

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



Headquarters - 103 Dee Road-Tilhurst-Reading-Berkshire-RG30 4FS  
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Your reference:

My reference: RBFA/15/9/DRW  
(please quote on all correspondence)

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

Date: 8 September 1999

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 15 September 1999 in the Council Chamber at Wokingham District Council, Shute End, Wokingham commencing at 6.30pm. A buffet will be provided in the Council Chamber.

The District Council Offices are situated in Shute End which is between the A329 Reading Road and Broad Street. Access to the Offices is from Shute End and car parking is at the rear of the building as is the entrance to the Council Suite. A map showing the venue is reproduced overleaf.

For Members travelling from the west of the County it is suggested that you use the M4 Motorway and leave at Junction 10 and join the A329 (M) Motorway following signs to Wokingham and Bracknell. Leave the A329(M) at the next exit (Coppid Beech Flyover) and take the third exit off the roundabout onto the A329 London Road (Signposted Wokingham). Follow the A329 London Road into Wokingham and continue into Peach Street, passing the Market Place on your left, and into Broad Street. Continue down Broad Street which then becomes Shute End and access to the District Council Offices is located on the left hand side just before the mini-roundabouts.

With the exception of those Members travelling from Bracknell who can use the A329 London Road from Bracknell to Wokingham, it is suggested that Members travelling from the east should also use the M4 Motorway and leave at Junction 10 joining the A329 (M) Motorway and then following the directions referred to in the previous paragraph.

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 15 September 1999 at 6.30pm**

**VENUE:** **Council Chamber, Wokingham District  
Council, Shute End, Wokingham**

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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.

D C H Williams  
Clerk to the Authority

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**To: MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**  
D Ball, P A Barnett, Mrs C Bateson, J C G Brooks, R J Day,  
T P Dredge, J M B Egan, B W Gardner, E E Herbert, Mrs V Howes,  
A Gregory, A B V P Hickley, D W Liddiard, T D McCann, T Mills,  
J Morris, J Orton, T O'Flynn, B J S Patman, K Peak, T N Stephens,  
R Turner, R G Vernon-Jackson, D A Veakins R J Webb

**Briefing Meetings:**

Conservative Group: 6.00pm - Committee Room 2  
Labour Group: 6.00pm - Committee Room 4  
Liberal Democrat Group: 6.00pm - Committee Room 1

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



ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 1999



## AGENDA

### PART I AGENDA

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4	Chairman's Communications (if any)	-
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**AGENDA ITEM 1:**

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE  
FIRE AUTHORITY**

**To:**

**Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**

**Date:**

**7 July 1999**

**Officer Contributing:**

**Clerk & Monitoring Officer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members of a change in the representative membership of the Fire Authority.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to NOTE the report.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

1 The Fire Authority has been notified of the following change in the representative members of the Constituent Councils:

**Wokingham District Council**

Councillor T D McCann replacing Councillor A Spratling

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Letter from Wokingham District Council - 4 August 1999

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



**AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES: 7 JULY 1999****MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT READING BOROUGH COUNCIL, CIVIC OFFICES, READING ON WEDNESDAY 7 JULY 1999 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 8.48PM**

**Present:** P A Barnett, Mrs C Bateson, J C G Brooks, T P Dredge, J M B Egan, B W Gardner, A Gregory, E E Herbert, A B V P Hickley, D W Liddiard, T Mills, J Morris, T O'Flynn, B J S Patman, Ms K Peak, A W Spratling, T N Stephens, R J Webb

**Apologies:** R J Day, Mrs V Howes, Mrs J Orton, D A Veakins

**2.01/99 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor J C G Brooks be elected Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

**2.02/99 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor B J S Patman be elected Vice-Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

**2.03/99 MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 3 - not reproduced) of the following changes in the representative Members of the Fire Authority:

Slough Borough Council	Councillor E E Herbert replacing Councillor J J Connolly
Reading Borough Council	Councillor Ms K Peak and Councillor Mrs J Orton replacing Councillor Dr L Silverman and Councillor C J Goodall respectively
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	Councillor Mrs V Howes and Councillor T O'Flynn replacing Councillor Mrs M R Gliksten and Councillor Mrs K Newbound respectively.



In welcoming the new Members to the meeting the Chairman wished to place on record his thanks to all the retiring Members for the very valuable contribution they had made to the work of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

**NOTED**

**2.04/99 MINUTES: 3 FEBRUARY 1999**

The Minutes of the Fire Authority meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 1999, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**2.05/99 MINUTES (PART 1) OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AND URGENCY COMMITTEE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 5 - not reproduced) of the Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee 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**

**2.06/99 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman had nothing to report.

**2.07/99 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Chairman referred to the fact that as a Petition had been received under Agenda item 7 he would be seeking Members' approval to suspend Standing Orders to allow the petition organiser to address the Fire Authority on the subject of his petition for no longer than five minutes. The purpose of this request was to allow Members to receive an explanation of the reasons why the petition had been presented. Members were reminded that under Standing Order 8(d) the Petition Organiser will also be permitted to address the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 15 September 1999. Therefore on the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Mr B J S Patman it was **RESOLVED:** That Standing Orders be suspended during consideration of Agenda item 7 for the purpose of permitting the Petition Organiser to address the Fire Authority on the subject of his petition for no longer than five minutes.



**2.08/99            PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC  
UNDER STANDING ORDERS 8 AND 9**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 7 - not reproduced) that a Petition and two questions had been received from members of the public under Standing Orders 8 and 9 respectively.

The Petition containing 39 signatures had been received from Mr L N C Ball and requested the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to consider the plausibility of giving accredited representative bodies a formal role during meetings of the Fire Authority. This would bring the Royal Berkshire into line with Fire Authority practice in some of the neighbouring areas and may include some or all of the following principles:

- the presentation of a report to each Fire Authority meeting;
- the answering of any questions raised by Fire Authority Members;
- permanent role of accredited representative bodies on Fire Authority in an ex-officio capacity;
- additional source of information and opinion for Fire Authority Members.

In accordance with the decision made in Minute 2.07/99 above the Fire Authority received an address from the Petition Organiser.

The Fire Authority had also received two questions and the following is a transcript of the questions received together with the answer given by the Chairman:

**Question from Mr L N C Ball**

What machinery is in place within the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service for the resolution of disputes between the management and accredited representative bodies and what is the sequence of stages for the implementation of this machinery?

Prior to answering the question the Chairman invited the Chief Fire Officer to comment on the procedure currently in place. The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that there was a recognised and nationally accepted procedure for dealing with disputes between management and the staff representative bodies and that he was satisfied that in Berkshire these were being adhered to. Part of this procedure allows for referral to a Members Panel should the issues fail to be resolved by the Chief Fire Officer. Over the past ten years he could only recall two occasions when it had been necessary to invoke this process.

**Answer by Councillor J C G Brooks**

Since being elected Chairman of the Fire Authority I have, on an informal basis, attended 2 or 3 meetings with Representative Bodies and as far as I am aware never failed to set up a meeting in response to a request from the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU). Dialogue with the FBU is the positive approach to settling disputes and I am disappointed that we as Members have not met the FBU on a more regular basis. It is



therefore my intention to meet on a more regular basis and set up meetings between Elected Members and Representative Bodies probably in October, January and March of each year. The meeting will be called by the Clerk to the Authority and will include the publication of an Agenda.

#### **Supplementary Question from Mr Ball**

Can the Chairman arrange to provide a verbatim or as near to verbatim copy of his reply in the Minutes of this meeting for presentation to the Fire Authority at its meeting in September?

#### **Answer by Councillor Brooks**

I am aware that there has been a mechanism in place for many years regarding the calling of meetings with Representative Bodies and any meetings will be arranged within the remit of that mechanism. I can confirm that the Minutes of this meeting will include a transcript of your question and my answer and will be presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting in September 1999.

#### **Question by Mr R McAllister**

Could you please inform me of the amount which was under spent in the Fire Service 98/99 budget and indicate if and where it has been spent and why did we lose 12 posts if such a surplus did exist?

#### **Answer by Councillor J C G Brooks**

The Accounts for the year 1998/99 are in the process of being closed. The Accounts for 1998/99 showing the final position will be presented to the Fire Authority on 15 September 1999. The Agenda for this meeting includes a report (Agenda item 34) which sets out the provisional outturn for 1998/99 compared with budget. After provision for liabilities outlined in the report have been made it is not anticipated that there will be any remaining surplus. The decision made in December 1997 to relocate Special Appliances (eg Operational Support Unit and Chemical Incident Unit) resulting in the reduction of the establishment of 12 fire-fighter posts was taken along with other measures to contain the overall budget to £18.9m for 1998/99 and provide an ongoing saving for future years of the order of £250,000 per annum.

*(Note: Although Mr McAllister was unable to attend the meeting the Chairman permitted the following Supplementary Question, submitted by Mr McAllister in advance, to be asked)*

#### **Supplementary Question from Mr McAllister**

If the surplus is in the region of the rumoured £1m and if that surplus is being used to assist purchases for the year 1999/2000 budget does this mean that the 1999/2000 budget was incorrectly set?



**Answer by Councillor Brooks**

The answer to the main question indicates that there is unlikely to be any surplus after proper provision for liabilities has been made. I confirm that the Budget of £20m for 1999/2000 was correctly set.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 The Petition be received and referred to the next meeting of the Fire Authority on Wednesday 15 September 1999 for consideration and determination.
- 2 The Petition Organiser be informed of the Fire Authority's decision and invited to the next ordinary Fire Authority meeting in September.
- 3 The Chairman's answer to the questions and supplementary (if submitted) be noted and a copy of the reply be sent to the questioners.

**2.09/99 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

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

**2.10/99 NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

**2.11/99 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Authority was invited (Agenda item 10 - not reproduced) to re-appoint its Committees/Working Parties for the ensuing year together with its representatives on outside bodies.

**RESOLVED:** That the:

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

*Councillors Mrs C Bateson, J C G Brooks, A B V P Hickley,  
J Morris, B J S Patman and D A Veakins*



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

*Councillors J C G Brooks, J Morris and B J S Patman*

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

*Councillors J C G Brooks, A B V P Hickley, T Mills, J Morris, Mrs J Orton and B J S Patman*

- 4 Councillor B J S Patman be appointed as the Fire Authority's representative on the Local Government Association's Fire Committee for the ensuing year.

- 5 Councillors J C G Brooks, J Morris and B J S Patman (one vacancy) be appointed to represent the Fire Authority at the General Assembly of the Association.

