic Plan 2001-2006 as recommended by the Performance Review and Audit Panel at its meeting held on Thursday 1 March 2001.

Members were reminded that the Authority at its meeting in July 1999, approved the adoption of the Strategic Plan as the basis for the long-term direction of the brigade and that it should develop year on year to meet the changing circumstances of the service.

If approved the Plan will be published on 1 April 2001 and copies circulated to a wide range of individuals and organisations, including members of staff, as detailed in paragraph 12 of the report (not reproduced). The cost of producing 2000 copies is approximately £1,500 and can be funded from within existing approved Budgets.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Plan 2001-2006 be approved and adopted.

1.10/01 BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2001/2002

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 10 – not reproduced) to the Best Value Performance Plan 2001/2002 (BVPP) as recommended by the Performance Review and Audit Panel at its meeting on Thursday 1 March 2001.

The Plan has been prepared and produced in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government (Best Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Order 1999 SI 3251.

To cover the distribution of the BVPP Summary Sheet, after consultation with the District Auditor, the Chief Fire Officer is to proceed with a half page display in local newspapers covering the whole County. For next year's distribution it is hoped to collaborate with the Constituent Authorities by utilising their Newsletters and other relevant publications. The cost of the half page display and producing sufficient copies of the Plan will be £5,000 and £3,000 respectively and can be funded from within the approved BVPP Budget. If approved the Plan will be published on 1 April 2001.

RESOLVED: That the Best Value Performance Plan 2001/2002 be approved and adopted and the arrangements for the distribution of the Summary Sheet noted.

1.11/01 COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN 2001/2002

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 11 – not reproduced) to the Community Safety Plan 2001/2002 as recommended by the Community Safety Panel at its meeting on Thursday 25 January 2001.

The Plan is to help the Brigade develop a more strategic, data driven approach to fire prevention and instil a regular planning cycle for Community Fire Safety Work and must therefore be updated annually and presented to the Home Office in April each year. If approved the Plan will be published on 1 April 2001, a copy submitted to the Home Office at the same time.

The cost of reproducing and distributing the Plan will be approximately £1,500 for 2000 copies and can be funded from within the approved Community Safety Budget for 2000/2001.

RESOLVED: That the Community Safety Plan 2001/2002 be approved and adopted.

**1.12/01 INSTALLATION OF SMOKE DETECTORS IN BEDROOMS
AND FIRE SUPPRESSING SPRINKLER SYSTEMS FOR
DOMESTIC BUILDINGS**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 12 – not reproduced) to an initiative to secure the installation of domestic smoke detectors in every bedroom of new build houses, and on a trial basis, for domestic sprinklers to be incorporated into all new build houses within a single development project as recommended by the Community Safety Panel at its meeting held in January 2001.

Although a similar scheme has already been achieved in Hampshire there is no evidence to suggest that this initiative is being extended to Berkshire by the same builders. In association with the request for improving fire safety in the home, awareness of the positive benefits that residential sprinkler systems have to offer in saving life and protecting property should be made more apparent to house builders.

Members were therefore asked to show their support to the national initiative of raising the profile of residential sprinklers and their installation in the home by recording support to the Residential Sprinkler Association. In addition it was suggested that in partnership with the Constituent Authorities and housing developers, consideration should be given to a proposal that a trial site of new build houses are fitted with residential sprinklers.

In response to questions raised by Members, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Association of British Insurers would be included in any consultation process and the question of fitting smoke detectors in domestic lofts will also be considered but would have to be based on the current data and number of loft fires that have actually occurred.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1 The relevant Planning Officers of each Constituent Authority be approached with a view to seeking the support of the Planning Committee to the recommendation that in new domestic dwellings the required provision of single point domestic smoke detectors be extended to include one in each bedroom.
- 2 The Fire Authority support the proposal that a recommendation be made to the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions, to amend the Building Regulations – Approved Document “B” to include extended smoke detector coverage.
- 3 The Chief Fire Officer be requested to seek, in partnership with the Constituent Authorities and Housing Developers, the trial installation of residential sprinkler systems within a proposed new local housing development.

1.13/01 BRACKNELL FOREST "FORESTCARE"

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 13 – not reproduced) of an invitation to the Brigade to join in partnership with Bracknell Forest Borough Council in the development of an initiative designed to improve the delivery of services to Borough Council tenants, particularly those who fall within those groups identified as being "at risk", such as the elderly and the very young.

From a Fire Service perspective, the system could be useful in raising early awareness of a fire occurring in the home of a vulnerable person. Although the project is in its infancy the Brigade's Director of Service Delivery has been invited to join the Project Board. However the financial implications of such a partnership have not yet been identified, as much will depend on the degree of involvement required within the partnership that the Brigade would find beneficial.

If Members were minded to support the Brigade's participation in the partnership in principle, the Chief Fire Officer would present more detailed reports to the Community Safety Panel, Budget Working Party and, if appropriate, to the Fire Authority meeting in December 2001.

RESOLVED: That, in principle, the Fire Authority becoming a partner in the Forestcare scheme be approved, subject to further consideration of the implications and associated costs to the Authority in due course with reports being presented, as considered appropriate to, the Community Safety Panel, Budget Working Party and December 2001 Fire Authority meeting.

1.14/01 EMERGENCY SPECIAL SERVICE CALLS – ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS OF LEVYING CHARGES: PROGRESS REPORT.

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 14 – not reproduced) of progress nationally in respect of charging for Brigades' attendances at emergency special service calls (non-fire incidents) and were requested to determine whether or not to apply charges for attending emergency special service incidents.

In noting the background to this particular issue and the implications to the Brigade of adopting a charging mechanism, Members were advised that in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, where this system had been adopted, the control of whether to charge a particular caller now rested with the Chief Fire Officer or the Business Manager in his absence who also manages the appeal mechanism, which has also been put in place.

Should this Authority adopt the same strategy as implemented by Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, as detailed in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the report (not reproduced), it is estimated that the total income would be in the region of £25,000 based on 2001/2002 figures.

In considering the implications for the Brigade, Members decided that it would be inappropriate at this moment in time to apply charges for attending emergency special service incidents and requested the Chief Fire Officer to present further progress reports to future Fire Authority meetings as deemed necessary. In addition it was also agreed that the Local Government Association be asked to provide information on their current official position together with details of what further action is proposed in support of the request for primary legislation and the need to improve the SSA allocation to reflect the work undertaken nationally by Brigades in this particular area.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1 For the time being charges be not applied for attending emergency special service incidents, other than those previously agreed by the Authority, and that the Chief Fire Officer be requested to present further progress reports to future Fire Authority meetings as deemed necessary.
- 2 The Clerk and Monitoring Officer be requested to write to the Local Government Association seeking further information on their current official position together with details of what further action is proposed in support of the request for primary litigation and the need to improve the SSA allocation to reflect the work undertaken nationally by Brigades.

