

# 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  
E-Mail: wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk

Date: 10 March 2004

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 17 March 2004 in the Council Chamber at Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell commencing at 6.30pm.**

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David R Weller".

David R Weller  
Committee Administrator

To: All Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority









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A329(M)

RG40

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CONTINUED

W O K I N G H A M

W O K I N G H A M

Bill Hill

Cantley

Jokingham

Luckley

Woodcra Manor Farm

Ashridge Wood

Ashridge Farm

Wokingham

Chapel Green

Trench's Bridge

Rushton's Farm

Keep Hatch Farm

Dowles Green

Wokingham

Waterloo Crossing

Long Patch

Dairy Cottage

Stokes Farm

Peblestone Copse

Keep Hatch Farm

Wokingham

Starlane Crossing

Water Hill Farm

Gardeners Green

Manor Farm

Swain's Copse

Keep Hatch Farm

Wokingham

Waterloo Crossing

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Waterloo Crossing

Water Hill Farm

Gardeners Green

Manor Farm

Swain's Copse

Keep Hatch Farm

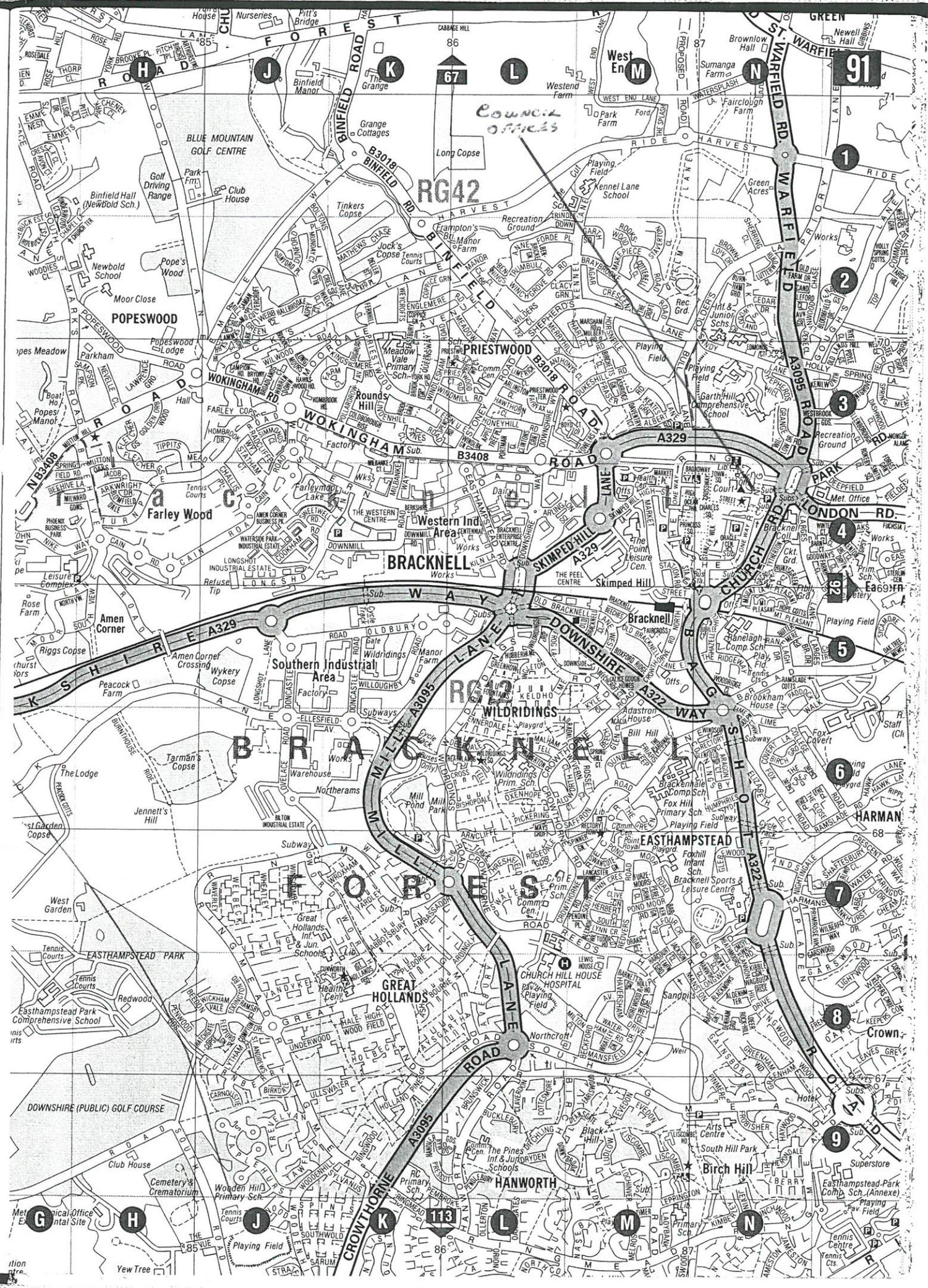
Wokingham

Waterloo Crossing

Water Hill Farm

Gardeners Green







# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



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

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

**DATE AND TIME:** **Wednesday 17 March 2004 at 6.30pm**

**VENUE:** **Council Chamber, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Bracknell  
Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead  
House, Town Square, Bracknell, Berkshire**

## NOTICE OF MEETING

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

Rosemary J Lansdowne  
Clerk to the Authority

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

T Mills (Chairman), J C G Brooks (Vice-Chairman),  
Christine Borgars (Leader of the Labour Group), M Adams, Mrs C Bateson,  
Mrs P Bray, Dr P Bryant, Tom Crisp, G S Findlay, John P Green, J S Grewal,  
D Howes, Mrs V Howes, Owen E Jeffery, C Maskell, J E R Mole, Peter North,  
B J S Patman, A J Ross, D J Smith, D Swindells, R Webb, Simon Werner,  