**2.12/99 PROPOSED PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT PANEL**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 11 - not reproduced) to the establishment of a Performance Review and Audit Panel

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 A Performance Review and Audit Panel be appointed and that its Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1 (not reproduced) be approved and adopted.
- 2 The Panel has a membership of six, comprising the nominated Deputy Party Spokesperson of the three largest party groups, together with the following three named Members:
- Councillors E E Herbert, B J Gardner and T N Stephens*
- 3 The Spokespersons of the three largest party groups shall be Ex-Officio Members of the Panel.



**2.13/99 REVIEW OF BRIGADE STRUCTURE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 12 - not reproduced) of the preliminary findings of the agreed review of the Brigade structure introduced on 5 May 1999 and approval was sought to certain variations.

Members were reminded that a new management structure was approved by the former Shadow Combined Fire Authority and at that time the Chief Fire Officer agreed to review the perceived effectiveness of the initiative within a twelve month period and present a report on the outcome of that review to a future Fire Authority meeting. The Chief Fire Officer drew Members' attention to paragraphs 3,4 and 5 which summarised the outcome of the review and identified the additional posts required. With regard to IT, it was reported that the newly appointed Information Systems Manager would be joining the Brigade later in July.

One further area of potential concern was the Contracts and Facilities Department where under resourcing was one possible cause of difficulties currently being experienced in meeting expectations. The Director of Central Services had therefore been asked to undertake an internal audit of the functional area and a report on the outcome of that audit would be presented to a future Fire Authority meeting. In addition the number of actual Directorates was also being reviewed and the results would also be reported to the next meeting.

In response to a question concerning the funding for next year the Chief Fire Officer indicated that costs were likely to be in the region of £60,000 and that it was his expectation that the additional costs would be absorbed within current budgetary provision by identification of compensatory savings.

**RESOLVED:** That the:

- 1 Preliminary findings of the review be noted.
- 2 Additional posts referred to in the report be approved subject to the Chief Fire Officer in consultation with the Authority Treasurer identifying the funding required from within existing budgetary provision.
- 3 Chief Fire Officer presents a report to the next Fire Authority meeting on the progress of the outstanding areas of review, including the number of Directorates.

**2.14/99 AUTHORITY ANNUAL REPORT 1998/99 AND STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 13 - not reproduced) to the 1998/99 Annual Report together with the formal adoption of the accompanying long



term Strategic Plan. A copy of the Annual Report and Strategic Plan was circulated at the meeting.

In accordance with established practice the Chief Fire Officer had produced a report on the activities and significant aspects of the Brigade covering the twelve month period from 1 April 1998 to 31 March 1999. This year however the Annual Report was accompanied by a Strategic Plan which identified targets and objectives that span beyond the current financial year.

In highlighting various aspects of the Annual Report and Strategic Plan, the Chief Fire Officer reported that some Unitary Authorities had already accepted his offer to discuss the contents of the report and plan with their elected Members.

If Members were minded to approve the report and plan then it was the Chief Fire Officer's intention to circulate copies to all members of staff, Unitary Authorities, Berkshire MP's and dignitaries, HM Fire Service Inspectorate, other Emergency Services and to prospective partners in the local commercial/industrial community.

In response to a request from Councillor Webb, the Chief Fire Officer agreed to arrange for next year's Annual Report to be circulated prior to the meeting. Members also requested that a progress report on Equality issues facing the Brigade be presented to the Fire Authority meeting in September.

Members were also informed that future reports to Fire Authority meetings would now include a new heading "Implications of the Strategic Plan".

**RESOLVED:** That the:

- 1 1998/99 Annual Report be approved and adopted.
- 2 Strategic Plan be adopted as the basis for the long term direction of the Brigade
- 3 Chief Fire Officer be requested to present a progress report on the equality issues facing the Brigade to the Fire Authority meeting in September.

## **2.15/99 SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW FIRE SAFETY ACT**

The Authority considered a report (Agenda item 14 - not reproduced) on a campaign by the Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officer's Association (CACFOA) and other groups to support the early introduction of a new Fire Safety Act into the parliamentary timetable. The new Act would consolidate and rationalise all existing fire safety legislation into a single piece of legislation.



The Chief Fire Officer, in his professional capacity, had written to all Berkshire MP's inviting their support to the formulation of the new Act to which there had been positive and constructive responses.

It was felt, however, that if Fire Authorities and their constituent authorities were also to make similar representations, this would add significant weight to the campaign. Members approval was therefore sought to a letter, drafted by CACFOA, to be sent to all Berkshire MP's (Appendix 1 - not reproduced) together with a similar letter (Appendix 2 - not reproduced) to the constituent authorities seeking their support to the campaign.

**RESOLVED:** That the Fire Authority write to:

- 1 All Berkshire MP's asking them to support this course of action.
- 2 All Berkshire Constituent Authorities seeking their support to the campaign.

#### **2.16/99 ENFORCEMENT CONCORDAT**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 15 - not reproduced) of the Enforcement Concordat sponsored by the Cabinet Office and requested to authorise the Chief Fire Officer to make arrangements for its adoption.

The Enforcement Concordat requires participating authorities to adopt and publish in plain language, appropriate standards of performance and that they actively work with local businesses to advise and assist with compliance. This initiative also concurs with the principles of Best Value and, if adopted, would be incorporated into Brigade procedures.

**RESOLVED:** That the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to make arrangements to adopt the Enforcement Concordat.

#### **2.17/99 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME: STATEMENT OF POLICY**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 16 - not reproduced) to a revision of the Authority's statement of pension policy as required by the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Amendment) Regulations 1999 subject to consultation with Representative Bodies.

It was reported that the Representative Bodies had been consulted and whilst the Policy had been approved and supported by the Non-Uniformed Personnel Joint Consultative Committee the FBU had asked that consideration be given to the



inclusion of a statement that the Personnel Committee would, prior to reaching an agreement, take into consideration the views of the individual concerned and their Representative Body. In supporting this request from the FBU Members agreed to the inclusion of a new Resolution 3.

**RESOLVED:** That the Brigade's Statement of Pension Policy is amended to provide that:

- (i) the award of any discretionary compensatory benefits will only be considered on a case by case basis with reference to the financial or other benefits to the Authority;
- (ii) in all cases the employer will obtain the full capital cost of retiring any employee earlier than their normal date of retirement;
- (iii) prior to reaching an agreement the Personnel Committee will take into consideration the view of the individual concerned and their Representative Body

#### **2.18/99 BEST VALUE - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 17 - not reproduced) of the progress being made on implementing "Best Value". In noting the contents of the report members agreed that it be referred to the newly established Performance Review and Audit Committee for consideration and determination.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be referred to the newly established Performance Review and Audit Committee for consideration and determination.

#### **2.19/99 SINGLE TENDER ACTION - BEST VALUE CONSULTATION**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 18 - not reproduced) for single tender action to undertake, as part of the Best Value process, public consultation on behalf of the Fire Authority.

Officers have been in discussion with Opinion Research Services Limited (ORS Ltd) concerning the consultation. ORS Ltd was part of Swansea University, was non profit making, and specialised in the public sector. The Chief Fire Officer reported that ORS Ltd were currently dealing with 16 other Brigades and two satisfactory references had been received.



**RESOLVED:** That in accordance with Standing Order 10(f) relating to Contracts, a single tender action be approved to undertake public consultation for a period of two years

## **2.20/99 PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 19 - not reproduced) to the process for the provision of support services for the Brigade.

In supporting the proposed Action the following amendment to Resolution 1 was proposed, seconded and agreed:

*Resolution 1 - second line - delete all after "Services" and insert:  
"for a period of three years from 1 April 2000 with an option to extend for a further two years."*

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 Reading Borough Council provide Legal Services, Estate Management and Building Services for a period of three years from 1 April 2000 with an option to extend for a further two years
- 2 Tenders be sought for the provision of Financial Services for a period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years.
- 3 Tenders be sought, including from Reading Borough Council, for the provision of Internal Audit for a period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years.

## **2.21/99 THE FIRE AUTHORITY AND BRIGADE'S REVISED HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENTS AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FRAMEWORK**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 20 - not reproduced) of the continued progress made by the Chief Fire Officer in implementing the plan agreed with the Health and Safety Executive, to discharge the Improvement Notice issued to the Authority in January 1997 and approval was sought to a proposed Health and Safety Policy Statement for the Authority.

As an outstanding issue of the Improvement Notice the Brigade was required to produce a Health and Safety Policy Statement and organisational arrangements which identified the key health and safety roles and responsibilities of managers of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. A copy of the relevant extracts of the Policy



Statement together with the Chief Fire Officer and Directors Support Statements, together with an example of the organisational arrangements including safety responsibilities, were presented as Appendices A and B respectively (not reproduced). Members were advised that this would be the last report specific to the Discharge Plan.

**RESOLVED:** That the:

- 1 Proposed Health and Safety Policy Statement for the Authority be approved and adopted.
- 2 Policy and supporting arrangements be adopted and a safety management system be further developed with an annual report on progress being presented to the Fire Authority.

**2.22/99 DETACHMENT TO THAMES VALLEY PARTNERSHIP**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 21 - not reproduced) on the part-time detachment of an Officer to the Thames Valley Partnership. Station Officer Mark Pinnell, currently Station Commander at Bracknell Fire Station, had volunteered for this detachment and had been accepted by the Partnership.

**NOTED**

**2.23/99 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 22 - not reproduced) on the extension into 1999/2000 of a commercial partnership with the private sector developed in 1998/99.

As reported to the Fire Authority in June 1998 a partnership had been developed with Yellow Pages. The partnership had worked well and as the Brigade had met all of the objectives agreed with Yellow Pages for the year they have decided to extend the partnership for the year 1999/2000. A report by the Community Safety Officer detailing the achievements of the Team during 1998/99 and outlining the proposals for 1999/2000 was presented in Appendix 1 (not reproduced). Members were advised that the proposals had been agreed.

**NOTED**



**2.24/99 CREWING LEVELS - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 23 - not reproduced) of the crewing levels on Wholetime Fire Stations. Members attention was drawn to the general improvement in the percentage of shifts at which the preferred crewing levels or higher, including special appliances, had been achieved in the period from 1 January 1999. Early indications are that with the forecast return to full establishment following the completion of basic training at the end of April of the most recent intake of Wholetime recruits, confidence levels should improve significantly. Further progress reports would be presented to future Fire Authority meetings.

**NOTED**

**2.25/99 COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY PLAN 1999/2000**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 24 - not reproduced) of the development of a Community Fire Safety Plan by the Brigade for 1999/2000. As part of a national thrust towards greater community safety, the Home Office has required each Brigade to develop a robust Community Fire Safety Plan for 1999/2000, and to update this for subsequent years. A copy of the full Plan was available to Members on request and further progress reports would be presented to future Fire Authority meetings.

