

# 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: 6 March 2002

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 Wednesday 13 March 2002 at the Frank Hutchings Memorial Hall, Bradley Moore Square, Harts Hill Road, Thatcham commencing at 6.30pm.**

The Memorial Hall is situated in Bradley Moore Square which is accessed via the A4/Floral Way and Harts Hill Road, Thatcham. A map showing the venue is reproduced overleaf.

For Members travelling from the east of the County it is advisable to use the M4 Motorway, leave at Junction 12 and join the A4 signposted Newbury. Follow the A4 through Woolhampton and after approximately 3 miles you will approach the first of three roundabouts. Continue on the A4 for the first two roundabouts and at the third turn right into Floral Way. At the next roundabout turn left into Harts Hill Road and then almost immediately right into Bradley Moore Square (The Mill House Restaurant will be on your right) The Memorial Hall is located at the far end where adequate parking facilities are available.

As you enter the Memorial Hall the Committee Room is located on the right hand side of the entrance lobby and Hall 2 a little further along the entrance corridor on the right. Hall 1 is situated on the left hand side of the entrance lobby just past the public telephone. Cloakroom facilities are to be found through the door at the end of the entrance lobby.

If any Member will be travelling to Thatcham by train please let me know if you will require transport from Thatcham Station, as it is quite some distance from the venue for the meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black 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



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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:** **Wednesday 13 March 2002 at 6.30pm**

**VENUE:** **Frank Hutchings Memorial Hall, Bradley Moore Square, Harts Hill Road, Thatcham, Berkshire**

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## 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.

D C H Williams  
Clerk to the Authority

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**To: MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

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, A Gregory, J P Green, E E Herbert, P Hingley, Mrs V Howes O E Jeffery, D W Liddiard, P Love, C Maskell, T D McCann, D McCarthy, D Morgan, T Mills, J E R Mole, Mrs J Orton, M Pritchett, A J Ross, D Wilson

**Briefing Meetings:**

Conservative Group: 5.30pm – Hall 2  
Labour Group: 5.30pm – Hall 1 – screened off area  
Liberal Democrat Group: 5.30pm – Committee Room

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**For Further Information regarding this meeting, please contact:**

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

**E-Mail: [wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk)**



**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2002**



**AGENDA**

**PART I AGENDA**

**PAGE NO.**

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	<i>To note that the Annual Fire Authority meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19 June 2002 in the Council Chamber, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead commencing at 6.30pm.</i>	
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**AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL, SHUTE END, WOKINGHAM ON WEDNESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2001 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 9.40PM.**

**Present:** J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman),  
T Bucknell, T P Dredge, R A Flood, E L Glasson,  
John P Green, A Gregory, P Hingley, O E Jeffery,  
D W Liddiard, C Maskell, T D McCann, T Mills,  
J E R Mole, M Pritchett, A J Ross, D Wilson

**Apologies:** Mrs C Bateson, E E Herbert, P Love, D Morgan, Mrs J Orton

*(Councillor J C G Brooks in the Chair)*

**4.01/01 COUNCILLOR JOHN CONNOLLY**

The Chairman reported with regret the untimely death in November of Councillor John Connolly a former Member and Leader of the Labour Group on the Fire Authority. Members stood in silent tribute in memory of Councillor Connolly.

**4.02/01 MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

It was reported (Agenda item 2 – not reproduced) that Councillor P Love had replaced Councillor D Parker as one of the Fire Authority representatives from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

**NOTED**

**4.03/01 MINUTES: 19 SEPTEMBER 2001**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 19 September 2001, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**4.04/01 PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 4 – not reproduced) of the Performance Review and Audit Panel, Personnel Committee and Community Safety Panel meetings that had taken place since the last meeting in September 2001. Members were advised



that copies of the Part I Minutes were available on request from the Committee Administrator (0118) 932 2288)

**NOTED**

**4.05/01 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman had nothing further to report.

**4.06/01 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.

**4.07/01 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

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

**4.08/01 NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**4.09/01 DISTRICT AUDIT – MANAGEMENT LETTER TO MEMBERS**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 9 – not reproduced) of the receipt of the District Auditor's Management Letter to Members in respect of the Audit for the financial year 2000/2001. Members were reminded that the District Auditor had completed the Audit of the Accounts for 2000/2001, which had been approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting in September 2001.