P Weston, D J Wilson

**Briefing Meetings:**

Conservative Group: 5.30pm – Function Room – 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Labour Group: 5.30pm – Boardroom 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Liberal Democrat Group: 5.30pm – Marriage Room – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

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**For Further Information regarding this meeting, please contact:  
David R Weller: (0118) 932 2288 or E-Mail: [wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk)**



ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2004



## AGENDA

### PART I AGENDA

PAGE NOS

#### CONSTITUTIONAL ITEMS

1	Apologies for Absence	-
2	Part I Minutes: Wednesday 11 February 2004 (Copy attached)	1-7
3	Part I Minutes of Committees (For Information)	8
4	Chairman's Communications (if any)	-
5	Petitions and Questions from the Public Under Standing Orders 8 & 9	-
6	Questions from Members under Standing Order 10 (if any)	-
7	Notices of Motion under Standing Order 12 (if any)	-
8	Appointment of Fire Authority Members to the Regional Management Board – Recommendation from the Executive Committee	9-10

#### ITEMS FOR RESOLUTION

9	Report of the Standards Committee	11-15
10	Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2004/2005	16-24
11	ODPM Charging Strategy Consultation	25-27

*Note: A copy of the Consultation document referred to in the report was E-Mailed/posted to Members on 4 March 2004 – Further copies are available from the Committee Administrator*

#### ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

12	2003/2004 Budget Monitoring	28-31
13	2004/2005 Budget	32-45
14	Update on Regional Management Board	46-47



15	Report on Audit Commission Verification Audit	48-50
16	Fires, Incidents and Issues of Interest	51-55
17	Date of Next Meeting	-

***To note that the Annual Fire Authority Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 30 June 2004 in the Frank Hutchings Community Hall, Bradley Moore Square, Harts Hill Road, Thatcham commencing at 6.30pm***







**AGENDA ITEM 2: MINUTES: 11 FEBRUARY 2004**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH BERKSHIRE ON WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2004 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 7.50PM**