**NOTED**

**2.26/99 AUDIT COMMISSION FIRE SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 1997/98**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 25 - not reproduced) on the Fire Service's performance during 1997/98 and were advised of changes to the Performance Indicators in 1999/2000. Members were reminded that there was a statutory obligation on the Fire Authority to collect and publish Citizens' Charter Performance Indicators.

**NOTED**

**2.27/99 SERVICES GUARANTEES - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 26 - not reproduced) on the results of monitoring the Brigade's service guarantees. The returned customer care cards had been analysed and the results for the four quarters of 1998/99 were presented in Appendix 1 (not reproduced).



In noting what the Brigade had achieved Members wished to place on record their thanks to all the staff concerned for their hard work.

**NOTED**

**2.28/99 BUSINESS PRIORITIES 1998/99**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 27 - not reproduced) on the progress made against the Brigade's 1998/99 Business Objectives. A copy of the final progress report for the year was presented in Appendix 1 (not reproduced)

**NOTED**

**2.29/99 COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 28 - not reproduced) on complaints about the Service received from the public during 1998/99. In noting the contents of the report Members were advised that with one exception, which is still being investigated, all complaints have been satisfactorily resolved.

**NOTED**

**2.30/99 CONDITIONS OF SERVICE NEGOTIATIONS - CURRENT POSITION**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 29 - not reproduced) on the progress of National Employer proposals to change conditions of service.

Since the summer of 1998 the Employers Side of the NJC for Local Authorities Fire Brigades have been seeking to negotiate changes to the Scheme of Conditions of Service for Fire Officers, Firefighters and Control, Staff known as the "Grey Book". In response to the package of changes to the "Grey Book" produced by the Employers the FBU at its Annual Conference on 11 May rejected the Employers proposals and authorised their Executive Council to commence a national ballot for strike action if the Employers attempted to alter the national conditions of service.

In response to this the National Employers referred the failure to agree on proposed changes to ACAS. In turn the FBU requisitioned a special NJC meeting which took place on 11 June 1999.



The formal referral to ACAS is expected to take place after this meeting. The Chief Fire Officer updated Members on the current situation regarding the negotiations.

**NOTED**

**2.31/99            IMPACT OF ILL HEALTH AS A RESULT OF ACCIDENTS -  
SIX MONTH REPORT**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 30 - not reproduced) on the number of days of sickness associated with accidents. The report had been prepared in response to a request by Members at the Fire Authority meeting in February 1999.

**NOTED**

**2.32/99            ILL HEALTH RETIREMENTS**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 31 - not reproduced) on the decision of the Brigade to retire one employee on the grounds of ill health during the period October 1998 to March 1999.

**NOTED**

**2.33/99            ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 1998/99**

The Authority received (Agenda item 32 - not reproduced) the 1998/99 Annual Treasury Report prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice: Treasury Management in Local Authorities (1996) which set out the actual Treasury operations for the last financial year. In noting the contents of the report Members wished to record their thanks to Donald Illingworth, Authority Treasurer, for all his hard work in preparing a very full and informative report.

**NOTED**

**2.34/99            ROYAL COUNTY OF BERKSHIRE PENSION FUND  
ACTUARIAL VALUATION AS AT 31 MARCH 1998**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 33 - not reproduced) on the receipt of the Valuation Report of the Fund as at 31 March 1998 together with details of the



budgetary implications for the Fire Authority in the financial years 2000/2001 and 2001/2002. Members noted that the full costs to the Pension Fund of any early retirements would be payable at the time they arose in the form of a one off lump sum or over a five year period.

**NOTED**

**2.35/99            OUTTURN 1998/99 - PROVISIONAL INDICATION OF FINAL  
REVENUE AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS POSITION**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 34 - not reproduced) on the likely Final Revenue and Capital Accounts position for 1998/99. With regard to the replacement fire fighting clothing referred to on page 139 of the report (not reproduced) an example of the new fire kit was displayed for Members.

**NOTED**

**2.36/99            1999/2000 BUDGET MONITORING**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 35 - not reproduced) of the revenue and capital expenditure against budgets up to the end of May 1999.

**NOTED**

**2.37/99            CAPITAL FINANCING, LEASING, BORROWING AND  
REVENUE FUNDING**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 36 - not reproduced) which had been prepared in order to assist Members to formulate decisions on Capital financing during the budget process.

**NOTED**

**2.38/99            FIRES, INCIDENTS AND ISSUES OF INTEREST**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 37 - not reproduced) summarising some of the incidents attended by the Brigade during the period 1 February to 1 June 1999 together with letters of appreciation and news from around the Brigade.

**NOTED**



**2.39/99 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Paragraph</b>
39	Part II Minutes - Wednesday 3 February 1999	1, 8 & 9
40	Part II Minutes of Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee	1, 8 & 9
41	Non-Uniformed Staff Grading Structure	1
42	Community Safety Partnership Funding Arrangements	8 & 9
43	Treasurer's Contract	1
44	Licences for Erection of Radio Antenna	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 7 July 1999.*

**2.40/99 PART II MINUTES: 3 FEBRUARY 1999**

The Part II Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 February 1999 were received and approved as a correct record.

**2.41/99 PART II MINUTES OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE AND URGENCY COMMITTEE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 40 - not reproduced) of the Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee meetings that had taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting.

**2.42/99 NON-UNIFORMED STAFF GRADING STRUCTURE**

The Authority approved (Agenda item 41 - not reproduced) the implementation of a revised grading structure for non-uniformed employees not subject to local pay.



**2.43/99      COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP FUNDING  
ARRANGEMENTS**

The Authority was advised of the funding provided to the Brigade for 1999/2000 from the partnership with a local company.

**2.44/99      TREASURER'S CONTRACT**

The Authority approved an extension to the Treasurer's contract. During consideration of this item the Treasurer withdrew from the meeting.

**2.45/99      LICENCES FOR ERECTION OF RADIO ANTENNA**

The Authority agreed to grant licences to a local company to enable them to erect antenna on drill towers at Dee Road, Reading and Wokingham Road Fire Stations.



**AGENDA ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PERSONNEL COMMITTEE,  
URGENCY COMMITTEE AND PERFORMANCE  
REVIEW AND AUDIT PANEL**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 7 July 1999  
**Officer Contributing:** Clerk & Monitoring Officer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members on meetings of the Personnel Committee, Urgency Committee and Performance Review and Audit Panel that have taken place since the last meeting.

**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 of the Personnel Committee and Urgency Committee have taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting in July 1999:

**Personnel Committee:** Thursday 5 August and Wednesday 1 September\* 1999  
 (\*Inquorate meeting - no decisions made)

**Performance Review  
and Audit Panel** Monday 16 August 1999

To keep Members fully informed of progress with the Best Value initiative in the Brigade a copy of the Performance Review and Audit Panel Minutes are attached as Appendix 1 for information

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

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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



**AGENDA ITEM 1: MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT PANEL HELD AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS ON MONDAY 16 AUGUST 1999 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.35PM.**

**Present: B W Gardner, A B V P Hickley, T Mills, T N Stephens**

**Also Present: M Clarkson (Deloitte and Touche)**

**Apologies: E E Herbert, Mrs J Orton**

**1.01/99 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor A B V P Hickley be elected Chairman of the Performance Review and Audit Panel for the remainder of the ensuing year.

**1.02/99 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor T Mills be elected Vice-Chairman of the Performance Review and Audit Panel for the remainder of the ensuing year.

**1.03/99 PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND AUDIT PANEL - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Panel received a copy (Agenda item 3 - Appendix 1 - not reproduced) of the Panel's Terms of Reference as approved and adopted by the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 7 July 1999.

**NOTED**

**1.04/99 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT 1998/99**

The Panel considered a report (Agenda item 4 - not reproduced) which summarised the outcome of internal audit activity during the year, highlighted any matters of particular concern and presented an overall Assurance Opinion on the work undertaken. The Chairman on behalf of Members welcomed Mike Clarkson, Director in Charge of the Fire Authority Audit from Deloitte and Touche to the meeting and



explained that he had been invited to the meeting to present the report in conjunction with the Authority Treasurer (AT) and answer any questions.

The AT reported that 1998/99 was the first year of a two year outsourcing agreement between the Fire Authority and Deloitte & Touche (DT) National Internal Audit Group, for the provision of internal audit services to the Authority. The contract with DT required them to produce an Internal Audit Annual Assurance Report. Accordingly the 1998/99 report was presented as Appendix A (not reproduced).

In considering the Appendix, Members attention was drawn to the Assurance and Recommendations Table (not reproduced) which summarised the assurances given and the recommendations made and agreed. In noting that all the recommendations had been agreed Members were advised that the speed of implementation had been dependant on achieving a full staff compliment in the Accounts Department.

On the invitation of the Chairman Mike Clarkson took Members through the Report highlighting various aspects. Overall the Fire Authority were to be congratulated on implementing the agreed recommendations. In particular full credit was due to the Brigade Management Accountant (BMA) and his staff for all their hard work especially in view of the limited staff resources they had experienced for a time. In overall terms, from the work undertaken during 1998/99, DT were able to give a summary "satisfactory" opinion to the Authority.

External Audit were kept informed of progress via quarterly liaison meetings between the AT and DT. In addition regular liaison had taken place with the AT and BMA had been maintained via regular quarterly contract meetings. These had proved useful throughout the year and DT were looking forward to building on them during 1999/2000.

## **NOTED**

### **1.05/99 BEST VALUE UPDATE**

The Panel received a presentation (Agenda item 5) from DO Doyle, Best Value Project Officer on the progress to date with Best Value together with a summary of what the Brigade is required to achieve by April 2000 in accordance with Best Value legislation.

Following the presentation Members were given the opportunity to ask questions. The Chairman, on behalf of Members, thanked DO Doyle for his very full and informative presentation.

## **NOTED**



**1.06/99 BEST VALUE - STRATEGIES FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Panel was informed (Agenda item 6 - not reproduced) of the Best Value strategies being processed and approval was sought to future progress on preparing Best Value.