**1.15/01 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY
2001/2002**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 15 – not reproduced) to the Treasury Policy and Strategy Statements for 2001/2002 and also to determine the Fire Authority's overall borrowing limit and limit on the proportion of total interest payable which is payable at a variable rate.

In noting the main requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities as set out in paragraph 1 of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that the minor amendments detailed in paragraph 2 of the report (not reproduced) had been incorporated in the Treasury Policy Statement a copy of which, together with the Treasury Strategy Statement was presented as Appendix 1 (not reproduced). In addition the Authority had a statutory duty to determine its borrowing limits as set out in Section B of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Proposed Treasury Policy Statement and Strategy Statement for 2001/2002 be approved and the following determinations be made for 2001/2002:

- (a) An overall borrowing limit of £2,447,000
- (b) A short term borrowing limit of £1,218,000
- (c) A maximum limit of 50% of total interest paid, being on variable rate loans.

1.16/01 **ORIS PROJECT UPDATE REPORT**

The Authority received a progress report (Agenda item 16 – not reproduced) on the Operational Risk Information System (ORIS) project, post installation.

Members were advised that the system is designed to be updated over the Brigade's IT network, connected by means of a wireless LAN connections whilst located within the appliance bay of the home station. However this connection has proved to be problematic and has resulted in apparently random and intermittent failures of the wireless LAN units. It was hoped however that following the appointment of two staff to fill the vacant positions within the IT Department the problems should be resolved in the very near future.

In noting that further progress reports would be presented to future Fire Authority meetings, Members supported a request from the Chairman that a report detailing the full implications of the programme, including the identification of all the problems experienced and the options available for resolving them be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting in June 2001.

RESOLVED: That the contents of the report be noted and the Chief Fire Officer be requested to present a report detailing the full implications of the ORIS programme, including the identification of all the problems experienced and the options available for resolving them to the Fire Authority at its meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 June 2001.

1.17/01 **FUTURE OF BRIGADE FIRE CONTROL ROOMM: PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 17 – not reproduced) of the progress made in conducting a Best Value Review of the Brigade Fire Control Room, and, in exploring with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and Oxfordshire County Council, the potential for establishing a single Brigade Fire Control serving all three Thames Valley Fire Authorities, on a shared basis via a joint agency.

In noting the progress to date, Members were advised that a preliminary meeting had been held between Clerks, Chief Fire Officers and Treasurers of the three Thames Valley Authorities involved. In addition the Home Office (HM Fire Service Inspectorate) had agreed to compile the range of issues, which the proposed Agency may wish to consider addressing. The receipt of this information was anticipated in April 2001.

Although the three Authorities had now appointed their Elected Member representatives to the proposed Agency it was the recommendation of the Joint Officer Group that in view of the forthcoming local Government Elections in May and the anticipated Inspector's report the first meeting of the Member Steering Group be deferred until after the elections which may now be held on a later date.

In noting the contents of the report it was **RESOLVED:** That the inaugural meeting of the Joint Member Steering Group be deferred until after the Local Government Elections on a date yet to be determined.

**1.18/01 IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THE SPECIAL APPLIANCE BEST
VALUE REVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 18 – not reproduced) on the progress made by the Chief Fire Officer on the implementation of the Special Appliance Best Value Review as requested by the Authority at its meeting in December 2000.

An in-depth analysis has taken place of each of the Review's constituent parts to identify the work required and to nominate key Officers to lead each team, together with the funding allocated to achieve each of the direct outcomes. The teams are now drawing up detailed project plans and a list of the teams created together with a summary of their main objectives was set out in paragraph 6 of the report (not reproduced).

The Chief Fire Officer referred to the ongoing dispute between the Fire Authority and Fire Brigade's Union and reported that a Notice of Ballot had been received from the General Secretary of the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU). In addition an application to vary the establishment, made under Section 19 of the Fire Services Act, 1947 has been made to the Home Office, which included the presentation of evidence from both the Brigade and FBU.

Mr Currie, the Fire Services Inspector has also visited the Brigade to look at the details relating to the Special Appliance Review which included a discussion with FBU representatives.

In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the background work is likely to take in excess of four months before any real changes are made. It was therefore unlikely that any transfer of appliances would take place before October 2001.

NOTED

1.19/01 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Authority received a copy of the Audited Statement of Accounts for 1999/2000 and was advised of the non-material amendments made during the course of the Audit.

NOTED

1.20/01 2000/2001 BUDGET MONITORING

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 20 – not reproduced) of the revenue and Capital expenditure against budgets up to 31 January 2001 as presented in Appendices A and B respectively (not reproduced). In response to a question from the Chairman,

9

the Authority Treasurer indicated that the current Revenue underspend was £62,000, made up by £40,000 on Pensions and £22,000 on other items. It was anticipated however that the Authority would be close to budget by 31 March 2001.

NOTED**1.21/01 2001/2002 BUDGET**

The Authority received details (Agenda item 21 – not reproduced) of the Budget for 2001/2002, consequent on the approval of the overall Revenue Budget of £22.420m by the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 13 December 2000.

NOTED**1.22/01 2001/2002 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMBINED FIRE SERVICE FUND**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 22 – not reproduced) of the exercise by the Authority Treasurer of his delegated authority to fix the contributions to be made by each Constituent Authority to the Combined Fire Service Fund for 2001/2002 as detailed in Appendix A (not reproduced)

NOTED**1.23/01 REVIEW OF STANDARDS AND DISCIPLINE ON WHOLETIME FIRE STATIONS**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 23 – not reproduced) of the process adopted by the Brigade in completing the review of standards and discipline on Wholetime Fire Stations.

The report had also been presented to the Performance Review and Audit Panel at its meeting on Thursday 1 February 2001, who having resolved that the process adopted be approved, agreed that a copy of the report be presented to the Fire Authority meeting in march 2001 for information.

In noting the outcome of the review Members requested the Chief Fire Officer

present a report on the implementation of the Communications Programme and Management of Change Programme, including a summary of the visits that have so far taken place, to the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 13 June 2001.

NOTED

1.24/01 FIRES, INCIDENTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 24 – not reproduced) summarising some of the incidents attended by the Brigade during the period 1 November 2000 to 28 February 2001.

NOTED

1.25/01 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the Annual Fire Authority meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 June 2001 in the Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Town Square, Bracknell commencing at 6.30pm.

1.26/01 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 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act indicated:

	Agenda item	Paragraph
27	Part II Minutes: Wednesday 13 December 2000	1, 7 & 8
28	Part II Minutes of Sub-Groups	1, 7 & 8
29	Fire Brigade's Union Trade Dispute Update	1

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Fire Authority Meeting held on Wednesday 14 March 2001)

1.27/01 PART II MINUTES: 13 DECEMBER 2000

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 13 December 2000 were received and approved as a correct record.

1.28/01 PART II MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 28 – not reproduced) of the Sub-Group meetings that had taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting.