On the invitation of the Chairman, Members received a presentation from Mr Stephen Taylor, District Auditor, and Mr Hassan Rohimun, Audit Manager, on the contents of the Management Letter to Members, presented as Appendix 1 (not reproduced). Following the presentation Members were given the opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification on the Management Letter.

In noting that an unqualified Audit opinion on the Annual Accounts for 2000/2001 would be issued by the District Auditor, Members were advised that as part of the 2000/2001 Audit, a review of Fire Appliance Procurement and Commissioning had



been undertaken and a report on their findings is likely to be issued by District Audit in December.

Mr Taylor wished to place on record his thanks for all the help and support that he had received from Officers. In thanking Mr Taylor and Mr Rohimun for their attendance at the meeting and for a very full and informative presentation the Chairman expressed his pleasure at the contents of the letter, which reflected well on both the Members and Officers of the Brigade. He therefore wished to place on record his thanks to the Chief Fire Officer, and his Senior Management, Mr D Illingworth (Authority Treasurer), Mr A Vallance (Head of Financial Services) and the staff in the Authority's Accounts Office for all their hard work in achieving a very positive outcome.

## **NOTED**

### **4.10/01 BUDGET 2002/2003**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 10 – not reproduced) to the 2002/2003 Budget and Capital Programme so that notice of the estimates of net expenditure for 2002/2003 could be given to the Constituent Authorities. The Chairman advised Members that the Budget Working Party had met prior to this meeting and agreed to endorse the 2002/2003 Budget and Capital Programme as set out in the report and refer it to the Authority with a recommendation that it be approved.

On the invitation of the Chairman, the Authority Treasurer took Members through the report and drew their attention to the following Annex/Appendices (not reproduced):

- Annex 1: Minutes of Budget Working Party – Tuesday 4 December 2001
- Appendix A: Budget Recommendations 2002/2003 compared with Overall Budget Options set by the Fire Authority and the added option Requested by the Working Party
- Appendix B: Budget 2002/2003 before the incorporation of Growth Bids and Potential Savings compared with Budget 2002/2002
- Appendix C: Fire Service Spending compared with Standard Spending Assessment (SSA)
- Appendix D: Expenditure per Head of Population
- Appendix E: Revenue Growth Bids
- Appendix F: Savings/Additional Income
- Appendix G: Capital Bids
- Appendix H: Budget 2002/2003

The Treasurer drew Members attention to Appendix H which indicated that the proposed 2002/2003 spend in excess of SSA was 8.50% compared with 6.91% in 2001/2002. Therefore, based on Appendix A, the Fire Authority's 2002/2003 Budget was £23, 890,000, an increase of 6.56% over the 2001/2002 Budget. If Members were minded to approve the Budget then it would allow for all Category 1 Growth Bids identified in Appendix E (not reproduced) plus £46,000 of Category 2 Bids.



The Vice-Chairman, in his capacity as Chairman of the Working Party, summarised the Working Party's deliberations on the 2002/2003 Budget and drew Members' attention

to Note 8 of Appendix A on page 14 of the report which set out the Chief Fire Officer's recommendations for the allocation of the £46,000 within the Category 2 Bids. Whilst this Budget would undoubtedly place pressure on the Unitary Authorities he advised Members that the Budget Working Party had agreed that the level of increase in the 2002/2003 net expenditure would not be a recurring issue and that they would not expect a Budget to be produced next year without some savings to redress the balance. This pressure could however be eased in future years if the Fire Authority became a Precepting Authority in its own right.

In respect of the £46,000 for Category 2 Bids the Chief Fire Officer reported that the sum of £13,000 for Hydrant repair and maintenance may not be necessary due to emerging factors. In respect of this Councillor Jeffery indicated that he would like to see SD4 (Positive Pressure Ventilation) included in the Budget as soon as possible. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that if there were sufficient flexibility within the £46,000 he would be delighted to bring SD4 forward in the 2002/2003 Budget. He also advised Members that if they were minded to approve the 2002/2003 Budget as presented it would enable the Brigade to deliver a very sound and positive service to the people of Berkshire.

In response to a further question concerning the reasons why no funding had been allocated under the Category 1 Bids HR6 (Retained Pensions) and HR7 (Retained Equal Pay) the Authority Treasurer advised that currently it was not possible to confirm whether these areas of expenditure would impact on the 2002/2003 Budget, as they were both subject to ongoing Employment Tribunal Hearings. In the event of the situation changing it would be necessary for the allocation of funding to be reviewed and a report presented to Members seeking the necessary approval to amend the Budget.