Members were advised that the work required to comply with the duty placed on the Fire Authority by the Local Government Bill would require a number of strategies to be in place by 1 April 2000. In order for progress to be made in preparing for Best Value some direction and impute from Members on the following strategies were now necessary:

- (i) Public Consultation
- (ii) Best Value Performance Plans
- (iii) Review Process

Consideration was therefore given to the report which detailed the various options available in respect of the above mentioned strategies and the following is a summary of the comments made and decisions reached:

**Public Consultation**

In accordance with the Best Value legislation the Fire Authority was required to consult with the public in order to access their perception of the Service and to determine their vision for the future. Members were reminded that the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 7 July 1999 had approved the appointment of Opinion Research Services Limited (ORS) to assist with the consultation process and contracts had now been signed. ORS Ltd had worked with nineteen other Brigades and information obtained from their surveys would be made available to Berkshire.

Consideration was therefore given to Appendix A (not reproduced) which briefly summarised the methods of consultation. It was noted that many Brigades had opted to carry out a Popular Questionnaire and Employee Survey Questionnaire as part of their preparations for Best Value.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that Principal Officers had also considered the methods of consultation and were of the opinion that the Popular and Employee Surveys should be undertaken followed by the Focus Group Programme in conjunction with the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities. In supporting this Members considered that in consulting with the Unitary Authorities it would be prudent to seek views from Elected Members and professional Officers in Social Services, Education and other relevant Departments. In addition it was felt that the views of local businesses was an important concept of any survey and the Business Survey Questionnaire should also be considered as a possible option in association with the Popular and Employee Surveys.

It was emphasised that the questions would need to be very carefully compiled to avoid confusion and further detailed discussions with ORS Ltd was therefore an essential element in the preparation of any surveys and/or questionnaires.



It was therefore **Agreed** that further detailed discussions take place with ORS Ltd with a view to proceeding with the Popular Questionnaire/Employee Survey Questionnaire and the Business Survey Questionnaire. If as a result of these discussions another method of consultation is considered to be useful then the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to proceed accordingly.

### **Best Value Performance Plans (BVPP)**

Members were advised that a BVPP was required to be produced and made available to the public by 1 April 2000 and would include:

- A report on the current performance, including a comparison with the performance of other similar Authorities;
- Identify forward targets for all services on an annual or longer term basis;
- Comment on the means to achieve plans, including proposals for major capital projects and investments, and for the procedural and purchasing changes designed to improve performance.

With the approval of the Chairman examples of BVPPs produced by other Brigades were tabled at the meeting (not reproduced). The cost to the Brigade of producing sufficient Performance Plans in the A5 folded leaflet type format for wide distribution in Berkshire, as required by the legislation, would be in excess of £20,000.

The Chief Fire Officer suggested that one possible option was to design the BVPP along the lines of the Authority's Strategic Plan but in a more "punchy", focused, clear and concise format. In addition it was suggested that consideration be given to placing the BVPP on the Brigade's Web Site in support of the leaflet.

### **Review Process**

The legislation requires that every function of the service is subject to a Fundamental Performance Review (FPR) with a five year rolling programme. Members were reminded that the Brigade's Strategic Plan, which included a framework of three, four or five yearly fundamental reviews for discrete elements of service, was approved and adopted by the Fire Authority at its meeting in July. In reality it was considered that the review would be over a five year period. The review process would require Member level consideration of the findings of each review and there would now be the need to look at the list of priorities included in the Strategic Plan and consider them in the context of Best Value.

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the proposals in respect of the Authority's Strategic Plan and FPR's had been discussed with the District Auditor, Graham Meldrum, HM Chief Inspector of Fire Services and Robin Currie the Brigade's own Territorial Inspector and they did not foresee any problems with the proposed course of action.



The strategy for the review process would need to set out why services had been selected for review, the criteria for prioritising one service against another and the methodology for carrying out the review. A copy of the Review Process and Methodology was presented as Appendix B (not reproduced) for Members' information.

In response to a question as to the level of Member involvement required for the Internal Review process the Chief Fire Officer advised that the findings of each review would be reported back to Members. In the interim period however progress reports would be presented as many of the reviews were expected to take some time to complete. It was emphasised however that the conclusions and proposals of each review were the most important part to be considered at Member level.

In response to a suggestion it was agreed that an overview from the Chief Fire Officer on how the Brigade were progressing with the Best Value initiative would be a standard Agenda item at future Panel meetings.

The Chief Fire Officer also advised Members that certain projects emanating from Best Value may create resourcing problems. In those instances it would be necessary to seek Member approval to transfer the project to the next financial year as insufficient funding was available in the current year.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1 Further detailed discussions take place with ORS Ltd with a view to proceeding with the Popular Questionnaire/Employee Survey Questionnaire and the Business Survey Questionnaire.
- 2 If as a result of these discussions another method of consultation is considered to be useful then the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to proceed accordingly.
- 3 Subject to the approval of the Fire Authority and sufficient funding (estimated at £20,000) being provided in the 2000/2001 budget, the BVPP be produced in an A5 folded leaflet type format for wide distribution in Berkshire
- 4 Consideration be given to placing the BVPP within the Brigade's Web-Site in addition to and in support of the leaflet.
- 5 A report from the Chief Fire Officer on how the Brigade are progressing with the Best Value initiative be presented as a standard Agenda item at future Panel meetings.

**1.06/99          DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That a further meeting of the Panel be arranged for Tuesday 23 November 1999 commencing at 6.30pm.





**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 1999  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Members attention is drawn to the following additional information/amendments:

**Agenda item 8:      Petition from Member of the Public**

Unfortunately it has not been possible to produce the revised version of Appendix 1 (Constitution and Terms of Reference) referred to in Resolution 1. Therefore to avoid deferring the item to the December meeting the Chairman will be seeking Members approval to the inclusion of the following new Resolution 2:

“That the Chairman and Party Spokespersons be authorised to approve the revised Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Fire Authority Liaison Group (Appendix 1) and that a copy of the approved document be circulated to all Members of the Fire Authority for information”

If Members are minded to approve this new Resolution the remaining Resolutions will be renumbered accordingly.

**Agenda item 11:      Equal Opportunities Policy Statement and Strategy**

Members are advised that as the Chairman of the Fire Authority will now be a signatory on the Equal Opportunities Policy Statement as set out on page 43 of the Agenda it will be necessary to amend the Policy Statement as follows:

Delete all references to “Fire and Rescue Service” and inset “Fire Authority”

**Agenda item 12:      Disposal of Redundant Equipment**

To bring Financial Regulation 15.8 in line with Resolution 1, Members approval to the following minor amendment is requested:

Paragraph 7 - page 48

In fifth line after “*Officer*” insert:- “, *after consultation with the Authority Treasurer,*”

**Agenda item 14:      Review of Brigade Structure**

Members are advised that paragraph 4 of the report (page 52) should read as follows:

“This will therefore have the effect of making the post of Director of Central Services surplus to requirements and details of the proposed redundancy package for the individual concerned are set out in the Part II Agenda under Agenda item 23.”

*David R Weller, Committee Administrator*

**AGENDA ITEM 8: PETITION FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 15 September 1999  
**Officer Contributing:** Clerk & Monitoring Officer  
 Chief Fire Officer  
 Treasurer

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To consider the Fire Authority's response to the Petition presented by Mr L N C Ball at the last meeting.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to **RESOLVE: That:**

- 1 a Fire Authority Liaison Group be established, comprising members of the Authority and accredited representatives of the FBU and Unison, with the terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1 (To follow).
- 2 Meetings of the Liaison Group take place prior to the Fire Authority's Agenda Briefing Meetings with further meetings being arranged at the discretion of the Chairman and in consultation with the Party Spokespersons.
- 3 there should be equal numbers of Authority and accredited representatives on the Group and that it be proposed that there be 3 Authority members, 2 FBU representatives and 1 Unison representative and with the approval of the Chairman other Union/Staff group representatives by invitation.
- 4 the Party Spokespersons be appointed as the Fire Authority representatives on the Liaison Group and that substitute Members be permitted with the approval of the Chairman
- 5 the Chairman of the Authority be authorised to agree a variation of the representation following consultation with the Unions.
- 6 the Petitioners be advised that in the Fire Authority's view, the proposed establishment of a Fire Authority Liaison Group would be the most effective way of establishing the close working relationship between the Authority and the representatives of the accredited bodies, which the Petitioners are seeking to achieve.



## **C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**There are no financial implications other than Members Attendance and Travelling Allowances which are met by the Constituent Authorities.**

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

**The report contributes indirectly to the Strategic Plan by facilitating discussion between Members and Representative Bodies on key issues.**

## **E SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 On 7 July a petition containing 39 signatories was presented seeking a formal role for the representatives of accredited bodies in the deliberations of the Authority. The Petition was introduced by Mr Ball, following a waiving of Standing Orders, and was then referred without discussion for consideration to this meeting. Under Standing Orders, the Petition Organiser, will be given the opportunity to address the Fire Authority for up to five minutes on the subject of the petition.
- 2 The Petition which the Authority is asked to consider reads as follows:
 

‘We the undersigned, request the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members to consider the plausibility of giving accredited representative bodies a formal role during the meetings of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority. This would bring Royal Berkshire into line with Fire Authority practice in some of the neighbouring areas and may include some or all of the following principles

  - i the presentation of a report to each Fire Authority meeting
  - ii the answering of any questions raised by Fire Authority members
  - iii permanent role of accredited representative bodies on Fire Authority in an ex-officio capacity
  - iv additional source of information and opinion for Fire Authority members
- 3 It is of course, a matter for the Fire Authority to decide how it wishes to organise its business and some Authorities do permit their FBU representatives to present reports and/or answer questions. Most, however, do not.
- 4 Constitutionally, however, it would not be possible to give employees an official role in the deliberations of the Authority, which appears to be the intention behind paragraph (iii) of the Petition.



- 5 At present, there are well defined structures to enable consultation to take place between the Brigade and the representatives of the accredited Unions.
- 6 There is, however, no standing consultation mechanism to enable Members of the Authority to meet with the Representative Bodies. They have however been advised that the Chairman of the Authority and his senior colleagues are prepared to meet the Representative Bodies at any time, but such meetings are a rarity.
- 7 Members will also appreciate that if there are issues which need discussion, it is useful to hear them discussed first in Committee, where size and informality give members a better opportunity to put their case, than in the more formal setting of a full Council or Authority.
- 8 Your officers would advise that applying the same principles would suggest that there should be a standing procedure whereby the Representative Bodies can meet the Authority members. The report of the meeting would then come before the full Authority for discussion and consideration, where appropriate.
- 9 A draft Constitution (Appendix 1) is being prepared and will be circulated prior to the meeting. A number of Authorities have such groups and it appears standard practice that there should be equal number of Authority members and Accredited Representatives. The FBU have agreed to appointing two representatives and it is expected that Unison will agree to one representative. Substitutes will be permitted and if required other Union Representatives/Staff Group representatives will be invited to attend at the discretion of the Chairman
- 10 If the proposed Liaison Group is established, your officers would feel it unnecessary to then grant Union representatives additional **rights** to address the Authority or answer questions. However, it is always open to the Chairman to exercise his discretion, with the agreement of the Authority, to seek Union views at the Authority meeting. That has happened occasionally in the past and will no doubt continue to be the case in future.