1.29/01 FIRE BRIGADE'S UNION TRADE DISPUTE UPDATE

The Authority received a progress report from the Chief Fire Officer on the current position regarding the Trade Dispute with the Fire Brigade's Union.

AGENDA ITEM 5: MINUTES: 17 APRIL 2001

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL, SHUTE END, WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE ON TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2001 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.35PM

Present: J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bateson, T Bucknell, T P Dredge, R A Flood, E L Glasson, J P Green, A Gregory, E E Herbert, Mrs V Howes, O E Jeffery, D W Liddiard, T D McCann, J E R Mole, J Morris, Mrs J Orton, D Parker, Ms K Peak, M Pritchett, A J Ross, D Wilson

Apologies R J Day, D McCarthy, T Mills

2.01/01 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the Annual Fire Authority meeting was now scheduled to take place on Tuesday 10 July 2001 in the Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell commencing at 6.30pm.

2.02/01 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:

Agenda item	Paragraph
4 Proposal to Resolve Current Trades' Dispute	1

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting held on Tuesday 17 April 2001)

2.03/01 PROPOSAL TO RESOLVE CURRENT TRADES' DISPUTE

The Authority approved the formal offer to be made to the Fire Brigade's Union on Wednesday 18 April 2001 to seek resolution to the current trades dispute.

AGENDA ITEM 5: MINUTES: 13 JUNE 2001

MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCIL, MARKET STREET, NEWBURY, BERKSHIRE ON WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2001 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.50PM

Present: J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman), T P Dredge, R A Flood, E L Glasson, A Gregory, E E Herbert, O E Jeffery, D W Liddiard, T D McCann, J E R Mole, D Parker, M Pritchett, D Wilson

Apologies Mrs C Bateson, T Bucknell, J P Green, D McCarthy, A J Ross

3.01/01 AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY AND THE FIRE BRIGADES' UNION

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 2 - not reproduced) of the terms on which the dispute with the Fire Brigades' Union was settled and were requested to appoint Members to the proposed Joint Working Party.

On 26 April 2001, the Authority's Urgency Committee met for the second time in 48 hours and in the light of the information received submitted a revised proposal, a copy of which was presented in Appendix 1 (not reproduced). This was accepted by the Fire Brigades' Union and led to the dispute being settled. In noting the reasons for the dispute as set out in paragraph 3 of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that as the eventual agreement represented a compromise on previously stated positions it is now necessary for the Authority to appoint its Member representatives to the proposed Joint Working Party. To ensure that the Working Party commenced its work as soon as possible a Special Meeting of the Fire Liaison Group was held on Thursday 31 May 2001 and a copy of the Minutes from that meeting was presented as Appendix 2 (not reproduced).

On the invitation of the Chairman, the Chief Fire Officer explained the mechanism to be adopted in moving the process forward under the auspices of the Joint Working Party. It is envisaged that Officers of the Brigade, under the direction of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, will undertake the detailed work in conjunction with FBU Executive Committee members. The role of Elected Members will be to monitor progress and determine any proposed amendments to the implementation of the outcome of the Special Appliance Review, which might be recommended. It is envisaged that non-contentious items will proceed with those of a contentious nature being referred to the Joint Working Party for consideration and determination.

The Chairman referred to the significant amount of work undertaken by both sides involved in the dispute in an attempt to find a way forward and was of the opinion that at the end of the day a good result had been achieved for the people of Berkshire.

On the invitation of the Chairman and with the approval of Members, the FBU representatives were given the opportunity of addressing the meeting.

In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that a joint press statement had been drafted and was currently with the FBU Executive Committee for comment. Once agreement had been reached on its contents a copy will be sent to the Chairman and Party Spokespersons for approval.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Joint Working Party subject to ratification or amendment of each appointment, once the Unitary Councils have made their appointments to the Fire Authority following the Local Council Elections on June 7 2001:

Conservative:	Mrs C Bateson, B S J Patman
Labour:	Ms K Peak, E L Glasson,
Liberal/Democrat:	J C G Brooks, M Pritchett

- 2 That in the event of a nominated Member of the Working Party not being appointed to the Fire Authority, or not wishing to be appointed, then the Party Spokesperson be authorised to nominate a replacement.

3.02/01 COST OF CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 3 - not reproduced) of the estimated costs incurred through the contingency plans developed to enable a limited service to be delivered to the public in the event of strike action and approval was sought to proposals as to how these costs might be contained.

Members were advised that although the dispute was settled without strike action occurring, some costs were directly incurred through the contingency planning put in place as directed by the Chief Fire Officer. Details of the costs incurred was summarised in paragraph 2 of the report (not reproduced) and following a brief explanation by the Chief Fire Officer, Members were given the opportunity of asking questions and seeking clarification on the estimated costs of £80,000.

In response to a suggestion that the estimated postage costs of £15,000 appeared to be excessive the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that this figure would be investigated with the outcome of that investigation being reported back to Members at the Fire Authority meeting in July.

The Chief Fire Officer drew Members' attention to paragraph 3 of the report (not reproduced) which recommended that the estimated cost of £80,000 be contained within the 2001/2002 budget by the following measures:

	£
• Cancellation of the Water Bowser	40,000
• Reduction in Light Vehicle replacement programme for 2001/2002	20,000
• Removal of 'extra travel' budget	10,000
• Removal of 'white goods' budget	10,000

In response to a question asking whether manufactures might be prepared to supply 'white goods' in return for advertising, the Chief Fire Officer explained that when the new Business Manager post had been filled, the successful candidate would be asked to investigate the opportunities for achieving possible sponsorship from external companies together with the legal implications.

The measures recommended by the Chief Fire Officer to cover the estimated costs of the contingency plans having been proposed and seconded was approved.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1 The estimated costs of the contingency plans be noted.
- 2 Subject to confirmation of the estimated postage costs, the costs be contained within existing budgets by the measures recommended by the Chief Fire Officer.

3.03/01 STRATEGIC PLAN 2001 - 2006

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 4 - not reproduced) that following the resolution of the recent trades dispute with the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) the existing Strategic Plan, approved by the Authority at its last meeting, is no longer relevant and approval was sought to producing a revised Plan through the Authority's Performance Review and Audit Panel (PRAP).

On the recommendation of PRAP, the Authority, at its meeting on Wednesday 14 March 2001, approved the production of the Strategic Plan for 2001-2006. Subsequent to the production of the Plan, but prior to its distribution, the trades dispute with the FBU was resolved. As the terms of the resolution, reported in Minute 3.01/01, will significantly alter the contents of the Plan, together with knock-on effects for subsequent years caused by the need to reschedule projects displaced from this year, the Chief Fire Officer determined not to distribute the Plan.