Members' attention was drawn to the proposed Capital Budget presented in Appendix G (not reproduced). The Treasurer reported that the DTLR had notified the Authority that they have allocated Basic Credit Allowance (BCA) of £597,000 compared with £598,000 in 2001/2002. Vehicles costing £399,000 had been identified for operational leasing. This would enable Category 1 schemes to go ahead. The shortfall of £28,000 between this and the currently notified BCA will be covered by an additional BCA allocation or by adjustment of the Programme.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the Capital Bids identified under Category 1, totalling £1,024,200 were those which he and the Directors felt should be encompassed in this year's Capital Budget. He also advised that although the requirements under SS12 (E-Compliance requirements) are likely to be changed it would be necessary for the Bid to be retained for the time being until the appropriate legislation is amended and confirmation of its non-requirement is received. In the event that confirmation is forthcoming this will give him and the Directors some flexibility in maintaining the Capital Budget.



In response to a request from Councillor Gregory for justification on the provision of the Rescue Boat, the Chairman indicated that it would be more prudent if this was

raised and discussed in more detail under Agenda item 15 (Proposed Water Safety Strategy).

The Chairman in thanking the Chief Fire Officer and Members for their contribution to the debate proposed that the Fire Authority's Revenue and Capital Budget for 2002/2003 as presented by approved. The proposal having been seconded was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- 1. The Capital Programme as set out in Appendix G (not reproduced) and its indicative method of funding as set out in the report (not reproduced) be approved.**
- 2. The estimate of net expenditure of the Fire Authority be £23,890,000 and that the Constituent Authorities be notified accordingly.**

**4.11/01 PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SENSE**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 23 – not reproduced) supported by a presentation from Leading Fire-Fighter Jesse James from Bracknell Fire Station on the current position of the Partnership for Common Sense process. The presentation explained the background and purpose of the initiative, what has been achieved to date and proposals for the future.

In August 2001 representatives from each of the Workshops held in late March 2001 established a Steering Group, known as the Design Team. Having considered the key themes that had emerged from each Workshop they proposed that a Charter of Principles should be adopted by the Brigade.

To achieve this the Design Team proposed that a wider group of staff who had participated in the Workshops should convene as a Sponsorship Team to discuss and produce a Charter. At its meetings on 18/19 September the Sponsorship Team finalised the Charter of Principles and a copy was presented as Appendix A (not reproduced).

In October 2001 the Authority's Spokespersons and Deputy Spokespersons met with the two Consultants to discuss progress to date of the Partnership for Common Sense.

The Chairman on behalf of the Authority thanked LF James for attending the meeting and complimented him on the style and content of his presentation. He also took the opportunity of encouraging Members to visit Fire Stations.



**NOTED****4.12/01 BUDGET MONITORING**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 11 – not reproduced) of the Revenue and Capital expenditure against Budgets up to 31 October 2001 and presented in Appendices A and B (not reproduced) and were asked to approve a proposal that £100,000 of this year's Capital programme is vired from Enhanced Rescue Equipment to Planned Maintenance.

The reason for this request is that it will now not be possible to spend the funding allocated to Enhanced Rescue Equipment as part of the Special Appliances Review this year.

It was also reported that the Authority has now received Supplementary Credit Approval of £140,000 to fund the provision of facilities for women at Fire Stations, which is £20,000 more than the original Budget prediction.

Members were also advised that the Revenue Budget was underspent by £272,000 as at the end of October 2001 which included an underspend on the Pensions Budget of £148,000. However, budgetary pressures such as Recruit Training and the Fire-Fighters pay award will ensure that the Budget is fully spent by the end of the financial year.

**RESOLVED: That £100,000 of this year's Capital Programme be vired from Enhanced Rescue Equipment to Planned Maintenance.**

*(Note: At this point the Chairman left the meeting. The Vice-Chairman therefore took over as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting – Councillor B J S Patman in the Chair)*

**4.13/01 COMBINATION OF BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN, ANNUAL PLAN AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 12 – not reproduced) to the combination, for 2002/2003, of the Annual Plan arising from the Strategic Plan, the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and the Community Safety Plan and that the approval of the respective Plans be delegated to the Performance Review and Audit Panel and Community Safety Panel.