## **F BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Fire Authority meeting 7 July 1999 - Petition from Mr L N C Ball  
Fire Authority Standing Orders 8 & 9

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



**AGENDA ITEM 9: FINAL ACCOUNTS - YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1999**

**To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**  
**Date: 15 September 1999**  
**Officer Contributing: Treasurer**

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**To obtain approval of the statement of accounts for year ended 31 March 1999. (To follow)**

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

**The Authority is invited to RESOLVE That the Statement of Accounts for year ended 31 March 1999 as submitted be approved.** *for submission to UTP (as amended)*

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**These are fully set out in the Statement of Accounts.**

**D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

**The Authority's financial position is an essential component of strategic planning.**

**F SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 1 The main legislative requirements relating to the preparation, publication and audit of statements of accounts of Local Authorities in England and Wales are contained in Part III of the Local Government Finance Act 1982 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996.
- 2 The Statement of Accounts has been drawn up in accordance with the statutory requirements. The Explanatory Foreword to the Statement provides an understandable guide to the most significant matters reported in the accounts.
- 3 In accordance with the Regulations:
  - accounts have to be made up yearly to 31 March
  - the accounts have to be prepared as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year, and approved by a resolution of the Authority or one of its committees within six months of the year end (ie by 30 September)
  - the Statement of Accounts has to be published within 9 months of the year end (ie by 31 December)



- the Accounts should be published, together with any certificate, opinion or report given by the auditor or, if published before the conclusion of the audit, with an explanation of that fact.

4 The External Audit process will be:

- the auditor appoints a date on which any local government elector for the area of the Authority to which the accounts relate can attend before the auditor and make objection to any of those accounts
- the accounts and other documents are available for 15 full working days before the date appointed by the auditor
- not later than 14 days before the commencement of the period during which the accounts and other documents are made available notice by advertisement be made of the various rights and time-scales
- the time-table for the audit provides for field work during September/October with a report in November. The Management Letter meeting is likely to take place in November/December.

## **G BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1 Local Government Finance Act 1982
- 2 Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996
- 3 CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Handbook
- 4 Accounting Records and Supporting Documents

**Contact Officers:** Donald H Illingworth (0118) 932 2284  
Andrew Vallance (0118) 932 2251



# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



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

Your reference:

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

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

Date: 10 September 1999

Dear Member

## AGENDA FOR THE FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING - WEDNESDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 1999 - DOCUMENTS MARKED TO FOLLOW

I refer to the Agenda for the Fire Authority meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday 15 September 1999 and attach a copy of the following document marked to follow:

**Agenda item 9: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority - Statement of Final  
Accounts 1998/99**

Please include these papers with your Agenda for the meeting. A copy of Appendix 1 associated with Agenda item 8 will be either be circulated just before the meeting or tabled at the Members Briefing meetings. I would also ask you to accept my apologies for the delay in producing this Appendix but following the Chairman's Briefing changes are required to the text and unfortunately the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, the author of the report, is away on leave.

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  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS *1998/99*

*Produced for*  
*Royal Berkshire Fire Authority by*  
CSL GROUP LTD,  
READING

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For further information concerning any items contained in this Statement please write to the Treasurer, Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, 103 Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4FS or telephone 0118 932 2251

# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

## MEMBERSHIP 1998/99

### COUNCILLORS

#### **Bracknell Forest Borough Council**

J M B Egan  
T Mills  
D A Veakins (From 18 Nov 1998)  
W J E Onions (Deceased 1 Nov 1998)

#### **West Berkshire District Council**

P A Barnett  
J C G Brookes (Chairman)  
B W Gardner  
D W Liddard  
R G Vernon-Jackson

#### **Reading Borough Council**

R J Day  
C J Goodall  
J Morris  
Dr L Silverman

#### **Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

C Bateson  
M Gliksten (From 1 Sep 1998)  
A B V P Hickley  
K Newbound  
T N Stephens  
H Parker (To 31 Jul 1998)

#### **Slough Borough Council**

J J Connolly  
A Gregory  
R J Webb (From 7 May 1998)  
D Thomas (To 6 May 1998)

#### **Wokingham District Council**

D Ball  
T P Dredge  
B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman)  
A W Spratling  
R Turner (From 28 Oct 1998)  
P J Edwards (To 30 Sep 1998)

The Authority is made up of 25 Members who are appointed in proportion to the number of Local Government electors in each authority area.

# **ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

## **OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY**

### **Chief Fire Officer**

David J Harper MVO

### **Clerk & Monitoring Officer**

Clive Williams OBE (Solicitor)

### **Treasurer of the Combined Fire Service Fund**

Donald H Illingworth CPFA

## **AUDITORS**

### **The District Audit Service**

District Auditor – Stephen Taylor CPFA

## ***EXPLANATORY FOREWORD***

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### **1 The Authority**

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority was formed on 1 April 1998 following the reorganisation of Local Government in Berkshire.

Following the abolition of the Berkshire County Council the Fire Authority became responsible for the provision of fire and rescue services for the areas covered by the six unitary authorities formed to provide local government services in Berkshire.

### **2 The Accounts**

The Accounting Statements which follow form the Fire Authority's Statutory Accounts for the year ended 31 March 1999.

Prior to 1 April 1998 a shadow Combined Fire Authority was established which was empowered to perform any transactions necessary to ensure that the new Fire Authority became operational on 1 April 1998. Expenditure was incurred in set-up costs and these were funded by Supplementary Credit Approval and were approved by the Home Office. These costs were included in the final year's accounts of the Berkshire County Council and are acknowledged in a note to these Accounts. Further set-up costs, again funded by Supplementary Credit Approval, have been incurred in 1998/99 and are included in these accounts.

The accounts are drawn up in accordance with the Accounting Policies set out in detail on pages 8 to 10.

The Accounting Statements consist of:

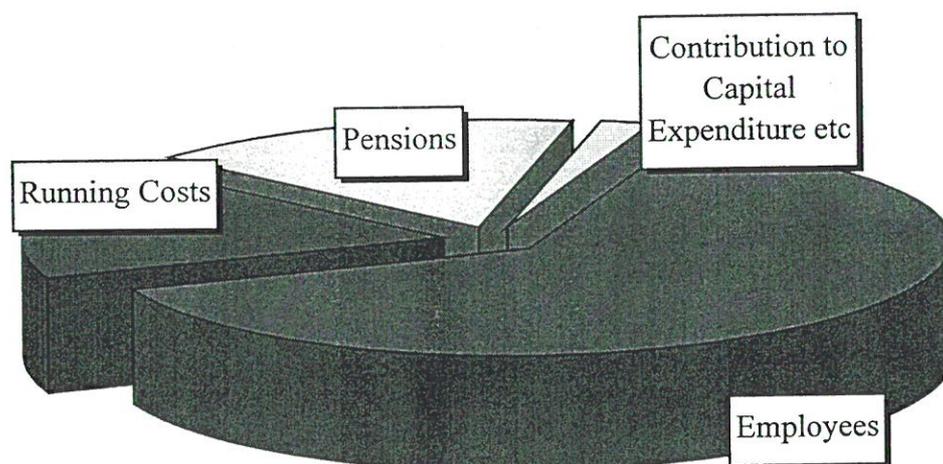
- a) The Revenue Account -which summarises the gross expenditure, income and net expenditure analysed in accordance with CIPFA's standard classification and how this was met by funding from the Unitary Authorities in Berkshire.
- b) The Balance Sheet -which shows the Authority's position as a whole and summarises its assets and liabilities.
- c) The Statement of Total Movements in Reserves -which brings together all the recognised gains and losses of the Authority during the year.
- d) The Cash Flow Statement -which summarises the in-flows and out-flows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.

## EXPLANATORY FOREWORD CONT'D

### 3 Revenue Spending in 1998/99

Gross expenditure (excluding Notional Capital Charges) in 1998/99 amounted to £20,761,000. This money was spent on:

	£000	%
Employees	13,250	64
Running Costs	3,672	18
Pensions	3,411	16
Contributions to Capital Expenditure, Capital Provision and Debt Charges	428	2
	<u>20,761</u>	<u>100</u>

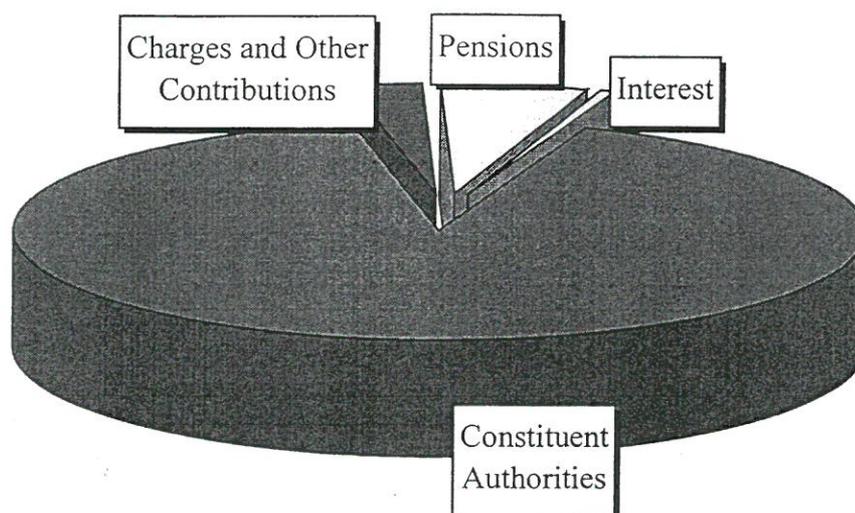


Gross Income amounted to £20,761,000

	£000	%
Constituent Authorities	18,900	91
Charges and other contributions	599	3
Interest	145	1
Pensions - Contributions and transfer values	1,117	5
	<u>20,761</u>	<u>100</u>

## *EXPLANATORY FOREWORD CONT'D*

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The Authority's net revenue expenditure is funded by a levy on the six constituent authorities, the amount payable by each being proportional to its tax base. There is no statutory limit on the amount of the levy. Whilst the Fire Authority has no Standard Spending Assessment of its own the Fire elements are included in the Assessments of the six unitary authorities. Control is therefore exercised by the Fire Authority Members who are appointed by the six constituent authorities.