Subject to Members' approval it was the Chief Fire Officer's intention to amend the Plan to reflect these changes and present a revised version to PRAP at its meeting on Tuesday 3 July 2001. Members were reminded that the principles behind the Plan remain unaltered and only its content will change to reflect the changes to the work programme resulting from the dispute resolution.

So that the production and distribution of the amended Plan might be expedited it was proposed and agreed that PRAP be authorised to approve it.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Review and Audit Panel be authorised to approve the amended Strategic Plan 2001-2006 at its meeting on Tuesday 3 July 2001.

3.04/01 DATE OF NEXT FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING

It was noted that the Annual Fire Authority meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 10 July 2001, in the Council Chamber, at Bracknell Forest Borough Council, commencing at 6.30pm.

3.05/01 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:

Agenda item	Paragraph
7 Trade Dispute - Sequence of Events	1

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting held on Wednesday 13 June 2001)

3.06/01 TRADES' DISPUTE - SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The Authority was advised of the full sequence of events which occurred during the recent trades dispute with the Fire Brigades' Union.

AGENDA ITEM 6: PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members on meetings of the Personnel Committee, Urgency Committee, Performance Review and Audit Panel Community Fire Safety Panel and the Fire Liaison Group that have taken place since the last meeting of the Fire Authority in March 2001.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **NOTE** the report.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1 The following meetings have taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting in March 2001:

Personnel Committee:	Monday 9 April 2001
Performance Review and Audit Panel	Tuesday 3 July 2001
Urgency Committee	Wednesday 25 April and Thursday 26 April 2001
Fire Liaison Group	Special Meeting on Thursday 31 May 2001 and Monday 25 June 2001
Community Safety Panel	Thursday 19 April 2001

2 Copies of the Part I Minutes (if available) can be obtained from David Weller on (0118) 932 2288)

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda's and Minutes for the above mentioned meetings

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

**AGENDA ITEM 11: APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, PANELS
AND WORKING PARTIES**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To invite the Authority to re-appoint the Personnel and Urgency Committees, the Performance Review and Audit Panel, Community Safety Panel, Budget Working Party and the Joint Member Steering Group on Future of Control Rooms for the ensuing year

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to RESOLVE: That:

- 1 The Personnel Committee be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat

- 2 The Urgency Committee be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

1 Conservative, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat

- 3 The Performance Review and Audit Panel be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

3 Conservative, 3 Labour, 3 Liberal Democrat

- 4 The Community Safety Panel be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat

- 5 The Budget Working Party be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat

- 6 The Joint Member Steering Group on Future of Control Rooms be appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:

1 Conservative, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 Under Standing Order 27, the Authority is required to decide by resolution at its Annual Meeting which Committees it intends to establish as "Standing Committees" and to appoint Members to each Standing Committee.
- 2 Members are therefore invited to re-appoint the Personnel and Urgency Committees, the Performance Review and Audit Panel, Community Safety Panel and the Budget Working Party and approve their membership which is currently as follows:

Personnel Committee (6)

Mrs C Bateson, O E Jeffery, T D McCann, *J Morris*, *Ms K Peak*, B J S Patman

Urgency Committee (3)

J C G Brooks, *Ms K Peak*, B J S Patman

Performance Review and Audit Panel (9)

T Bucknell, E E Herbert, Mrs V Howes, T D McCann, T Mills, Mrs J Orton, M Pritchett, D Wilson, (*one vacancy -Labour Group*)

(Note: The Chairman, Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority and Leader of the Labour Group are Ex-Officio Members of the Panel)

Community Safety Panel (6)

J C G Brooks, Mrs V Howes, Mrs J Orton, D Parker, *Ms K Peak*, D Wilson

Budget Working Party (6)

J C G Brooks, T Mills, J E R Mole, Mrs J Orton, *Ms K Peak*, B J S Patman

Joint Working Party on Future of Control Rooms (3)

J P Green, O E Jeffery, *Ms K Peak*

- 3 Those Members shown in bold italics are no longer members of the Fire Authority. **Members appointed to the Community Safety Panel will be asked to remain behind at the conclusion of the meeting to arrange a suitable date for its next meeting.**

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

AGENDA ITEM 12: APPOINTMENT OF FIRE AUTHORITY'S REPRESENTATIVES - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION'

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To appoint the Fire Authority's representative on the Local Government Association.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to RESOLVE: That Councillor B J S Patman be appointed to represent the Fire Authority on the Local Government Association for the ensuing year.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 The Fire Authority has been invited to its representative on the Local Government Association for the ensuing year. The appointed representative will also represent the Fire Authority at the Annual Meeting and Conference of the Local Government Association's General Assembly.
- 2 As reported at the meeting in March 2000 the Fire Authority, as a result of population changes, are now entitled to a Voting Entitlement of 17 for 2001/2002. As the closing date for the receipt of Registration Forms for General Assembly is 30 June a provisional place has been booked.
- 3 Councillor Patman has expressed an interest in remaining as the Fire Authority's representative and Members are therefore asked to support this appointment and Resolve accordingly.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Invitation from Local Government Association

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

AGENDA ITEM 13: APPOINTMENT OF FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE ON THE ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILS FOR THE THAMES VALLEY REGION (ACTVAR)

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer
 Chief Fire Officer
 Authority Treasurer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To appoint the Fire Authority's representative on the Association of Councils for the Thames Valley Region (ACTVAR).

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE:** That Councillors and be appointed as the Fire Authority's representative and Standing Deputy respectively on the Association of Councils for the Thames Valley Region (ACTVAR).

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost to this Authority of membership of ACTVAR is £1,111 per annum based on the fact that there are three Fire Authorities in the Thames Valley and the Thames Valley Police Authority pays an annual subscription of £3,333. Provision to meet this cost is contained in the Budget for 2001/2002.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the Strategic Plan

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 In response to a request from the Local Government Association Fire Service Executive, ACTVAR's Member Steering Group at its meeting in May 2000 considered the possibility of Fire Authorities liaison arrangements being brought within the framework of the Regional Association.
- 2 ACTVAR welcomed such a development and agreed to make its arrangements available to the three Fire Services operating within the Thames Valley as a means of facilitating discussion of Fire Service issues. The Regional Secretary of ACTVAR has indicated that

appropriate mechanisms could be devised to accommodate the wishes of the three Thames Valley Fire Authorities to deal with “service” issues across the three Counties covered by the LGA Regional Association.