Members were advised that as many of the elements of each of these plans are interlinked, the Chief Fire Officer considers that it is now pertinent to produce a single, combined Plan. Although this will be larger than any single, individual Plan, the need to avoid duplication will result in a reduction in the overall production costs. The Plan would also act as a single point of information of intent for 2002/2003, and on performance against Best Value for 2001/2002, for all stakeholders in the Service.



If Members were minded to approve the production of a Combined Plan and carry forward the principle into subsequent years, the intention will be to produce a five year Strategic Plan for 2007-2011 at the appropriate time.

The timescale for a Combined Plan is set by statutory requirements of the BVPP and to achieve such a timescale it is intended that meetings of the Performance Review and Audit Panel and Community Safety Panel be called on Monday 21 January to consider the draft combined Plan. The approved Plan will then be presented to the Fire Authority meeting in March 2002 for Members information, prior to its distribution.

**RESOLVED: That:**

1. **A combined Plan be produced for 2002/2003, comprising the Annual Plan elements from the Authority's Strategic Plan for 2001-2006, together with the Best Value Performance Plan and Community Safety Plan for 2002/2003.**
2. **The Performance Review and Audit Panel and Community Safety Panel be authorised to approve the combined Plan at their meetings on Monday 21 January 2002.**

**4.14/01 FIRE-FIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEME**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 13 – not reproduced) of an update of the study to identify the future possible costs to the Authority of the Fire-Fighters' Pension Scheme. In addition approval was sought to a proposal that the Authority Treasurer be authorised to appoint a firm of Actuaries to provide a valuation of the liabilities of the scheme for inclusion in the Annual Accounts at an estimated cost of between £4,000 and £6,000. This action will enable the Authority to conform with the new Financial Reporting Standard (FRS 17).

**RESOLVED: That the Authority Treasurer be authorised to appoint a firm of Actuaries to provide a valuation of the liabilities of the scheme for inclusion in the Annual Accounts.**

**4.15/01 PROPERTY STRATEGY AND PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Authority was requested (Agenda item 14 – not reproduced) to consider and approve the principles of the proposed Property Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan (PAMP) as endorsed by the Performance Review and Audit Panel (PRAP) at its meeting on Monday 3 December 2001.

Members were advised that the principles of PAMP are based on the findings of the District Auditor's report of March 2001, which concluded that the Authority was under-investing in its property portfolio and recommended that a long-term approach



should be established through the development of an Asset Management Plan based on guidance from the DETR (now the DTLR).

To assist in the formulation of a Property Strategy and Plan a report was commissioned from Vail Williams, a Property Management Agency. The report, a

copy of which was presented as Appendix A (not reproduced) was used in the development of the Strategy and Plan. Members attention was also drawn to paragraph 4 of the report (not reproduced) which summarised the key points made in the report presented to PRAP.

PAMP must incorporate capital, revenue and composite issues and each of the Authority's twenty-five premises will have its own programme incorporating the necessary capital investment and maintenance (revenue) schedules to maintain the asset. A Property Maintenance Strategy is being developed and a copy was presented as Appendix C (not reproduced), which determines the prioritisation of maintenance works. In noting the cost implications as set out in paragraph of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that the adoption of the Plan, with quantitative and qualitative measures, will strengthen the Authority's strategic management process.

**RESOLVED: That the principles of the proposed Property Strategy and Property Asset Management Plan be approved.**

#### **4.16/01 PROPOSED WATER SAFETY STRATEGY**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 15 – not reproduced) to a proposed Water Safety Strategy, produced by an Officer Working Group in response to a decision by the Fire Authority at its meeting in December 2000, which includes the reinstatement of the Fire Rescue Boat, on a phased basis, including the required training and equipment purchase.

To implement the Authority's decision a Water Safety Working Party (formerly known as the Boat Working Party) was established to undertake the necessary detailed work. In producing the strategy the Working Party not only recognised the reality of having one boat and the difficulties posed by geography of the area to be covered, resulting in extended attendance times but also the public expectation and moral pressure placed on the first crews on scene to take life saving action.

The strategy, which proposed a three-phased approach to dealing with water rescues was summarised in paragraph 4 of the report (not reproduced). The Chief Fire Officer is of the opinion that the proposed Water Safety Strategy appears to be the only safe way of implementing the Fire Authority's decision of December 2000.

The training of all operational personnel, Officers and the specialist crew has been underway for some months and implementation of the strategy is, subject to Fire Authority approval, dependent upon the production of supporting policy documentation, and the purchase and issue of the necessary equipment.