There is legal uncertainty on a Fire Authority's ability to hold reserves or general fund balances. The Audit Commission have expressed the view that as a general rule, Combined Fire Authorities should not create and maintain reserves. However, they consider that it is prudent for Authorities to create provisions where a liability is likely or certain to be incurred but where there is uncertainty as to the amount or the date on which it will arise. After provisions have been made any under or over spending at the year end should be transferred to or from the constituent authorities.

The Fire Authority's net revenue budget for the first year was set at £18.9m. Actual expenditure during the year (before provisions) totalled £17.9m, an under spending of £1m. A significant trend of underspending was identified early in the year but it was decided to retain this to allow for any unforeseen additional expenditure on such items as pension payments, retained firefighters call outs or other heads of expense which had been difficult to estimate for the first year.

After making the prudent provisions set out in detail in the notes to the Accounts the end of year balance on the Revenue Account was nil and no money needed to be transferred back to the constituent authorities.

## ***EXPLANATORY FOREWORD CONT'D***

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### **4 Capital Spending in 1998/99**

Under the legislation establishing the Fire Authority, buildings and equipment relating to the fire services were transferred from the County Council to the Fire Authority at no cost. A total of £623,000 was spent on capital schemes and equipment in 1998/99 as follows:

	£000
Brigade Training Centre	50
Brigade Control Suite	32
Caversham Road Fire Station	6
Breathing Apparatus	42
Fire Appliances	404
Other Vehicles	39
Re-organisation Costs	50
	<hr/>
	623
	<hr/>
The spending was funded by	
Loans	403
Revenue Contributions	220
	<hr/>
	623
	<hr/>

### **5 Future Developments**

#### *Year 2000*

The operational and management issues associated with the millennium have been addressed. The main areas of concern are the possibility of failure of equipment outside the control of the Service and the effect of celebrations on the operations of the Service.

#### *Strategic Planning and Best Value*

The Authority has adopted a Strategic Plan containing Service Aims, Targets and a Review Process. This will be integrated with Best Value and its accompanying Performance Plan. As they develop they will feed into the financial planning process and develop more informed revenue budget and capital programme projections.



D H Illingworth CPFA

Treasurer to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

## ***ACCOUNTING POLICIES***

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### **1 General Principles**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting issued in June 1998 by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and also with guidance notes issued by CIPFA on the application of accounting standards (SSAPs).

The accounting policies are set out below.

### **2 Debtors and Creditors**

The revenue accounts are maintained on an income and expenditure basis in accordance with SSAP 2. That is, sums due to or from the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority during the year are included whether or not the cash has actually been received or paid in the year. The only exceptions are that:

- a) Public utility payments are charged at the date of meter reading, and are not apportioned on a time basis;
- b) Salaries and wages are paid in arrears, and amounts charged correspond to the income tax year;

The effects of these policies are not considered to be material, as they are applied consistently each year.

The capital accounts are also prepared on an accruals basis in accordance with the Code of Practice. This has no effect on the Authority's ability to control its expenditure within the statutory capital controls, which remain on a cash basis.

### **3 Nature of Substantial Reserves and Provisions**

The balance sheet has been prepared to comply with the requirements of the 1996 Code. Funds set aside for liabilities or losses which are likely to be incurred, but for which the amounts involved or dates are uncertain, have been classified as provisions.

The following provisions have been established:

- a) Future Pension Costs. The full cost of Firefighters Pension Scheme payments are payable from the Authority's Revenue Account. This provision has been made towards the lump sum retirement costs for uniformed staff who have become eligible to retire, but have not exercised their right to do so by 31 March 1999.
- b) Removal of Asbestos. Asbestos has been found in many of the Authority's buildings. This provision will fund a programme of remedial works.

## ***ACCOUNTING POLICIES Cont'd***

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- c) Community Safety. This function is partly funded through sponsorship. The main project sponsored by Yellow Pages extends into the 1999/2000 financial year, although all the funding was received during 1998/99.
- d) Replacement of Firefighting Clothing. The existing fire tunics and overtrousers have been identified as providing inadequate thermal protection and require urgent replacement.
- e) Capital Funding Provision. The Authority is required to introduce an Operational Risk Intelligence System ("Computers in Cabs") as a condition of the Health and Safety Improvement Notice received in 1997. This project has now slipped into 1999/2000. This provision also contains some residual funding to meet expenditure on capital schemes commenced by Berkshire County Council.

All other funds set aside have been classified as reserves

- a) Fixed Asset Restatement Reserve. This primarily represents the difference between the valuation of assets under the previous system of capital accounting and the revaluations as at 1 April 1995. It is written down by the net book value of assets as they are disposed of. This is purely a reserve for accounting purposes, it does not represent "spendable" resources.
- b) Capital Financing Reserve. This contains amounts required by statute to be set-aside from capital receipts for the repayment of external loans, and the amounts of capital expenditure financed from revenue and capital receipts. It also reflects the difference between the minimum revenue provision (MRP) for the repayment of external loans (normally this is 4%, but see note 4 below) and the provision for depreciation on fixed assets. This reserve does not represent "spendable" resources.

### **4 Basis of Provision for Redemption of Debt**

The provision is based on the statutory requirement of 4% of the paying Authority's credit ceiling. For 1998/99 no provision is required because the credit ceiling at the start of the year was nil.

### **5 Fixed Assets**

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of fixed assets has been capitalised on an accruals basis.

All the property assets have been classified as operational assets and have been included in the balance sheet at the lower of net current replacement cost or net realisable value in existing use. The property asset values used in the accounts as at 1 April 1998 are based on a valuation undertaken by Berkshire County Council in 1996 (plus net additions in subsequent years), as set out on page 22 of the accounts.

## ***ACCOUNTING POLICIES Cont'd***

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### **6 Depreciation**

Assets, other than land, are being depreciated over their useful economic lives. For properties the estimated lives given as part of the 1996 revaluation exercise by Berkshire County Council have been used.

Where depreciation is provided for, assets are being depreciated using the straight line method, except for vehicles where the reducing balance method is used.

### **7 Notional Capital Charges**

The notional capital charges made to the revenue accounts equate to the sum of depreciation plus a notional interest charge. The latter has been based on the average value at which the fixed assets have been included in the balance sheet between 1 April 1998 and 31 March 1999.

The notional rate of interest used was 6% (as defined by CIPFA) as all assets were included in the balance sheet at current value.

### **8 Pensions**

The Fire Authority participates in two pension schemes. Both provide members with defined benefits relating to pay and service.

- a) Uniformed Fire-fighters - this scheme is unfunded and the charge to the accounts represents the net cost of pensions and other benefits after allowing for contributions made by employees for the year.
- b) The Local Government Superannuation Scheme - which all administrative staff, subject to certain qualifying criteria, are eligible to join. The pension costs that are charged to the Authority's accounts in respect of these employees are equal to the contributions paid to the funded pension scheme for these employees. Further costs may arise in respect of certain pensions paid to retired employees on an unfunded basis. The pension costs have been assessed in accordance with the advice of a professionally qualified actuary. The most recent review was as at 31 March 1998, and revised contributions took effect from 1 April 1999.

The pension costs included in the accounts in respect of these schemes have been determined in accordance with the relevant Government regulations. As a result the Authority does not comply with the accounting requirements of SSAP 24 "Accounting for pension costs", and the liabilities included in the balance sheet are understated in respect of pension costs. However, in accordance with standard accounting practice for local authorities (including fire authorities), the pension costs that would have been necessary to provide for in the accounts for the period under SSAP 24 are disclosed in note 3 to the Revenue Account.

## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES & AUDITOR'S OPINION

### 1 The Fire Authority's Responsibilities

The Fire Authority is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. For the Fire Authority, that officer is the Treasurer;
- to manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.

### 2 Treasurer's Responsibilities

The Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the committee's statement of accounts which, in terms of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting ("the Code"), is required to present fairly the financial position of the Authority at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 1999.

In preparing this statement of accounts, the Treasurer has:

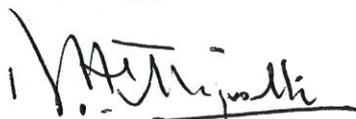
- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- complied with the Code of Practice.

The Treasurer has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date;
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### 3 Treasurer's Certificate

I certify that the statement of accounts set out on pages 15 to 31 are an accurate summary of the accounts of the Authority for the financial year 1998/99 prepared in accordance with the accounting policies stated on pages 8 to 10.



D H Illingworth CPFA  
Treasurer to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

Date: 7 September 1999

*STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES & AUDITOR'S OPINION Ct'd*

4 Auditor's Report to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

## **GLOSSARY OF FINANCIAL TERMS**

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### **Accounting Standards**

Statements of standard accounting practice (SSAP's) issued by the Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB) of which the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) is a member. Guidance has been issued by the CCAB as to the application of these standards to local authority accounts.

### **Accruals**

The concept that income and expenditure are recognised as they are earned or incurred, not as money is received or paid.

### **Balances**

The surplus or deficit on any account at the end of the year. Also referred to as reserves.

### **Capital Charge (Notional)**

A charge to service revenue accounts to reflect the cost of fixed assets used in the provision of services.

### **Capital Expenditure**

The acquisition of fixed assets which will have a long-term value to the Authority e.g. land, buildings, vehicles. *See also* Fixed Assets.

### **Capital Receipts**

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other fixed assets. Capital receipts can be used to finance new capital expenditure, within the rules laid down by the Government. They cannot be used to finance day-to-day spending.

### **Contingency**

A condition which exists at the balance sheet date, where the outcome will only be confirmed on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

### **Credit Approval**

A general term to cover the amounts authorised by the Government for borrowing to finance capital expenditure.

### **Depreciation**

The measure of the wearing out, consumption, or other reduction in the useful life of a fixed asset.

### **Finance Lease**

A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a fixed asset to the lessee. Such a transfer of risks and rewards may be presumed to occur if at the inception of the lease the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any initial payment, amounts to substantially all of the fair value of the leased asset.

### **Fixed Assets**

Tangible assets that yield benefits to the Authority for more than one year. *See also* Capital Expenditure.

### **Gross Expenditure**

The total cost of providing the Authority's services before taking into account any income from government grants and fees and charges.

**Net Cost of Service**

Gross Revenue Expenditure less service income such as fees and charges.

**Operating Lease**

A lease other than a finance lease.

**Operational Assets**

Fixed assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Authority in the direct delivery of those services for which it either has a statutory or discretionary responsibility.

**Provisions**

These are liabilities or losses which are likely or certain to be incurred but uncertain as to the amounts or the dates on which they will arise.