- 3 Whilst membership of the Association would entitle one Member and one Officer to attend all meetings there would however be only one vote for all three Fire Authorities. It should be noted however that business is normally conducted on a consensus basis.
- 4 ACTVAR already has Community Safety on its Agenda’s, although it tends to revolve around crime and disorder issues for the Police and Local Authorities. Nevertheless the Regional Secretary of the Association is of the opinion that membership would enable the development of Fire Service issues into the Agenda which could then, if necessary, be referred to the Local Government Association.
- 5 At its Annual Meeting in June 2000 the Fire Authority agreed to become a member of ACTVaR and appointed Councillors B J S Patman and T D McCann as the Fire Authority’s representative and Standing Deputy respectively. Members are therefore asked to consider the appointment of the Fire Authority’s representative and Standing Deputy for the ensuing year and Resolve accordingly

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

Invitation from ACTVAR to appoint Member representative

Contact Officer: David Weller (0118) 932 2288

**AGENDA ITEM 14: FIRE AUTHORITY'S ANNUAL REPORT
2000/2001**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officers Contributing: Chief Fire Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek the Authority's approval to the 2000/2001 Annual Report as recommended by the Performance Review and Audit Panel.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Panel is invited to RESOLVE: That the Annual Report for 2000/2001 be approved.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ACTION

The costs of the preparation and distribution of the annual report will be approximately £3000 and will be met from within current budgetary provisions.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Annual Report compliments the Brigade's Strategic Plan

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 At its meeting on Tuesday 3 July 2001, the Performance Review and Audit Panel considered the first draft of the Annual Report 2000 - 2001. In accordance with established practice, the Chief Fire Officer has prepared the report on the activities and significant aspects of the Brigade covering the twelve month period from the 1 April 2000 through to the 31 March 2001. A copy of the Annual Report will be circulated separately to the Agenda.
- 2 The format of the Annual Report reflects that presented in previous years and which has received favourable comment from a cross section of recipients. It aims not only to reflect upon the achievements and challenges of the past year but to also provide an insight into the changing culture of the Service and how the Chief Fire Officer intends to address the many significant national and locally initiated issues that lie ahead.
- 3 It is the Chief Fire Officers intention to provide copies of the Annual Report to each member of the Authority's staff, to elected Members and officers of the constituent Unitary Authorities, Berkshire's MP's and dignitaries, HM Fire Service Inspectorate, other Emergency Services and to prospective partners in the local commercial/industrial community.

- 4 The Panel was advised that in the absence of a Press and Public Relations Officer the Report had been prepared by an External Agency on behalf of the Fire Authority and may therefore need to be amended before final proof reading takes place. The Panel comments will be reported at the meeting together with its recommendation as to whether the Annual Report 2000/2001 should be approved and adopted.

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda and Minutes - Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, 6 September 2000

Contact Officer: Mike Clement-Green (0118) 932 2225

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

TUESDAY 10 JULY 2001

AGENDA ITEM 15 REFERS:

The summary referred to in paragraph 3 of the report is as follows.

In addition to the amended safety policy statements at Appendix A, the organisational arrangements for safety have also been reviewed and amended.

Since July 1999, a number of changes have been made within the Brigade. In summary, the key changes are detailed below and together with the new safety policy statements, will be published in the Brigade's Health and Safety Manual.

KEY AMENDMENTS:

- Amendments to Health and Safety Manual to reflect the removal of the Central Services Directorate and incorporation of the remaining posts into other Directorates structures
- Amendments to the organisation's family tree, ie removal of Central Services Directorate and job title changes ie Engineering Support Officer to Engineering Services Manager, Health and Safety Officer to Health and Safety Manager
- Amendments to the supporting information for specific safety responsibilities, extracted from Job Profiles. These include; Director of Support Services, which now incorporates maintenance of premises, Health and Safety Manager's responsibilities amended to reflect the section changes during 2000.
- Health, Safety and Welfare Committee amendments, agreed with the representative bodies which include; introduction of rotating chairmanship and details of membership
- Inclusion of the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations requirements, which places responsibility on the workplace manager to carry out a fire risk assessment at the workplace for which they are responsible
- Grammatical amendments

AGENDA ITEM 15: THE FIRE AUTHORITY AND BRIGADE'S REVISED HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENTS AND ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

To Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing Chief Fire Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Authority of the amended Health and Safety Policy Statements and the supporting organisational arrangements for the Brigade.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to RESOLVE: That:

- 1 the amendments to the organisational arrangements for health and safety in the Brigade to be Noted**
- 2 the amended Health and Safety policy statement for the Authority be approved and adopted**

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ACTION

There are no financial implications at this stage.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the Strategic Plan.

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 With the recent appointments at Principal Officer Level, the Health and Safety Policy statements have required amendment. It is also an appropriate time, to review and update the information contained within the organisational arrangements which support the policy statements.**
- 2 The Fire Authority Safety Policy Statement, along with the Chief Fire Officer and Directors Support Statement's are attached as appendix A of this report.**
- 3 Details of the revised organisational arrangements and safety responsibilities are available on application from the Committee Administrator (0118) 932 2288) and a summary will be tabled at the Fire Authority meeting.**
- 4 Members are therefore asked to consider the report and Resolve to adopt the amended Health and Safety Policy Statement for the Authority.**

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Fire Authority Safety Policy Statement – Appendix A
- 2 Organisational Arrangements – Appendix B
- 3 Key managers safety responsibilities
- 4 Home Office: Health and Safety Expectations

Contact Officers: David Wallace (0118) 9322227
Tracey Mitchell (0118) 9322130

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**1.1 SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT**

The elected members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are the employers of all personnel within the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, and so have overall responsibility as the employer, for the health, safety and welfare of all those who may be affected by the Brigade's undertaking.

The Chief Fire Officer is the person appointed, to make arrangements to meet health, safety and welfare commitments on the Authority's behalf. These arrangements are fully endorsed by the Authority whose aim is to achieve the highest standards of health, safety and welfare, at all locations for its employees and visitors. To achieve these standards, the Authority will ensure that appropriate resources are made available, to make arrangements in terms of planning, organisation, implementing controls and monitoring health, safety and welfare for the Brigade.

Chairman

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Dated:

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

1.2. SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

As the Chief Fire Officer of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, the elected members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, have appointed me as the responsible person for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees of, and visitors to the Brigade.

This policy statement and the organisational arrangements which support the policy, detail how I intend to achieve a safe environment in respect of people, equipment and accommodation.

I believe that to achieve the objectives of a successful health and safety policy, everyone has a role to play, and to ensure those roles are clearly understood, I have allocated specific safety responsibilities to certain senior managers. These specific responsibilities aim to; assess and reduce risk to the lowest levels practicable, reduce personal accidents and injuries, identify occupational health issues, and comply with, as a minimum, the requirements of legislation.

To ensure the Brigade continually improves its health and safety performance, it will be viewed as an essential part of the management function. Health and safety objectives will be published and performance reviewed on a regular basis, and I will use this information, to ensure management systems are appropriate to achieve minimum loss in respect of people, property and the environment, whether it is of a moral or financial nature.

Standards of safety will be reviewed at the Brigade Management Team meetings, which are chaired by me and attended by my senior managers, and also through working with other parties such as the Health and Safety and Welfare Committee meetings. These meetings will enable me to assess the success, and identify any failings, of this policy.