With the exception of the boat, all the equipment and training required to implement the strategy can be provided, subject to Member approval, from the funding provided by the Authority within the current financial year. Members viewed a video showing various types of water rescue using lines and other methods.

Councillor Gregory again expressed his concern over the need for a boat and having explained his reasons proposed that any decision on the purchase of the boat be deferred and that the Chief Fire Officer be asked to present a report listing the boats usage, location and anticipated attendance times together with an investigation into the feasibility of using alternative types of boats by utilising those owned by external agencies such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency etc. The proposal having been seconded was put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- 1. With the exception of Phase 3 the proposed Water Safety Strategy as outlined in the report be adopted in principle.**
- 2. The funding within the current Budget provision for the Fire Rescue Boat, to implement the proposed Water Safety Strategy be approved.**
- 3. Any decision on the purchase of the boat be deferred and that the Chief Fire Officer be asked to present a report, to the Fire Authority in March 2002, listing the boat's usage, location and anticipated attendance times together with an investigation into the feasibility of using alternative types of boats by utilising those owned by external agencies such as Thames Water and the Environment Agency etc.**

**4.17/01           INSTALLATION OF SMOKE DETECTORS IN BEDROOMS  
AND FIRE SUPPRESSING SPRINKLER SYSTEMS FOR  
DOMESTIC BUILDINGS**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 16 – not reproduced) of the present position regarding the 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 homes within a single development project. In addition Members were asked to approve a proposal that a further approach be made to those Unitary Authorities who have not yet responded.

In noting the Authority's decision from its meeting in March 2001 as set out in paragraph 1 of the report (not reproduced), Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 2 of the report (not reproduced) which summarised the responses received from the six Unitary Authorities. With the approval of the Chairman, the Clerk reported on the response received from Bracknell Forest Borough Council who supported the proposal to amend the Building Regulations.



Members were reminded that on 6 September 2001 the DTLR issued guidance seeking to encourage further the installation of smoke alarms in local authority housing.

**RESOLVED: That having regard to the Government's advice on smoke alarms issued in relation to Local Authority housing, a further approach be made to the Unitary Councils, who have not yet responded, to secure their support for the installation of smoke detectors in bedrooms and fire suppressing sprinkler systems in domestic buildings.**

**4.18/01 IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL APPLIANCE BEST VALUE REVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 17 – not reproduced) of progress towards the implementation of the Best Value Review of Special Appliances.

In noting the contents of the report Members were advised that since the last Authority meeting in September further progress is being made in partnership with the Fire Brigade's Union (FBU) in other areas linked to the outcomes of the Fire Cover Reviews that are now underway. The Management/FBU Special Appliance Review Working Group had met on 4 December 2001 to review progress and it was understood that the items raised during the meeting were considered by the FBU Brigade Committee at its meeting on 12 December 2001.

**NOTED**

**4.19/01 NEW YORK FIRE-FIGHTERS 9-11 APPEAL**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 18 – not reproduced) of the fund raising and associated activities undertaken by members of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service which had raised a total of £89,937.40 for the New York Fire-Fighters Appeal. The total was likely to increase as two further events had been planned and would be taking place in the very near future.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that no response has yet been received to the invitation for New York Fire-Fighters to visit the Brigade to receive a presentation cheque. If no response is forthcoming it was his intention to contact the American Embassy with a view to arranging an alternative presentation ceremony.

The Chairman referred to the tremendous effort and wished to place on record his very sincere and personal thanks to all those staff involved in raising the magnificent sum of nearly £90,000.

**NOTED**



**4.20/01           TRANSFER OF REDUNDANT L4P FIRE APPLIANCE TO THE  
FIRE CADET UNIT AT STATION 15 CROWTHORNE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 19 – not reproduced) of the imminent transfer of the redundant L4P fire appliance to the Fire Cadet Unit at Station 15, Crowthorne which had been rendered surplus to the Brigade's requirements following the purchase of a new six wheel-drive Pinzgauer pump (L6P). The Fire Cadet Unit

will benefit from the use of the redundant vehicle until such time as its continued use is not longer viable on the grounds of Health and Safety etc.

**NOTED****4.21/01           PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF SLOUGH FIRE STATION  
PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 20 – not reproduced) of progress on the proposal to redevelop Slough Fire Station as agreed at the Fire Authority meeting in September 2001 at no cost to the Authority.