**Present: T Mills (Chairman), J C G Brooks (Vice-Chairman)  
Christine Borgars (Leader of the Labour Group)  
M Adams, Mrs C Bateson, Dr P Bryant, G S Findlay,  
J S Grewal, D Howes, Owen E Jeffery, Peter North,  
B J S Patman A J Ross, D J Smith, D Swindells,  
P Weston, D J Wilson**

**Apologies: Mrs P Bray, Tom Crisp, John P Green, Mrs V Howes,  
J E R Mole, C Maskell, R Webb, Simon Werner**

**1.01/04 PART I MINUTES: 17 DECEMBER 2003**

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 17 December 2003, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute 4.09/03 – Resolution 9 on page 5: Under Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and DAG delete “Labour” in third line of each and insert “Liberal/Democrat”

**1.02/04 PART I MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 3 – not reproduced) of the Executive Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Standards Committee meetings that had taken place since the last meeting in December 2003. Members were advised that copies of the Part I Minutes were available on request from the Committee Administrator (0118) 932 2288 or by e-mail on [wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:wellerd@rbfrs.co.uk).

**NOTED**

**1.03/04 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman had nothing to report.



#### **1.04/04            PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Authority noted that no Petitions or Questions had been received from the Public under Standing Orders 8 and 9.

#### **1.05/04            QUESTIONS FROM FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBERS**

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

#### **1.06/04            NOTICES OF MOTION**

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

#### **1.07/04            BUDGET 2004/2005**

The Authority was requested (Agenda item 8 – not reproduced) to finalise the Budget requirements and set the Precept for 2004/2005 based on the recommendations of the Executive Committee. In addition to the report the following Appendices were also presented (not reproduced):

Appendix 1:	FSS and Grant Figures for 2004/2005
Appendix 2:	Budget Prospects 2004/2005 (19.8% increase)
Appendix 3:	Revenue Growth Bids
Appendix 4:	Revenue Savings
Appendix 5:	Medium Term Financial Plan 2004/2005 to 2006/2007
Appendix 6:	Capital Bids
Appendix 7:	Prudential Code Indicators 2004/2005 to 2006/2007
Appendix 8:	Budget Prospects 2004/2005 (9.8% increase)
Appendix 9:	Budget Prospects 2004/2005 (6.9% increase)
Appendix 10:	Budget Prospects 2004/2005 (5.57% increase)

In speaking to the revised report including Appendices 5 and 8, a copy of which had been distributed prior to the meeting, the Authority Treasurer reported that final FSS and Grant figures were published on 29 January 2004 and were shown in Appendix 1 (not reproduced). He also confirmed that final Council Taxbase figures have now been received from the six billing Authorities in Berkshire.

At its meeting on Thursday 22 January 2004 the Executive Committee had approved a Revenue Budget as summarised in Appendix 2 being a 19.8% increase over last years Budget. This would have set a Budget of £29,428,694 with a Band D Council Tax of £47.97.

However following further information from the ODPM the Executive Committee met again on Friday 6 February 2004 and revised its recommended Budget to



£28,594,879, being a 9.8% increase on last years Budget. This would result in a Band D Council Tax of £43.97. Details of the revised Budget was presented in the revised Appendix 8 (not reproduced).

It was noted that the proposed Revenue Budget includes the funding of a general reserve of £500,000, which is a requirement under Section 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. In response to a question the Authority Treasurer confirmed that if the setting up of a general reserve had not been necessary then the proposed increase on last year's Budget would have been 5.8%.

The Authority Treasurer also drew Members attention to the Transitional Funding Loan of £413,000 as identified in Appendix 8 and reported that the Executive Committee had supported a suggestion that this be paid into the bank and collect the interest as it would be necessary to repay this loan in twelve months time. However the Government has now advised Local Authorities that if this loan is not utilised during 2004/2004 then the Authority is likely to be capped.