To enable the successful implementation of the policy, training, briefing, motivation and co-operation of personnel at all levels within the organisation will be required. I will ensure that the appropriate resources are made available to meet these commitments. Any requirements beyond my sphere of control, will be referred to the Fire Authority for the appropriate action to be taken.

Chief Fire Officer

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Dated:

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

1.3 DIRECTORS SAFETY POLICY SUPPORT STATEMENT

We, the undersigned fully endorse the Chief Fire Officer's Safety Policy statement.

We are committed to the objectives set by this policy, and will give due consideration to the resources required for its implementation.

Director of Service Delivery

Name: O Baars

Signature:.....

Director of Support Services

Name: I Cox

Signature:.....

Director of Human Resources

Name: D Wallace

Signature:.....

Dated:

**AGENDA ITEM 16: THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSIONS
SCHEME: STATEMENT OF POLICY**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Chief Fire Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Authority of a change in the requirements relating to the publication of Local Government Pension Scheme Statements of Policy and to seek approval for an amendment to the Fire Authority's Statement of pension Policy to reflect the changed requirements.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE**: That its Statement of Pension Policy is amended as follows, to reflect its policy regarding the effects of new employment on the compensation paid to former employees in respect of their previous job:

- 1 The Fire Authority will reduce a former employees annual compensation by such amount (if any) so as to ensure that the annual rate of pay, from their new employment and the financial benefits under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 and the Pension Regulations, is no greater than the annual rate of pay they would have been entitled to had they remained in their terminated employment.
- 2 On cessation of the new employment, the Fire Authority will ensure that where a person has been awarded a credited period, their total membership does not exceed the total membership they would have achieved if they had held their terminated employment until their 65th birthday. In this event, the Fire Authority will reduce their annual compensation by the appropriate amount. If this cannot be secured by a reduction of the annual compensation, the entitlement to the compensation will cease.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the Strategic Plan.

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 The Authority has an established Statement of Pension Policy which was last amended in July 1999.
- 2 The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 amended the requirements regarding the contents of Statements of Pension Policy to include a requirement to cover policy in respect of the exercise of Authority's duties under Regulation 17 and 19 to reduce annual compensation to those in receipt of compensation when they obtain new employment that falls within the scope of the Local Government pension Scheme.
- 3 The contents of Regulations 17 and 19 have not been amended, but paragraph 26(1)(b) now requires that Statements of Pension Policy include policy in respect of Regulations 17 and 19.
- 4 Assuming that the Authority approves the proposed amendment, the amended Statement of Pension Policy will be circulated to all staff who are members of the LGPS.

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000

Contact Officer: David Wallace (0118) 932 2227

AGENDA ITEM 17:**EFFECT OF LGA 2000 ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES AS RELATED TO COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITIES****To:**

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Date:

10 July 2001

Officer Contributing:

Clerk

Treasurer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To draw the attention of the Authority to potential problems as regards the new arrangements for Councillor allowances and to suggest a solution.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE:** That the ~~DETR~~ ^{DILA} be informed that there is a compelling case that Combined Fire Authorities should be treated on the same basis as Joint Fire Authorities as regards the payment of Members' Allowances.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The cost will depend on the parameters laid down by the ~~DETR~~ but in total the cost will be of the order of £30,000 a year..

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The new Allowances regime has the potential for dissuading members of Unitaries from putting their names forward for membership of the Authority or attending meetings if they are appointed. This could detract from the quality of the Authority.

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 As from July 28 there will be a new regime for payment of members' allowances, brought in by the Local Government Act 2000 (Commencement No 6) Order 2001.
- 2 Members will in future be paid a basic allowance and where appropriate a childcare and dependant carers' allowance. Some members will receive in addition a special responsibility allowance. Councils are required to appoint independent remuneration Panels to advise on appropriate levels of payment.
- 3 In the 6 Berkshire Unitaries, the Clerk has been able to discover that basic allowances now range from £2,556 - £7,000; Special Responsibility allowances range from £3,090 -

£27,500. Some Unitaries have opted for a higher basic allowance and lower additional special responsibility allowance; others have gone the opposite way with a low basic allowance and more generous special responsibility allowances.

- 4 The Authority cannot itself pay any allowances, not even a Special Responsibility allowance to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. That will remain the position. But this will mean in future that the Authority could end up with a Chairman, who receives an allowance of just £2,556 for all his or her Councillor duties.
- 5 The position in Combined Fire Authorities' contrasts unfavourably with that of Metropolitan Joint Fire Authorities. They are regarded as Principal Councils and will retain that position. Therefore they can pay attendance and special responsibility allowances.
- 6 Representations have already been made to the DETR that Combined Fire Authorities should be treated on the same basis as Joint Fire Authorities and the Civil Servants are sympathetic. It will require a Ministerial Order to bring about such a change and the Clerk understands that this is being actively considered.
- 7 The Authority will be aware also that Police Authorities' have their own scheme of allowances covering attendance and special responsibility.

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

DETR letter of 19 February 2001 enclosing the Local Government Act 2000 (Commencement No 6) Order 2001 and Explanatory Guidance.

Contact Officer: Clive Williams (0118) 932 2284
(01491) 671631

AGENDA ITEM 18: ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2000/01

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 10 July 2001
Officer Contributing: Authority Treasurer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

In accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice: Treasury Management in Local Authorities (1996) to submit the Annual Treasury Report which sets out the actual Treasury operations for the last financial year.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to **NOTE** the Annual Treasury Report.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ACTION

The policy is to ensure the quality and status of Treasury Management of the Authority's cash flow, and its investments, the management of associated risks, and the pursuit of the optimum performance on returns consistent with those risks.

Interest received in the year totalled £175,000, compared with the original budget estimate of £110,000

By taking up the Public Works Loan Board loan in November 2000 rather than earlier in the financial year, the Authority will save interest of about 0.5% per annum on the £432,000 borrowed. This is equivalent to £2160 per annum for the 21 year period of the loan.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The main requirements of the Code are that the Authority formulates and approves:

- 1 A Treasury Policy Statement – which sets out an agreed structure for the operation of the treasury function on an ongoing basis.
- 2 An Annual Treasury Strategy Statement – which sets out the expected Treasury operation within the forthcoming financial year.
- 3 An Annual Treasury Report – which sets out the actual Treasury operations for the previous financial year.

The Treasury Policy Statement and Annual Strategy Statement for 2000/01 were approved by the Authority on 15 March 2000. The Annual Treasury Report for 2000/01 is attached as Appendix 3.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Treasury Management in Local Authorities
 - A Code of Practice
 - A Guide for Chief Officers
- 1 Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2000/01 approved by the Authority on 15 March 2000
- 2 PWLB Weekly Circulars.
- 3 2000/01 Authority Budget.