Since that time negotiations between the developer and a Housing Association owning adjacent land have broken down. The developer has agreed however to re-contact Officers if and when an alternative proposal for the redevelopment of Slough Fire Station becomes a viable option in the future. Should this become reality then a report will be presented to a future Fire Authority meeting.

**NOTED****4.22/01           INTEGRATED PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 21 – not reproduced), supported by a visual presentation, on the launch of the Integrated Personal Development System produced in accordance with the guidance contained in Fire Service Circulars 15/97 and 8/99 on competence based training and personal development in the Fire Service.

Following the visual presentation Members were given the opportunity to ask questions. In noting the contents of the report which detailed the main areas of activity and the development of 'role maps', Members were advised that the system had been endorsed by the Fire Brigades' Union at its Annual Conference in May. The Chairman, of behalf of Members, thanked Steve Sheikh, Brigade Training Officer, for his very full and informative presentation.

**NOTED****4.23/01           REPORT ON SONNING FIRE STATION**



The Authority was advised (Agenda item 22 – not reproduced) of the current situation regarding the future of Sonning Fire Station, leased by the Authority from the Sonning Fire Station Volunteer Trust, which expires in 2002.

The Fire Station at Sonning requires at least £25,000 of remedial work in the coming year, the majority of which concerns the appliance bay floor and hardstanding areas. Members attention was drawn to paragraph 3 of the report (not reproduced) which

summarised the two factors that will determine the prioritisation of the works. Professional advice has been obtained and the recommendation to the Authority is that the lease is renewed on a long-term basis, up to 99 years, with the option to purchase. This maintains the Authority's options pending the outcome of the emergency cover review.

The Trust has been kept informed of developments and a Partnership Board meeting between all interested parties is scheduled to take place in February 2002. Once plans have been developed and timescales known it is the Brigade's intention to liaise with Wokingham District and Sonning Parish Councils. Dependant on the outcome it may be necessary to obtain planning permission.

**NOTED**

**4.24/01 HALF YEARLY REPORT FOR MEDICAL RETIREMENTS, WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND SICKNESS ABSENCES**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 24 – not reproduced) of the number of medical retirements, workplace accidents and sickness absences during the period 1 April to 30 September 2001.

Absences due to sickness across the Station based employees, Control staff, Officers, including day-duty uniformed employees and non-uniformed personnel totalled 3600 duty days an increase of 435 over the preceding six months. Workplace accidents contributed 260 duty days lost an increase of 121 days when compared with the last reported period.

**NOTED**

**4.25/01 FIRES, INCIDENTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 25 – not reproduced) which summarised some of the notable incidents attended, together with letters of appreciation received, by the Brigade during the period 1 October to 1 November 2001. A summary of the incidents attended by the Brigade in December 2001 was tabled at the meeting (not reproduced).

**NOTED**



**4.26/01 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 March 2002 at the Frank Hutchings Memorial Hall, Bradley Moore Square, Thatcham commencing at 6.30pm.

**4.27/01 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:

	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Paragraph</b>
28	Part II Minutes – Wednesday 19 September 2001	8 & 9
29	Part II Minutes of Sub-Groups	1, 8 & 9

*(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Fire Authority meeting held on Wednesday 19 December 2001)*

**4.28/01 PART II MINUTES: 19 SEPTEMBER 2001**

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 19 September 2001 were received and approved as a correct record.

**4.29/01 PART II MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS**

The Part II Minutes of Sub-Groups were received and noted.



**AGENDA ITEM 3:****PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 13 March 2002  
**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 December 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 December 2001:

<b>Personnel Committee:</b>	Tuesday 19 February 2002
<b>Performance Review and Audit Panel</b>	Meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday 20 March 2002
<b>Urgency Committee</b>	Monday 25 February 2002
<b>Fire Liaison Group</b>	Monday 25 February 2002
<b>Community Safety Panel</b>	Meeting scheduled to take place on Monday 29 April 2002

2 Copies of the Part I Minutes (if available) can be obtained from David Weller on (0118) 932 2288) – E-Mail: [wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk)

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Agenda's and Minutes for the above mentioned meetings

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



**AGENDA ITEM 8:****DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE FIRE  
AUTHORITY – SEPTEMBER 2002 TO JUNE 2003**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 13 March 2002  
**Officer Contributing:** Clerk and Monitoring Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To agree on dates for future meetings of the Fire Authority for the period September 2002 to June 2003.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to consider the report and **RESOLVE:** That future Fire Authority meetings be held on the following dates in 2002/2003, commencing at 6.30pm, and, subject to confirmation, at the venues shown:

Wednesday 11 September 2002 at Bracknell Forest Borough Council (Confirmed)  
 Wednesday 18 December 2002 - Budget Meeting at West Berkshire Council (Confirmed)  
 Wednesday 12 March 2003 at Wokingham District Council (Confirmed)  
 Wednesday 25 June 2003 - Annual Meeting at Thatcham (To be confirmed)

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 It will be necessary to agree on dates for meetings of the Fire Authority in 2002/2003 and to assist Members the following dates are suggested, all commencing at 6.30pm:

Wednesday 11 September 2002  
 Wednesday 18 December 2002 - Budget Meeting  
 Wednesday 12 March 2003  
 Wednesday 25 June 2003 - Annual Meeting

- 2 Members are therefore asked to consider the above dates and Resolve accordingly. In addition the Unitary Authorities will be asked to include the dates in their Meeting Diaries.

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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



**AGENDA ITEM 9: MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

To Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
 Date 13 March 2002  
 Officer Contributing Clerk and Monitoring Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise the Authority that the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2001 came into effect on 27 November 2001; and to advise the Authority of the effects of the Code, which is now mandatory.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is asked to **RESOLVE**: That the Model Code of Conduct be adopted with the effect that:-

- a Within 2 months (13 May) each Member of the Authority must sign a written undertaking to observe the provisions of the Code, failing which the Member shall cease to be a Member of the Authority.
- b Within 28 days (10 April) each member of the Authority must register with the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, any financial or other interests as laid down in the Code and must also advise the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, in writing, within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality in excess of £25 in relation to his or her position as a member of the Authority.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

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 Clerk assumes that all Members of the Authority will have already received a copy of the Code of Conduct from their Constituent Unitary Authority. If not, on request, the Clerk will be happy to arrange for a copy to be supplied.
- 2 Assuming the Authority adopts the Code, each Member of the Authority must sign up to it within 2 months or cease to be a Member. The Clerk will have copies of the relevant undertaking available at the meeting. In the case of Members unable to attend this meeting, they will have the option of either signing the Undertaking before the Monitoring Officer of the Constituent Council or making special arrangements to meet the Clerk at a mutually convenient time and location.



- 3 As from the date of adoption, Members also have 28 days in which to register with the Clerk any financial or other interests, as laid down in Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Code. If members have already made such a declaration to their Constituent's Authority Monitoring Officer, it will be sufficient to send the Clerk a copy.
- 4 Finally, if Members receive any gift or hospitality in excess of £25 relating to their position on the Authority, they must notify the Clerk in writing within 28 days.

#### **E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2001.

**Contact Officer:** Clive Williams (0118) 932 2284



**AGENDA ITEM 10: STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

To Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
Date 13 March 2002  
Officer Contributing Clerk

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report receipt of Guidance from the Standards Board of England to (inter alia) combined fire authorities on the implementation of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is asked to **REVIEW** its decision of 13 December 2000 to constitute a Standards Committee of 7, with 4 independent Members and **RESOLVE** accordingly.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

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 On 13 December 2000, after reviewing practice in the Constituents, the Authority agreed terms of reference for a Standards Committee and resolved that this should comprise 7 members of whom 4 should be independent and 3 members of the Authority.
- 2 Since that date the Standards Board of England has been established. It has issued guidance to Police, Fire and National Parks Authorities and has advised that to comply with the legislation (Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000), Authorities should have at least 25% independent representation.
- 3 In other words, the Authority need, if it so chooses, to appoint just one independent member to its Standards Committee, not 4.
- 4 Since December 2000 there has been no business for the Authority's Standards Committee and the Clerk is not aware of any pending matters. In view of this the Clerk feels that the Authority may wish to review its earlier decision to appoint 4 independent Members.



- 5 The Authority Members of the Standards Committee are Mr Glasson (Lab), Mr Gregory (Con), Mr Pritchett (Lib/Dem).

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Guidance from Standards Board of England.
2. Authority Minutes – 13 December 2000.