Arrangements are under way to design and print 550,000 Council Tax leaflets for distribution to the six billing Authorities by the end of February 2004. It has also been necessary to consult the public and business community on the Authority's Council Tax Precept.

In noting the contents of the remaining Appendices, Members approval was sought to the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Capital Programme and the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendices 5, 6 and 7 respectively (not reproduced).

It was therefore proposed that the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's 2004/2005 Budget as recommended by the Executive Committee be approved. The proposal having been seconded was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED: That:**

1. **The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's 2004/2005 Budget of £28,594,879, being an increase of 9.8% on the 2003/2004 Budget and set out in the revised Appendix 8, be approved.**
2. **In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the following amounts be now calculated for the year 2004/2005:**
  - 1 **The aggregate Council Taxbase of the six Unitary Authorities has been notified as £311,704.06**
  - 2a **£30,902,129 being the aggregate of the amounts, which the Authority estimates for the items, set out in Section 43(2)(a) to (d) of the Act.**
  - 2b **£2,307,250 being the aggregate of the amounts, which the Authority estimates for the items, set out in Section 43(3)(a) to (b) of the Act.**
  - 2c **£28,594,879 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2a above exceeds the aggregate at 2b above, calculated by the Authority in**



accordance with Section 43(4) of the Act as its Budget requirement for the year.

2d £14,889,251 being the aggregate of the sums which the Authority estimates will be payable for the year in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, Revenue Support Grant and additional Grant for Transitional Funding.

2e £43.97 being the amount at 2c above less the amount at 2d above, all divided by the aggregate Council Taxbase at 1 above, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 44(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

2f The Authority, in accordance with Section 40(2)(a) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts of Council Tax for the year 2004/2005 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Band	£
A	29.32
B	34.20
C	39.08
D	43.97
E	53.74
F	63.51
G	73.28
H	87.94

And being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2c by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Authority, in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

2g The Authority, in accordance with Section 40(2)(b) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts payable as Precepts by the six billing Authorities for the year 2004/2005:

Authority	Taxbase	Precept
Bracknell Forest	41,440	1,822,116.80
Reading Borough	49,402	2,172,205.94
Slough Borough	38,247.5	1,681,742.58
West Berkshire	57,837.52	2,543,115.75
Windsor & Maidenhead	62,814.34	2,761,946.53
Wokingham District	61,962.7	2,724,499.92
Total	311,704.06	13,705,627.52

3. The Medium Term Financial Plan, the Capital Programme and the Prudential Indicators set out in Appendices 5,6 and 7 respectively be approved.



## 1.08/04 REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARDS – AGREEMENT

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 9 – not reproduced) of the outcomes of the work undertaken into the formation of a Regional Management Board (RMB) and were requested to approve the Authority's participation in the RMB arrangements for the South-East and other associated issues.

In addition to all Members receiving a copy of the latest Agreement (not reproduced) constituting the South East Fire and Rescue Services RMB prior to the meeting the report presented was supported by the following Appendices (not reproduced):

- Appendix A: Schedule 7 of the Draft Agreement: Costs and Expenses
- Appendix B: Schedule 3 of the Draft Agreement (RMB's Functions)
- Appendix C: The LGA Audit questions in relation to setting up RMB's

In speaking to the report the Chief Fire Officer referred to the guidelines published by the ODPM which make it quite clear that a robust constitution is required. In addition it is the Government's clear intention that RMB's are to be established by 1 April 2004 with specific responsibility to deliver the outcomes of the following six key issues:

- ❖ Establishing a regional approach to training including Regional Training Centres
- ❖ Establishing Regional Control Rooms
- ❖ Introducing regional personnel and HR functions
- ❖ Introducing regional procurement within the context of a national procurement strategy
- ❖ Putting into place effective regional resilience plans fore large scale emergencies
- ❖ Integrating regional common and specialist services.