**Reserves**

*See* balances.

**Revenue Expenditure**

This is expenditure on day-to-day running costs and consists principally of salaries and general running expenses. Sometimes abbreviated simply to "revenue".

**SSAP's**

*See* Accounting Standards

## **CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT**

	1998/99 £000	See Note
<b>SERVICE EXPENDITURE</b>		
Employees - Uniformed	10,916	
Employees - Non Uniformed	1,408	
National Insurance	909	
Other Employee Expenses	17	
Training	328	
Firefighters Pension Scheme	3,356	(3)
Other Employees Pension Scheme	55	(3)
Premises	1,106	
Communications	413	
Transport	642	
Supplies & Services	1,067	
Agency and Contracted Services	116	
Notional Capital Charges	1,601	
	21,934	
Gross Expenditure		
Income - Firefighters Pensions (Contributions)	(1,004)	
Income - Firefighters Pensions (Transfers In)	(113)	
Income - Other Operating Income	(599)	
	20,218	
<b>NET COST OF SERVICE</b>		
Transfer from Asset Management Revenue Account	(870)	(7)
External Interest Received	(145)	
	19,203	
<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>		
Depreciation/Principal Loan Repayment Adjustment	(728)	(8)
Contribution from Earmarked Reserves	(45)	
Contribution to Capital Funding Provision	250	
Financing of Capital Expenditure	220	
	18,900	
<b>NET COSTS TO BE MET FROM CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES</b>		
<b>SOURCES OF FINANCE</b>		
Contributions from Constituent Authorities	(18,900)	(10)
	0	
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>		

## ***NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT***

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### **1 Format of Revenue Accounts**

This statement shows the gross expenditure, income and net cost of the Fire Authority analysed subjectively, and how these costs were met from contributions from the Unitary Authorities in Berkshire. Service expenditure includes notional capital charges for fixed assets used in the delivery of services. The notional charges are reversed out in the Asset Management Revenue Account, therefore there is no impact on the amount of expenditure to be met from the constituent local authorities. Capital financing costs (loan charges) are also reflected in the Asset Management Revenue Account. As 1998/99 was the first year of the Authority, no comparative figures have been produced for 1997/98.

### **2 Publicity**

Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1986 requires the Authority to keep a separate account of its expenditure on Publicity. The sums involved are:

	<b>1998/99</b>
	<b>£000</b>
Staff Recruitment Advertising	6
Publicity (including Press and PR Officer)	32
	<hr/>
	38
	<hr/>

### **3 Pensions Costs**

#### *a) Uniformed Firefighters*

In 1998/99 the net cost of pensions and other benefits amounted to £2.2 million, representing 23.5% of pensionable pay. These figures include a contribution to the Provision for Future Pensions Costs of £354,000. Using research information available, it is estimated that if the cost of pensions under the scheme had been determined in accordance with SSAP24, "Accounting for pension costs" the regular cost of the scheme would have been an annual £2.6m, representing 27.5% of pensionable pay, whilst the cost of spreading the unfunded accrued liability over 40 years would have been an additional annual £2.9m, representing a further 30.8% of pensionable pay.

## **NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT *Cont'd***

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### *b) Local Government Superannuation Scheme*

In 1998/99 the Fire Authority paid an employer's contribution of £55,000 into the Pension Fund, representing 3.6% of pensionable pay. The contribution rate is determined by the Fund's Actuary based on triennial actuarial valuations. The review as at 31 March 1995 set the contribution rates for three years with effect from 1 April 1996. The latest review was as at 31 March 1998 and the revised contribution rate of 4.6% takes effect from 1 April 1999. Further increases to 7.9% and 11.2% are planned for 1 April 2000 and 1 April 2001 respectively. Under Pension Fund Regulations, contribution rates are set to meet 100% of the overall liabilities of the Fund and comply with SSAP24. In addition the Fire Authority is responsible for all pension payments relating to added years together with the related increases, but in 1998/99 there were no added years payments. Further information is contained in the Berkshire Pension Fund's Annual Report which is available from The Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead upon request.

#### **4 Leases**

There are no Finance leases. Photocopier lease rentals amounted to £8,000, with no outstanding obligations.

#### **5 Emoluments**

Starting at £40,000, officers' received emoluments in the following ranges:

£	1998/99
40,000 - 49,999	7
50,000 - 59,999	1
60,000 - 69,999	1
70,000 - 79,999	1

Emoluments refer to all amounts paid to, and receivable by, an employee and include sums due by way of expenses allowance, and the estimated money value of any other benefits received by an employee otherwise than in cash.

#### **6 Discontinued Operations**

None.

## *NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT Cont'd*

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### 7 Transactions on the Asset Management Revenue Account

The Asset Management Revenue Account is necessary to convert the net cost of services (which includes notional capital charges as a measure of the use of assets) into net operating expenditure (including depreciation and external interest) as a measure of the real cost to the Authority of holding and using assets. Consequently the deficit on the account is the net figure which results from reversing out notional capital charges made to services and debiting depreciation and external interest. The account is in no way a trading account reflecting the Authority's performance in property management.

	1998/99 £000
<b>Income</b>	
Notional Capital Charges	-1,601
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Provision for Depreciation	728
External Interest Charge	3
<b>Balance to Revenue Account</b>	<u>-870</u>

### 8 Minimum Revenue Provision

The Minimum Revenue Provision is the minimum amount of debt principal repayment that the Authority is required to make. It is calculated at 4% of the Authority's credit ceiling. As at 1 April 1998 the Fire Authority had no credit ceiling and therefore the charge to the Revenue Account in 1998/99 is nil. New loans taken out during 1998/99 have been added to the credit ceiling, and therefore there will be a Minimum Revenue Provision charge next year.

	1998/99 £000
Credit Ceiling at 1 April 1998	<u>0</u>
Minimum Revenue Provision	<u>0</u>
Amount charged as Depreciation	728
Depreciation / Principal Loan Repayment adjustment to Revenue Account	-728
	<u>0</u>

## ***NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE ACCOUNT Cont'd***

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### **9 Prior Year Expenditure**

The shadow Combined Fire Authority incurred expenditure of £45,000 in 1997/98 on set-up costs. This expenditure was included within the Statement of Accounts for Berkshire County Council for 1997/98.

### **10 Contributions from Constituent Authorities**

The Fire Authority's net revenue expenditure is funded by a levy on the six constituent authorities, the amount payable by each being proportional to its tax base.

The contributions from each authority in 1998/99 were:

	<b>1998/99</b>
	<b>£000</b>
Bracknell Forest Borough Council	2,532
Reading Borough Council	2,978
Slough Borough Council	2,321
West Berkshire District Council	3,479
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	3,840
Wokingham District Council	3,750
	<hr/> 18,900 <hr/>

### **11 Member Expenses**

All Member attendance allowances are met directly by the Constituent Authorities which they represent.

## ***FIRE AUTHORITY BALANCE SHEET***

This shows the Authority's financial position as a whole, and summarises its assets and liabilities.

31.3.98 £000		31.3.99 £000	31.3.99 £000	See Note
	<b>NET FIXED ASSETS</b>			
13,673	Land and Buildings	13,475		(1)
964	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	1,002		(1)
0	Deferred Charges	46		(3)
62	Long Term Debtors	33		
14,699	<b>TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS</b>		14,556	
	<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
319	Stocks and Work in Progress	332		
0	Temporary Investments	600		
0	Cash at Bank	1,050		
0	Debtors	269		
0	Payments in Advance	30		
5	Petty Cash Imprests	5		
324			2,286	
	<b>LESS: CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
(267)	Creditors		(1,286)	
14,756	<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		15,556	
0	Long-term Borrowing		(403)	(4)
	Provisions			
0	Capital Funding Provision		(323)	(6)
0	Future Pensions Costs		(354)	(6)
0	Replacement of Firefighting Protective Clothing		(150)	(6)
0	Removal of Asbestos		(178)	(6)
0	Community Safety		(26)	(6)
14,756	<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES</b>		14,122	
	Capital Reserves			
(14,638)	Fixed Asset Restatement Reserve		(14,633)	
0	Capital Financing Reserve		511	
	Revenue Reserves			
(118)	Special Reserve		0	
(14,756)	<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		(14,122)	

## NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET

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### 1 Net Fixed Assets

#### a) Movement of Fixed Assets 1998/99

	Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Net Book Value 1.4.98	13,673	964	14,637
Additions	63	510	573
Disposals/Transfers		-5	-5
Depreciation for Year	-261	-467	-728
Net Book Value 31.3.99	13,475	1,002	14,477

Assets valued at less than £10,000 are normally excluded from the balance sheet. The only exceptions are for vehicles (all of which are included) and major IT or equipment asset replacement programmes, funded through the capital programme.

#### b) Statement of Physical Assets

The Fire Authority owned the following assets at 31 March 1999:

##### Buildings

19 Fire Stations	1 Training Centre
1 Headquarters Offices	

##### Vehicles

37 Water Tenders	8 Other Vehicles
11 Specialist Fire Support Vehicles	1 Boat
24 Vans and Minibuses	

One fire station, at Sonning, is leased.

## *NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET Cont'd*

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### *c) Fixed Asset Valuation*

The properties held by the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority have been transferred from Berkshire County Council at the value shown in the Council's Balance Sheet as at 31 March 1998. These properties were valued (with a valuation date of 1 April 1996) over a six month period between September 1996 and April 1997. The valuations were undertaken by Jones Lang Wootton (who provided an estates and valuation service to the County Council) under the direction of Mr Anthony Levis FRICS. The Council's Director of Property and Assets at the time, Mr Clive Thomas BSc(Hons) MSc FRICS acted as the Instructing Officer.

The bases of valuation are either open market rental (OMV), existing use value (EUV), or depreciated replacement cost (DRC) as defined in the RICS Appraisal and Valuation Manual (the Red Book) with reference to the CIPFA Specification for Commissioning Valuation Services. Internal and external inspections of all properties were undertaken except:-

- i) Properties previously valued by Jones Lang Wootton as at 1 April 1994 (where they were inspected) unless known to have significantly altered since that previous inspection.
- ii) Properties known to fall into the de minimus category.

All the Fire Authority properties are classified as operational and have been valued on the basis of either existing use (EUV), or depreciated replacement cost (DRC). Where a property is highly specialised in use, such as a fire station, such that it is not possible to form a view of the EUV by reference to normal market information, the DRC approach has been used to assess the value of the asset subject to the assumption that the current use and occupation of the property will continue. The method is based on calculating the reprovision cost of the built part of the asset and depreciating this figure having regard to physical, functional and economic obsolescence. This figure is added to the value of the land.