**Contact Officer:** Clive Williams (0118) 932 2284



**AGENDA ITEM 11:****ADOPTION OF CIPFA's TREASURY  
MANAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SERVICES;  
CODE OF PRACTICE 2001**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 13 March 2002  
**Officer Contributing:** Authority Treasurer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to the adoption of the revised Code of Practice issued by CIPFA with effect from 1 April 2002.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is recommended to **RESOLVE**

- 1 This Authority adopts the key recommendations of CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the Code) 2001 as described in Section 4 of that Code and reproduced as Appendix A.
- 2 Accordingly, this Authority will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:
  - a treasury management policy statement (TMPS), stating the policies and objectives of its treasury management activities.
  - suitable treasury management practices (TMP), setting out the manner in which the organisation will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.
- 2 This Authority will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its TMPs.
- 4 This Authority will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices. It delegates to the Authority Treasurer the execution and administration of treasury management decisions who will act in accordance with the Authority's policy statement and Treasury Management practices (TMPs) and if he/she is a CIPFA member, CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

and that the Authority Financial Regulations be amended accordingly.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Code of Practice aims to secure the quality and status of Treasury Management.



## **D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

**This is an essential part of the Finance Strategy.**

## **E SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities was last updated in 1996 and has been substantially revised in 2001 in order to reflect developments since then. The Institute believes that this major revision is timely for a number of reasons. These include –
  - the increasing size and complexity of the public services' treasury management activities and the demands placed on them, particularly with regard to effective risk management, by performance measurement and the pursuit of best value.
  - the growth of cross-sectoral partnerships.
  - the volatility and sophistication of the financial and money markets.
- 2 In addition, various versions of the Code have been issued over time for different sectors in the public service field and it was felt that these should be consolidated into one document encompassing common principles, but allowing for variations in their outworking as appropriate to each sector.
- 3 The Code therefore requires that a report be submitted to the Council, Board or other appropriate body, setting out four clauses which should be formally passed in order to approve adoption of the new version of the Code.
- 4 The Council, Board or other appropriate body, will in addition receive each year the following reports –
  - Annual strategy and plan in advance of the year.
  - Annual report after its close.
- 5 The new Code also requires each organisation to draw up a much truncated and more strategic treasury management policy statement (TMPS) incorporating just three clauses and a revised definition of treasury management activities. The Code does not require this statement to be approved by the Council, Board or other appropriate body.
- 6 The 1996 Code required Chief Finance Officers to draw up a treasury systems document to cover how treasury management activities are actually implemented. The new Code has laid out a framework of treasury management practices (TMPs) to replace this and to incorporate parts of the previous approach to the treasury management policy statement. The Code does not require these TMPs to be approved by the Council, Board or other appropriate body.



**F BACKGROUND PAPERS**

CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services – Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2001.  
Sector Treasury Services Limited – Code Implementation advice.

**Contact Officer:** Donald Illingworth

(0118) 932 2294



## 4

## Executive Summary and Key Recommendations

This Code makes four key recommendations.

**Key Recommendation 1**

Public service organisations should put in place formal and comprehensive objectives, policies and practices, strategies and reporting arrangements for the effective management and control of their treasury management activities.

**Key Recommendation 2**

Their policies and practices should make clear that the effective management and control of risk are prime objectives of their treasury management activities.

**Key Recommendation 3**

They should acknowledge that the pursuit of best value in treasury management, and the use of suitable performance measures, are valid and important tools for responsible organisations to employ in support of their business and service objectives; and that within the context of effective risk management, their treasury management policies and practices should reflect this.

**Key Recommendation 4**

In order to achieve the above, organisations should:

1. adopt the four clauses in Section 5 of this Code
2. adopt a treasury management policy statement, as recommended in Section 6
3. follow the recommendations in Section 7 concerning the creation of TMPs.

In framing these recommendations, CIPFA acknowledges the difficulties of striving for effective risk management and control, whilst at the same time pursuing best value. This Code does not seek to be prescriptive about how this issue should be handled, particularly since it covers such a wide variety of organisations. However, where appropriate, the sector-specific guidance notes give suitable advice. CIPFA recognises that no two organisations in the public services are likely to tackle this issue in precisely the same manner; but success in this area of treasury management is likely to be viewed, especially in best value terms, as an indicator of a strongly performing treasury management function.



CIPFA considers that the report by the Treasury and Civil Service Committee of the House of Commons on the BCCI closure is still pertinent, wherein it was stated that:

*"In balancing risk against return, local authorities should be more concerned to avoid risks than to maximise returns."*

**Paragraph 58, Second Report, December 1991**

It is CIPFA's view that throughout the public services the priority is to protect capital rather than to maximise return. The avoidance of all risk is neither appropriate nor possible. However, a balance must be struck with a keen responsibility for public money.