In discussions with both the ODPM and the GOSE, it has become clear that the Government is seeking evidence of progress in the modernisation of the Fire and Rescue Services. In an attempt to achieve this, the ODPM has given the RMB's a significant amount of delegated powers, which will include the setting up of Regional Control Rooms.

The form of Agreement that has been drafted appears to be acceptable to all the nine South East Fire Authorities and if approved will create a joint committee to act as the RMB for the South-East. It is proposed that member representation would be on the basis of one Member per Authority with each Member having one vote and the Chairmanship rotating round the nine Members annually. The Chairman would be appointed at the Annual Meeting and it is understood that Surrey have indicated a willingness to chair the first year.

Discussions amongst Fire Authorities in the South-East Region has indicated no general support to enter into arrangements leading to a Regional Fire and Rescue Authority but would prefer to establish a RMB that can deliver in line with the Government's modernisation agenda.



Members therefore considered the remainder of the report and the following is a bullet point summary of the comments made:

- ❖ Councillor Brooks drew Members attention to item 2 of Schedule 3 which provided RMB with the ability to implement, monitor, and review such arrangements for the Schedule 2 Action Areas as are approved by the Constituent Fire Authorities. The Chief Fire Officer advised that the RMB will be coming forward in October with proposals for future work based on the six headings set out in paragraph 2 of the report. It is worthy of note however that each Authority does not have to proceed with any of the proposals for future work if it so desires.
- ❖ In response to reservations expressed over the anticipated number of Officers (i.e. nine Clerks and nine Treasurers) it was suggested that the RMB should make sufficient arrangements for the discharge of duties and legal advice in respect of Clerks and Treasurers.
- ❖ In response to a question from Councillor North it was confirmed that Members appointed as substitutes would have the same responsibilities, duties and power as other RMB members (paragraph 6.3 refers). The Chief Fire Officer agreed that the question of whether a substitute member would have the same power would be checked.  
Councillor North also suggested that it should be made clear as to whether an e-mail would be acceptable for notifying the name of a substitute member.
- ❖ Councillor North referred to paragraph 9.3 regarding the non use of cameras during RMB meetings and reminded members that whilst mobile phones are to be switched off many of them also incorporate a camera which could be operated without knowledge. This therefore requires clarification.
- ❖ In response to a question as to whether Constituent Authorities have the power of veto the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that an Authority could choose whether or not to take part in any of the proposed actions.
- ❖ In response to a question from Councillor Jeffery on whether it would be possible for each Authority to be represented by two elected Members the Clerk indicated that whilst it was not possible between now and 1 April to seek the necessary authorisation to increase Member representation it would be possible for RMBs to consider this after they have been established.

In thanking both Members and Officers for their input the Chairman proposed that the proposed action as set out in Section B of the report be approved. The proposal having been seconded was put to the vote and carried.

**RESOLVED: That:**

- 1. The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority agree to participate in the Regional Management Board arrangements in the South East Region, broadly within the constitution forwarded to Members on 9 February 2004, and as discussed by the Authority at its meetings in October and December 2003.**



2. After consulting the Chairman, Chief Fire Officer and Authority Treasurer, power be delegated to the Clerk and Monitoring Officer to approve the final terms of the Agreement, thereby creating a joint committee to act as a Regional Management Board.
3. That the Clerk and Monitoring Officer be authorised to sign and seal Agreement, to commence on 1 April 2004.
4. The Regional Management Board be authorised to spend, in its first year on behalf of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, the maximum sum of £1000 or one ninth of the total costs, whichever is the less, on administrative costs, plus one ninth of any Audit Fee.

#### **1.09/04 GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS FOR REGIONAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE CONTROL ROOMS**

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 10 – not reproduced), supported by a visual presentation from the Deputy Chief Fire Officer, on the Government proposals to require Fire Authorities to take part in a project that will bring about the creation of Regional Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms.