The DRC based valuations adopt a land value which in accordance with the Red Book reflects the surrounding land use where no tangible market for the existing use can be established. For valuations prepared by reference to DRC, the built part of the asset has been depreciated using the straight line method according to the age of the building. Full details were set out in the Valuation Certificate prepared for Berkshire County Council.

Full structural surveys were not undertaken except insofar as they formed part of the Annual Condition Surveys undertaken by County Council staff, Any problems of building construction or environmental factors revealed by these surveys were taken into account in the valuations, but full investigations were not undertaken and reliance was placed on the records maintained by the County Council.

## NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET Cont'd

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Data and information relating to tenure and other relevant details were collated from information held within the County Council's record systems. The more obvious and available sources of information were examined and the information contained therein relied upon as being both accurate and comprehensive.

The total value of land and building on the register at 31 March 1999 is £13,475,000 and the total number of properties are 22. It is anticipated that a revaluation exercise will be undertaken as at 1 April 2000.

### 2 Capital Expenditure and Financing

The table below summarises the capital expenditure for the year (the "additions" shown in the table of Movement of Fixed Assets 1998/99), and how that expenditure has been financed.

	1998/99 £000
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	
Brigade Training Centre	
- Rebuilding of "Willow Wall"	43
- Firehouse	7
Brigade Control Suite	32
Caversham Road Fire Station	6
Breathing Apparatus	42
Fire Appliances	404
Other Vehicles	39
Re-organisation Costs	50
	<hr/> 623 <hr/>
<b>Financed by</b>	
Basic Credit Approval	-353
Supplementary Credit Approval	-50
Revenue – Slippage from 1997/98	-44
Revenue – Funding from 1998/99 budget	-176
	<hr/> -623 <hr/>

- a) The total capital expenditure of £623,000 is £50,000 more than the addition to fixed assets shown in note 1(a). The difference relates to the capitalisation of costs relating to local government reorganisation which have been treated as a deferred charge as no assets have been created by the expenditure incurred by the Authority.

## NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET Cont'd

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- b) The capital accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.
- c) The Fire Authority's formally approved Capital Programme for future years is shown below. However it is now expected that operating leases will be entered into for some of the new vehicles required.

	1999/2000	2000/01	2001/02
	£000	£000	£000
Equipment (BA Sets)		65	
Information Technology	280	10	5
Vehicles	692	434	426
Building Works	176	130	250
Total Capital Payments	<u>1,148</u>	<u>639</u>	<u>681</u>

### 3 Deferred Charges

Deferred charges were set up in the year in respect of expenditure that was capitalised but did not result in the creation of or enhancement to a fixed asset. This expenditure, in respect of local government reorganisation, will be written down over seven years in accordance with the instructions from the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

	1998/99
	£000
Balance brought forward at 1 April	0
Expenditure during year	
- Local Government Reorganisation	<u>50</u>
	50
Written down during year	<u>- 4</u>
Balance carried forward at 31 March	<u>46</u>

## NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET Cont'd

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### 4 Long Term Loans

Long term loans consist of mortgage loans from the Public Works Loans Board, a Central Government agency. An analysis of loans by maturity is:

	<b>Debt at 31.3.99 £000</b>
Maturing within 1-2 years	
Maturing within 2-5 years	
Maturing within 5-10 years	403
Maturing within more than 10 years	
	<hr/> 403 <hr/>

All loans entered into prior to 31 March 1998 were transferred to Reading Borough Council and therefore do not form part of the accounts of the Fire Authority.

### 5 Contingent Liabilities

There is a contingent liability in respect of the cost of lump sum payments for firefighters who are eligible for early retirement because of their length of service. If all those entitled to retire early at 31 March 1999 opted to do so in 1999/2000 the cost of their lump sums would amount to approximately £840,000. The budget for 1999/2000 is insufficient to absorb the full cost of these lump sums, which is why a provision has been established from underspending in 1998/99 (see note 6 below).

### 6 Provisions

The following table shows movements on the Authority's provisions

	<b>1.4.98 £000</b>	<b>Movement in year £000</b>	<b>31.3.99 £000</b>
Future Pensions Costs	0	-354	-354
Removal of Asbestos	0	-178	-178
Community Safety	0	-26	-26
Replacement of Firefighting Protective Clothing	0	-150	-150
Capital Funding Provision	0	-323	-323
	<hr/> 0	<hr/> -1,031	<hr/> -1,031 <hr/>

## *NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET Cont'd*

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a) *Future Pension Costs*

The full cost of Firefighters Pension Scheme payments is payable from the Authority's Revenue Account. This provision has been made towards the lump sum retirement costs for uniformed staff who have become eligible to retire, but have not exercised their right to do so by 31 March 1999.

b) *Removal of Asbestos*

Asbestos has been found in many of the Authority's buildings. This provision will fund a programme of remedial works.

c) *Community Safety*

This function is partly funded through sponsorship. The main project sponsored by Yellow Pages extends into the 1999/2000 financial year, although all the funding was received during 1998/99.

d) *Replacement of Firefighting Protective Clothing*

The existing fire tunics and overtrousers have been identified as providing inadequate thermal protection and require urgent replacement.

e) *Capital Funding Provision*

The Authority is required to introduce an Operational Risk Intelligence System ("Computers in Cabs") as a condition of the Health and Safety Improvement Notice received in 1997. This project has now slipped into 1999/2000. This provision also contains some residual funding to meet expenditure on capital schemes commenced by Berkshire County Council.

## STATEMENT OF TOTAL MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES

	CAPITAL RESERVES		REVENUE RESERVES	TOTAL £000
	Fixed Asset Restatement Reserve £000	Capital Financing Reserve £000	Special Reserve £000	
Balance as at 31.3.98	-14,638	0	-118	-14,756
Net (surplus) /deficit for year	0	731	118	849
Unrealised (gain) / loss, from revaluation of fixed assets	0	0		0
Net (surplus) / deficit from disposal of fixed assets	5	0		<del>0</del> 5
Financing of fixed assets	0	-220		-220
Balance as at 31.3.99	-14,633	511	0	-14,122
See Note	1	2	3	

## NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES

### 1 Fixed Asset Restatement Reserve

The balance on the Fixed Asset Restatement Reserve represents the difference between the valuation of assets under the previous system of capital accounting and the revaluations as at 1 April 1995. The reserve will be written down by the net book value of assets as they are disposed of and debited or credited with the deficits or surpluses arising on future revaluations.

	1998/99 £000
Balance as at 1.4.98	- 14,638
Disposal and/or write-off of Fixed Assets	5
	<u>-14,633</u>

### 2 Capital Financing Reserve

The Capital Financing Reserve contains the amounts which are required by statute to be set aside from capital receipts for the repayment of external loans and the amount of capital expenditure financed from revenue and capital receipts. It also contains the difference between amounts provided for depreciation and that required to be charged to revenue to repay the principal element of external loans.

	1998/99 £000
Balance as at 1.4.98	0
1998/99 Excess of Depreciation charged over the Minimum Revenue Provision	728
1998/99 Write-down of deferred charges	3
Capital Financing Revenue	-220
	<u>511</u>

### 3 Special Reserve

As part of the disaggregation of balances held by Berkshire County Council at 31 March 1998, £118,000 was transferred to the Fire Authority in respect of slippage on capital schemes commenced and funded by the County Council. The balance unspent at 31 March 1999 has been transferred to the Capital Funding Provision.

NOTES TO STATEMENT OF MOVEMENTS IN RESERVES CONT'D

	1998/99 £000
Balance as at 1.4.98	-118
Transfer to Revenue Funding Capital Expenditure in 1998/99	44
Transfer to Capital Funding Provision	74
	<u>0</u>

## **CASH FLOW STATEMENT**

This statement summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.

	1998/99	
	£000	£000
<b>REVENUE ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Cash Outflows</b>		
Cash paid to and on behalf of employees	16,290	
Other operating costs	<u>2,359</u>	18,649
<b>Cash Inflows</b>		
Constituent Authorities	(18,900)	
Other revenue cash income	<u>(1,477)</u>	<u>(20,377)</u>
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Revenue Activities</b>		<b>(1,728)</b>
<b>RETURNS ON INVESTMENTS AND SERVICING OF FINANCE</b>		
<b>Cash Outflows</b>		
Interest Paid		3
<b>Cash Inflows</b>		
Interest Received		<u>(145)</u>
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Servicing Finance</b>		<b>(142)</b>
<b>CAPITAL ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Cash Outflows</b>		
Purchase of Fixed Assets	573	
Deferred Charges	<u>50</u>	623
<b>Cash Inflows</b>		
Capital grants received		<u>0</u>
<b>Net Cash Outflow from Capital Activities</b>		<b>623</b>
<b>Net Cash Inflow before Management of Liquid Resources &amp; Financing</b>		<b><u>(1,247)</u></b>
<b>MANAGEMENT OF LIQUID RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Cash Outflows</b>		
Short term deposits made		33,175
<b>Cash Inflows</b>		
Repayments of short term deposits		<u>(32,575)</u>
<b>Net Cash Outflow from Management of Liquid Resources</b>		<b>600</b>
<b>FINANCING</b>		
<b>Cash Outflows</b>		
Repayments of amounts borrowed		0
<b>Cash Inflows</b>		
New loans raised		<u>(403)</u>
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Financing</b>		<b>(403)</b>
<b>Net Increase in Cash</b>		<b><u>(1,050)</u></b>

## *NOTES TO THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT*

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**(1) RECONCILIATION OF THE SURPLUS ON THE REVENUE ACCOUNT TO THE NET CASH INFLOW FROM REVENUE ACTIVITIES**

	£000	£000
Surplus for the year per Consolidated Revenue Account		0
Minimum Revenue Provision		0
Movement in items on an accrual basis		
Increase in Debtors	269	
Increase in Creditors	-1,019	
Increase in Stocks	13	
Increase in Payments in Advance	30	
Decrease in Car Loans Outstanding	-29	-736
Items classified in another classification		
Interest Paid	3	
Interest Received	-145	-142
Revenue Funding of Capital		220
Other Internal Transfers		-1,071
<b>Net Cash Inflow from Revenue Activities</b>		<b>-1,728</b>

This reconciliation identifies items included within the revenue account which do not result in cash flows under the revenue activities in the statement

**(2) RECONCILIATION OF THE MOVEMENT IN CASH**

	as at 31.3.98	as at 31.3.99	
	£000	£000	£000
Increase in Bank Balance	0	1,050	1,050
<b>Increase in Cash</b>			<b>1,050</b>