Contact Officer: Donald Illingworth 0118 932 2294

ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT

Introduction and Background

Treasury management in local government is regulated by the 1996 revision of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities (The Code). This Authority has adopted the Code and fully complies with its requirements. The primary requirement of the Code is the formulation and agreement by the full Authority of a Treasury Policy Statement which sets out Authority, Committee and Treasurer responsibilities, and delegation and reporting arrangements (this was approved by the Authority on 15 March 2000).

A requirement of the Authority's Treasury Policy Statement is the reporting to the Authority of both the expected treasury activity for the forthcoming financial year (the annual Treasury Strategy Statement) and subsequently the results of the Authority's treasury management activities in that year (this Annual Treasury Report). Treasury management in this context is defined as:

'The management of the Authority's cash flows, its borrowing and its investments, the management of the associated risks and the pursuit of the optimum performance or return consistent with those risks.'

This Annual Report covers:

- the Authority's current treasury position.
- performance measurement.
- the borrowing strategy for 2000/01.
- the borrowing out-turn for 2000/01.
- compliance with treasury limits.
- investment strategy for 2000/01.
- investment out-turn for 2000/01.

1 Current Portfolio Position

The Authority's debt position at the beginning and end of year was as follows:

		31 March 2001			31 March 2000	
		Principal		Rate	Principal	Rate
		£000	£000	%	£000	%
Fixed rate funding	PWLB	1229			797	4.31
	Market	<u>Nil</u>	1229	4.47	Nil	
Variable rate funding	PWLB	Nil			Nil	
	Market	<u>Nil</u>	<u>Nil</u>		<u>Nil</u>	
Total Debt			<u>1229</u>	<u>4.47</u>	<u>797</u>	<u>4.31</u>

2 Performance Measurement

One of the key changes in the revision of the Code in 1996 was the formal introduction of performance measurement relating to investments, debt and capital financing activities. Whilst investment performance criteria have been well developed and universally accepted, debt performance indicators continue to be a problematic area with the traditional average portfolio rate of interest acting as the main guide (as incorporated in the table in Section 1). CIPFA have however issued draft indicators, although accompanied by a cautionary note. In effect they represent a potential range of statistics, which will not give, a definitive set of indicators, but will rather aid comparatives with neighbouring authorities treasury structures.

3 The Strategy for 2000/01

The treasury strategy for 2000/01 was based on the market view that world economic growth was gaining in momentum after the downturn in 1998 caused by financial crises in Russia, Japan and the Far East. This led to an expectation that interest rates around the world would be on a modest rising trend in order to contain growing inflationary pressures while longer term fixed borrowing interest rates continued running at historically low levels.

The UK itself recovered quickly from the near recession of the last half of 1999 and produced a remarkable combination of unemployment falling to very low levels, above trend GDP growth and inflation running comfortably below the MPC target of 2.5%. While some quarters expected the UK to be increasingly affected by European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), leading to further convergence of UK interest rates with Euro rates (ie short-term rates fall and longer-term rates rise), the level of political opposition to UK entry into the Euro meant such actual pressures were minimal.

The effect on interest rates for the UK, was therefore expected to be as follows:-

Shorter-term interest rates – The “average” City view anticipated that the robust outlook for growth in 2000 would mean that base rate would have to rise from 6.0% to 6.25% and possibly even to 6.5%. Base rate in fact was kept unchanged at 6.0% all year until the first cut to 5.75% in February 2001.

Longer-term interest rates – The longer-term fixed interest rates reached their bottom in 1999/00 so a modest rise was expected during 1999/2000. Fixed interest rates were expected to remain cheaper than short-dated and variable rates although the margin should have closed by the year-end.

The adopted Treasury Strategy – The agreed strategy put to the Authority based upon the above forecast was that:

- a Against the background of EMU and the risks involved with its success, caution be adopted with the 2000/2001 treasury operations. The Treasurer would monitor the interest rate market and adopt a pragmatic approach to any changing circumstances, reporting any decisions to the Authority at the next available opportunity.

The adopted Treasury Strategy continued

b In making borrowing decisions judgements would be exercised on the following options :

- that the expectation for falling base rates in the future was so strong that the drawing of cheaper longer term funding in the near term could eventually entail longer term costs and the Authority's view was that maintaining a short term position would lead to a cheaper, low risk long term portfolio;

or

- that the risks intrinsic in the shorter term variable rates were such, when compared to historically low long term funding, that the Council would maintain a stable, longer term portfolio by drawing longer term fixed rate funding.

4 Out-turn for 2000/01

The MPC was dominated by considerations at the start of the year whether base rate should go up from 6.0% in order to cool the economy down from an unsustainably high rate of growth. However, as the year progressed, growth declined and in January, the concern switched to current rates due to a sharp slowdown in the US economy which precipitated an emergency 0.5% cut in the Fed. rate on 3 January. This was followed by 2 further cuts of 0.5% in January and March in order to head off a hard landing for the US economy. However, the UK economy was in a much stronger position than the US economy as the manufacturing sector was still in low growth, not recession, and consumer confidence was at records levels as reflected in robust consumer spending and borrowing. In addition the Government had a planned programme of increasing expenditure over the next few years, which would generate £16bn deficit in 2003/04. The downside potential for base rate in the UK was therefore very limited compared to that for the short-term interest rate in the US (the Fed rate).

Demand for long gilts was driven by the Minimum Funding Requirement and Equitable Life needing to switch £2.5bn from equities into gilts on becoming a closed fund in Q1 2001. However, the preliminary Myners report in November, and the final report in March, eased pressure on buying long gilts by recommending abolition of the MFR. The Chancellor confirmed acceptance of this recommendation in the March Budget statement. The record surplus on the Government's budget plus the bonanza from mobile licence sales in June, caused a reduction in gilt issuance. However, the Treasury issued new 2032 gilt to relieve pressure on long gilt yields in May and added to it further during the year. Long gilt yields therefore did not go as low as in 1999/2000 and the lower quota 20-25 year interest rate bottomed at 4.625%.

The movement in interest rates for the year is appended.

Treasury Borrowing

Borrowed from	Date	Amount £000	Period Years	Interest Rate %
Public Works Loan Board	23.11.00	432	21	4.75

Debt Performance – As highlighted in Section 1 above, the average debt portfolio rate has moved over the course of a year from 4.31% to 4.47%. The approach during the year was:

To draw longer term fixed debt to take advantage of low long-term rates and reduce exposure to higher short-term interest rates.

On 2 October 2000, the Public Loan Works Board changed the calculation of all rates by adding one eighth of a percentage point to the rounding margin in order to ensure that it could comply with the “no loss” provisions of the National Loans Act 1968 for its operation in lending to local authorities. This change restored rates to the level, which prevailed until a reduction made in 1996.

It also split the 15-25 year band into 15-20 and 20-25 bands. This had the effect of reducing the rate applicable to the 20-25 year loans, as they were based on the 20 year gilt yield, whereas the 15-25 year band had been based on the 15 year gilt yield which was at a higher yield than the 20 year gilt.