Following the presentation, Members were given the opportunity to ask questions. It was noted that Fire Authority Chairman had been invited to collaborate and make a single regional response to the ODPM by the end of January 2004 on the following questions:

- ❖ The findings of the report (The Future of Fire and Rescue Service Control Rooms in England and Wales – Update 2004).
- ❖ The Government's response
- ❖ The draft Location Criteria (Annex 'A' to the Nick Raynesford letter).

It was reported that there was a significant amount of information to come which would be shared with Authority Members.

**NOTED**

#### **1.10/04 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next Fire Authority meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 17 March 2004 in the Council Chamber, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell commencing at 6.30pm.

**NOTED**



**AGENDA ITEM 3:****PART I MINUTES OF COMMITTEES**

**To:** Royal Berkshire Fire Authority  
**Date:** 17 March 2004  
**Officer Contributing:** Committee Administrator

**A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Members of Fire Authority Committee and Working Party meetings that have taken place since the last meeting of the Fire Authority in February 2004.

**B PROPOSED ACTION**

The Authority is invited to NOTE the report.

**C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**D SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

1 The following meetings have taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting in February 2004:

<b>IRMP Working Party</b>	Tuesday 24 February 2004
<b>Executive Committee:</b>	Friday 6 February and Tuesday 2 March 2004
<b>Fire Liaison Group</b>	Tuesday 2 March 2004
<b>Wokingham Fire Cover and Crewing Working Party</b>	Monday 15 March 2004

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

**E BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Agenda's and/or Minutes for the above mentioned meetings

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



# ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

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WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2004

## ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

With the approval of the Chairman the attached correspondence from the Fire Brigades National Employers will be discussed under **Agenda item 4 (Chairman's Communications)**

The following documents are therefore attached:

- ◆ Circular EMP/03/04
- ◆ Joint Secretaries' Report on Negotiations on the Grey Book (paragraph 5 of attached Circular refers)
- ◆ Joint Secretaries' Report on Issues Connected to the Implementation of IPDS (paragraph 6 of attached Circular refers)
- ◆ Report from ACAS (paragraph 8 of attached Circular refers)

Thank you

David  
Committee Administrator



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**To: Chairs of Fire Authorities  
Chief Executives/Clerks to Fire Authorities**

**cc: Chief Fire Officers/Firemasters  
Members of the Employers' Side of the NJC**

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15th March 2004

**CIRCULAR EMP/03/04**

Dear Sir/Madam

**CONSULTATION ON THE REVISED GREY BOOK AND A REVISED DISPUTES  
RESOLUTION PROCESS**

1. I am writing on behalf of the National Employers to consult you regarding the outcome of negotiations on (i) the Grey Book and (ii) an alternative process for the resolution of local disputes. *X*
2. Fire authorities will know that Stage 2 of the 7% pay increase due from 7th November 2003 was subject to the two conditions set out in paragraph 2.1 of the joint agreement of 13th June 2003, namely completion of negotiations and verification by the Audit Commission (or Accounts Commission in Scotland). *X*
3. In the light of the agreement to the Joint Secretaries' Position Statement of 20th October 2003, and the substantial progress being made in negotiations, it was agreed on 28th November that half of the 7% could be paid immediately with the remaining 3.5% following once the two conditions above had been met. *X*
4. The purpose of this circular is to inform you of the latest position and to consult you on the changes to the Grey Book and disputes resolution process that have provisionally been agreed in negotiations.

**Negotiations**

5. A report by the Joint Secretaries is **attached**, which summarises all of the changes resulting from the recent negotiations on the Grey Book together with the earlier agreements of 13th June and 20th October. Provisional agreement has now been reached on all but one issue (see paragraph 14 of the report).
6. Also **attached** is a separate Joint Secretaries' report on IPDS-related issues, which includes agreement to incorporate into the Grey Book the fire and rescue service role maps. This is one of the two crucial areas of modernisation,



alongside the agreement on duty systems that was reached in June 2003, which fire authorities are already free to implement.

7. In anticipation that these documents could form the basis for formal agreement, the Joint Secretaries will now draft a revised Grey Book, which will be submitted to the Plain English Society for advice.
8. A report from ACAS is **attached** that contains recommended local consultation and negotiating procedures to replace the current disputes procedure. The negotiating procedure would cover only those issues that are subject to collective agreement. It includes a facility for third party assistance where agreement is not possible and a facility for issues to be referred to binding arbitration, but only with the agreement of both parties (in other words, a bilateral rather than unilateral reference).
9. A provisional agreement reflecting these broad principles is currently being drafted.

#### **Verification**

10. The Audit Commission has already produced an interim report in respect of England and Wales and its final report will be published later this month. The Accounts Commission report in respect of Scotland will also be published later this month.

#### **Consultation process**

11. You will shortly be receiving an invitation for the chair and one other representative of your authority to attend a consultative meeting in London on 5th April to express your views on the three attached documents. This will be followed later that day by a meeting of the National Employers, who will consider whether they are satisfied that the two conditions for the release of the remaining 3.5% of the Stage 2 payment (backdated to 7th November 2003) have been met.
12. We understand that the FBU will also be consulting its members on these documents in the period leading up to 5th April.

#### **NJC constitution**

13. Significant progress has also been made in negotiations on the revised constitution of the NJC. Provisional agreement has been reached on the major principles and the detail should be concluded shortly. Circular NJC/03/04 confirmed that agreement on the constitution is not one of the conditions for payment of the remaining 3.5%.

Yours faithfully



**Phil White**  
**Assistant Employers' Secretary**



**NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES'  
FIRE BRIGADES**

**JOINT SECRETARIES' REPORT ON ISSUES CONNECTED TO  
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IPDS**

**MARCH 2004**

The Joint Secretaries' Position Statement of 20th October 2003 on the implementation of the fire service pay and conditions agreement required the NJC to conclude negotiations on guidance on the pay issues relating to (i) the assessment of competence for each role within the IPDS structure (which was dependent on the publication of a Fire Service Circular) and (ii) the assessment of job size for some of the roles.

Those negotiations have covered the following five areas. The term "agreement" needs to be considered in the context that any final agreement is subject to (i) agreement on all of the following issues and (ii) formal endorsement by the two sides of the NJC.

***(1) Incorporation of the fire and rescue service role maps into the Grey Book***

This has been agreed. The detail is set out at Appendix A.

***(2) Definition of competence for each role***

This has been agreed. The detail is also set out at Appendix A.

***(3) Process for assessing competence***

A national framework for workplace assessment has been agreed, which requires the production of a detailed code of practice to support the agreed framework. This is set out at Appendix B.

***(4) Guidance on the allocation of jobs to roles***

This will require the production of a role classification system based on the following principles:

- The process of role classification will be based on a prose description drawn from the agreed role maps.



- The prose will be a general description of the functions and responsibilities that may be applicable to the range of jobs within each of the roles eg fire safety officer within the Watch Manager role.
- The functions and responsibilities of a proposed or existing job will be compared with the resultant prose descriptions to determine the appropriate level and pay range.
- The prose descriptions will be agreed by the NJC.
- A framework for appeals will be agreed by the NJC.

### **(5) Guidance on job size**

This will require the production of guidance on determining whether a job falls into the competent A or competent B part of the pay band for the roles of Watch Manager to Area Manager.

It has been agreed that this will be based on the principle that the main determinant will be responsibility for people.

In respect of items (4) and (5) it is anticipated that a draft for testing against a sample of fire and rescue authorities will be ready by the end of April 2004.

### **Implementation**

The responsibility for implementing appropriate arrangements for the selection, development and assessment of employees to their roles lies with the fire and rescue authority. Until appropriate verified arrangements are in place employees in roles above firefighter will be competent for pay purposes only and will receive competent rates of pay on appointment. Verification of whether arrangements are in place across a brigade will be by the agreed body responsible for the quality assurance of the national framework.