Over 25 year maturity loans on the Public Works Loan Board lower interest rate band varied from 4.625% to 5.25% during the financial year. The Authority achieved its 2000/01 borrowing requirement at what turned out to be the next to the lowest offered rate in the year.

5 Compliance with Treasury Limits

During the financial year the Authority operated within limits set out in the Authority’s Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Strategy Statement.

6 Investments Strategy for 2000/01

Internally Managed Investments – The Authority manages its investments in-house and invests within the institutions listed in the Authority’s approved lending list.

The Royal Berkshire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 provides that contributions from the constituent authorities shall be of such amount as are at all times sufficient to enable the financial obligations of the Authority to be met. The contributions are payable by 12 equal monthly instalments on the first working day of each month. This leads to a positive cash flow situation.

Advantage is taken to invest any monies surplus to immediate requirements in the short-term money market. The maximum period for investment does not normally extend for more than 4 weeks and therefore the range of periods used is generally from overnight to 4 weeks. The periods chosen generally are dependent on the Authority’s cash flows and the interest rates on offer. Any end of day balance on the Authority’s Bank Account earns interest in accordance with their Business Premium Account terms.

Investments Out-turn for 2000/01 – Detailed below is the result of the investment strategy undertaken by the Authority.

	Average Investment	Rate of Return (gross of fees)	Rate of Return (net of fees)	Benchmark Return*
Internally Managed	£1,346,575	5.76 %	5.76 %	5.67%

During the year there has also been an average balance of £1,329,863 in the Abbey National Business Reserve Account with an average rate of return of 6.08%. At 31 March the balance stood at £1,100,000.

- The benchmark is taken to be the Local Authority 7 Day Return Index.

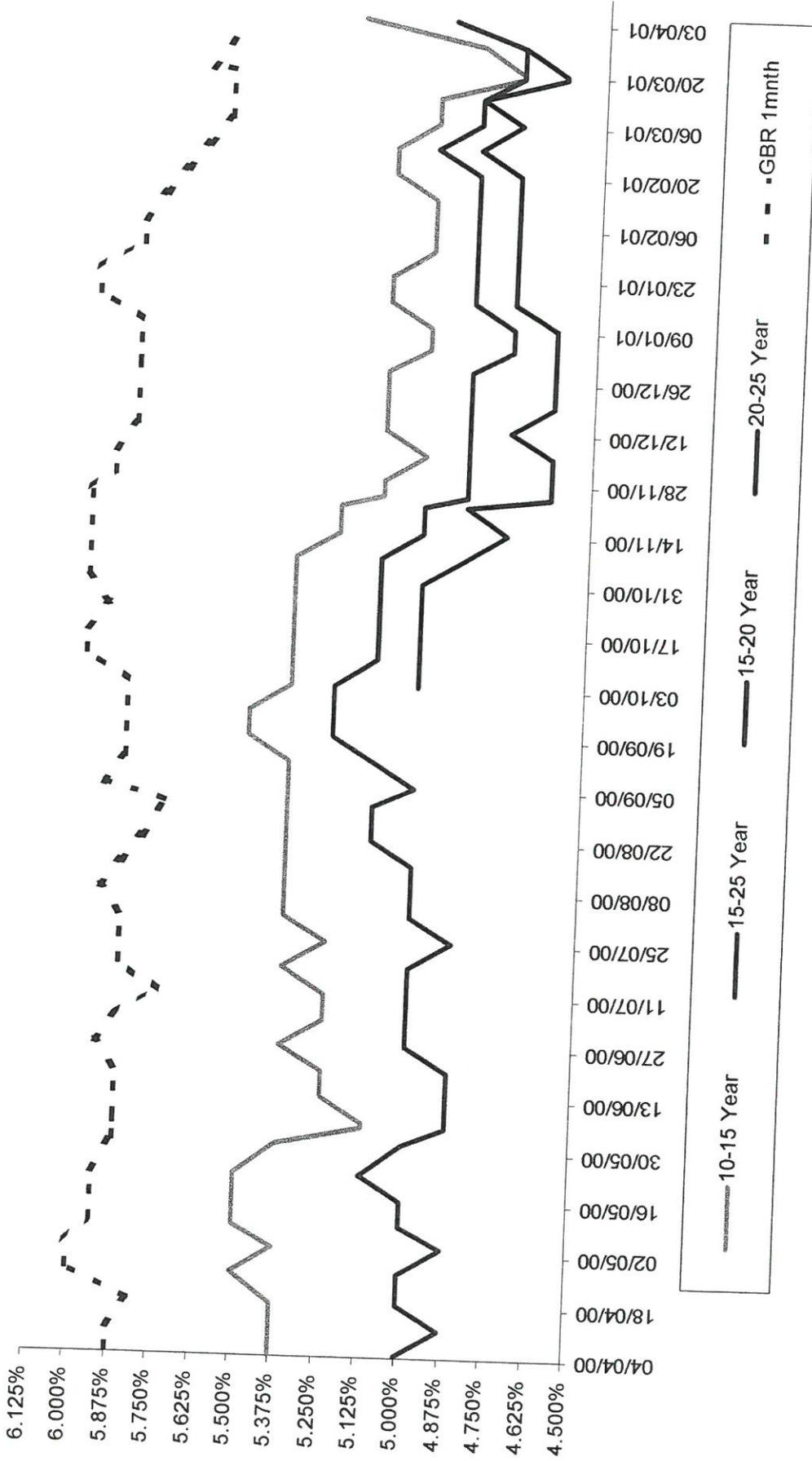
The following table shows the volume of activity in 2000/01:

Number of Investments made	
Maximum total invested at any one time	£2,000,000
Maximum invested in a single institution	£1,400,000
Interest earned	
• Short term investments	£77,000
• Barclays Business Premium Account	£17,000
• Abbey National Business Reserve A/C	£81,000

7 Treasury Consultancy Service

During the year the Authority used the Treasury Consultancy Service provided by Sector Treasury Services Limited to advise on treasury management issues.

PWLB Lower Rate 2000/01



AGENDA ITEM 19:**COST OF CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS****To:****Royal Berkshire Fire Authority****Date:****10 July 2001****Officer Contributing:****Treasurer**

Chief Fire Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Authority of the revised costs of preparing for industrial action.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to NOTE the report.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated costs of preparing for industrial action remain at £80,000, but reductions in postage costs will be added to the contingency budget.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the strategic plan.

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 The costs of preparing for industrial action were presented to the Extraordinary Fire Authority on 13th June 2001.
- 2 Further to a member query, the postage costs incurred were re-examined. They are unlikely to exceed £3,000.
- 3 The remaining £12,000 will be added to the contingency budget until the bill is received from the military.
- 4 If the contingency budget is then no longer required, the funds can be released to re-instate some of the budget cuts made on 13th June, such as light vehicles or 'white goods'.

F BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Agenda and Minutes, Extraordinary Fire Authority: 13 June 2001

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