In the case of newly appointed firefighters the training rates of pay will apply immediately. On completion of training the development rate will apply. Where a firefighter is unable to attain competence because the arrangements referred to above are not in place, he or she shall be regarded as competent for pay purposes three years from entry to the service.



## APPENDIX A

### COMPETENCE AND PAY

Pay for employees covered by this scheme of conditions of service is based on defined stages of development leading to demonstration of competence in the roles defined below. These stages are:

#### Training

For the roles of Firefighter and Firefighter (Control) the training stage is the point at which an employee is in full-time training and is not yet performing the role in its appropriate context. An individual in this position would receive a trainee rate of pay.

#### Development

The development stage is where an employee is working in the role under supervision and is being assessed against the different functions that make up that role. While employees are in this stage, and before they show competence in the full requirements of the role, they will receive the development rate of pay.

#### Competent

After all applicable functions have been assessed as having been sufficiently achieved by an individual employee, they will have demonstrated "competence" in their role and receive the appropriate competent rate of pay.

It is not possible to specify a time period for competence to be demonstrated as it depends on the specific requirements of employees, accessibility to assessment and the opportunities available. The whole basis of the new approach is to tailor development to meet individual and organisational needs, so the progress of each individual must be considered in the context of these variables. It can, however, be reasonably expected that the majority of employees, on any duty system, should show competence within the following timescales:

Firefighter	Three years from entry to the service
All other roles	18 months from entering the programme

#### Roles of employees

The defined roles of employees are:

Firefighter	Firefighter (Control)
Crew Manager	Crew Manager (Control)
Watch Manager	Watch Manager (Control)
Station Manager	Station Manager (Control)
Group Manager	Group Manager (Control)
Area Manager	



The roles utilised shall be as the fire and rescue authority considers necessary. Specific activities within roles will be determined by the fire authority to meet the local needs of the service based on risk. The pay structure applicable to each of the stages for the defined roles above are outlined in Section 3.

The units of competence that form each of these roles are [attached as appendices or cross refer to documents elsewhere]. Fire and rescue authorities can require any reasonable activity to be carried out by an individual within their role map.

As with all other units in a role map, a fire and rescue authority can require an employee to carry out driving duties where this unit is part of their role map. Where:

- the fire and rescue authority does not require an employee to drive, or
- the employee is unable to drive either for medical or other genuine reasons, or
- the employee is unable to demonstrate competence following selection, training or assessment

he or she shall be regarded as competent in the role subject to having demonstrated competence in all other applicable functions in the role map.



## APPENDIX B

### A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR WORKPLACE ASSESSMENT

The NJC is supportive of an approved process for workplace assessment within a national framework that benefits fire and rescue service employers and employees, ensures common standards are maintained and which will:

- Create realistic and transparent performance expectations
- Identify and recognise personal strengths and areas for improvement
- Consider how to build on, and extend, strengths and successes from both the personal and organisational point of view
- Share good ideas and exemplar practices within organisations
- Consistently measure progress towards individual and organisational objectives
- Achieve a common sense of performance and direction, based on a shared view of what needs to be done
- Links development needs to development opportunities

The national framework must be based on the agreed national occupational standards and must include:

- Equality of access
- Mechanisms to monitor equality
- Individual records
- A standardised approach to evidence gathering
- National verification and external validation of the standards being assessed and the system being used
- An appeals process
- A means to address malpractice

The workplace assessment process needs to be quality assured within the national framework and administered by an agreed body who will maintain rigorous quality assurance and quality control arrangements including:



- Confirming the existence and quality of procedures for selection, development and monitoring of assessors and verifiers
- Guidance, support and continuous development for assessors and verifiers
- Arrangements for effective monitoring
- Arrangements for the effective maintenance and monitoring of records relating to assessments and supporting arrangements concerning the verification process
- Systems to ensure that trends and developments identified are fed back to the assessment/verification network and fire and rescue service planning process

A code of practice to meet the needs of this national framework will be produced.

