

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
When calling ask for: David R Weller
Direct Line: (0118) 932 228
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Date: 18 June 2003

Dear Member

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

I have pleasure in attaching your Agenda for the Annual Meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to be held on **Wednesday 25 June 2003 in the Council Chamber at West Berkshire District Council, Market Street, Newbury commencing at 6.30pm**. A buffet will be provided in the Council Chamber.

Car parking is available in the Public Car Park adjacent to the Council Offices. Car parking charges do not apply after 6.00pm. **Members are advised not to park in the multi storey car park opposite as the gates may be locked before the conclusion of the Fire Authority Meeting.** A map showing the venue is reproduced overleaf and directions are as follows:

M4 - Leave the Motorway at Junction 13 (Newbury) taking the first exit signposted A34. After approximately one mile the A34 Newbury By-Pass will go off to the right. At this point you should take the left exit signposted Newbury/Thatcham. Follow this road until you reach a set of traffic signals and move over to the right hand lane. Continue on this road passing through the next roundabout (Robin Hood) and continue to the next roundabout (Police Station will be on your left). As you approach move over to the right hand lane. From the roundabout take the second exit signposted Town Centre. Continue down this road (Bear Lane) to the next set of traffic signals and turn left. Follow this road (Cheap Street) which then bears to the right (Market Street) passing the Bus Station on your left. Just after the entrance to the bus station take the next left hand turn signposted Council Offices and then turn immediately left into the Public Car Park.

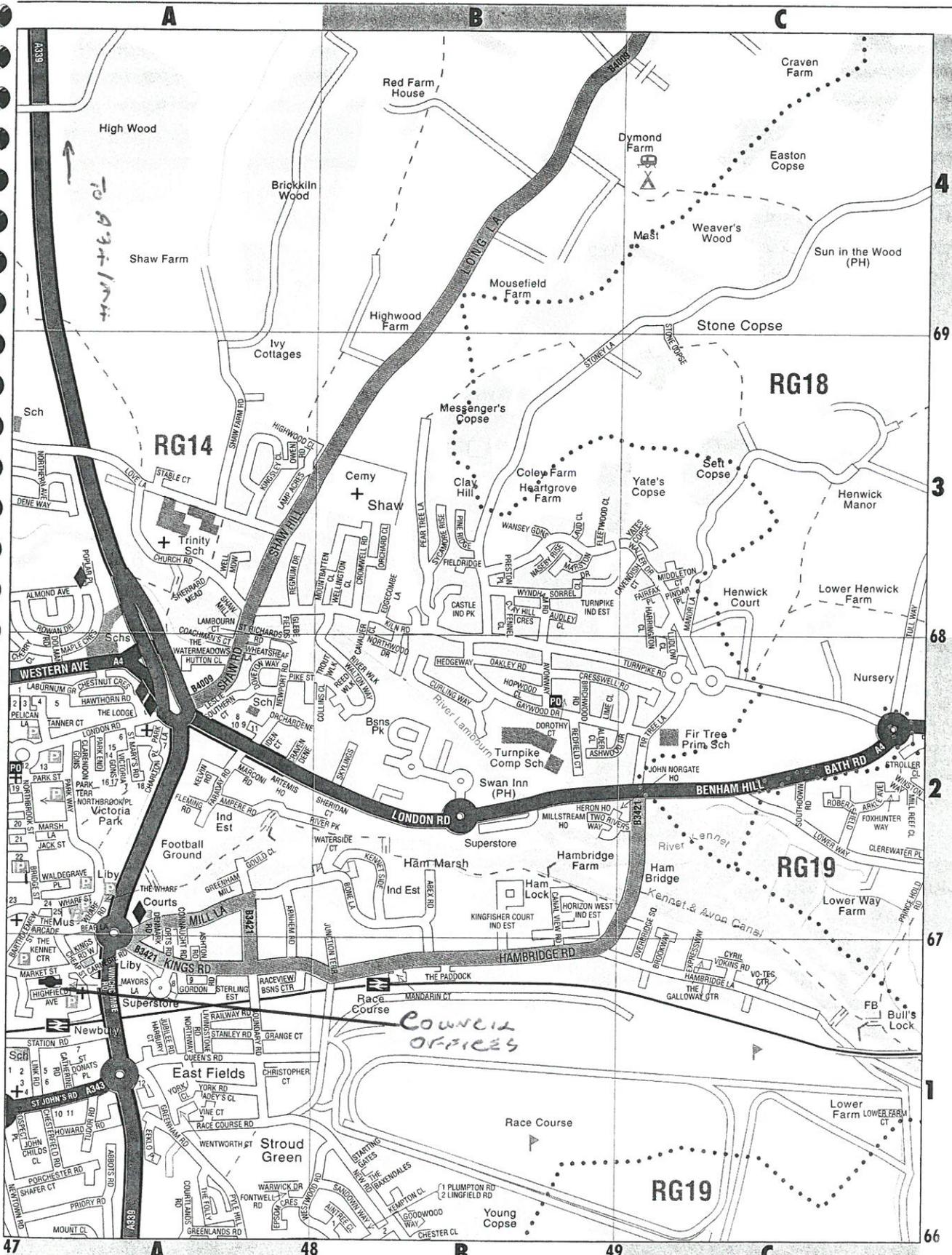
A4 - Leave the Motorway at Junction 12 and take the A4 signposted Thatcham/Pangbourne. Follow the A4 passing through Woolhampton and Thatcham until you reach the Robin Hood roundabout in Newbury where you turn left onto the old A34 and follow the directions above from the Police Station roundabout.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'David R Weller'.

David R Weller (Committee Administrator)

To: All Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority



- A1 1 FAIR CLOSE HO
- 2 LINK HO
- 3 MADEIRA PL
- 4 KENNET CT
- 5 SHEFFORD LODGE
- 6 ALCHESTER CT
- 7 SHROVE CT
- 8 GORDON CT
- 9 ROMANO CT
- 10 HILARY HO
- 11 QUEENS CT
- 12 WINCHESTER HO
- A2 1 CORPORATION COTTS
- 2 ANGEL CT
- 3 WESTBOURNE TERR
- 4 LYNTON CT
- 5 SPEENHAMLAND CT
- 6 ST MARY'S CT
- 7 ST JOSEPH'S CT
- 8 NORTH VIEW GDNS
- 9 SOUTH VIEW GDNS
- 10 KENNET PL
- 11 NEWFOOT CL
- 12 THE BROADWAY
- 13 THE PENTANGLE
- 14 ST MARY'S PL
- 15 BEECH CT
- 16 ASH CT
- 17 CHESTNUT CT
- 18 CONISTON CT
- 19 ALBERT RD
- 20 WEAVER'S WLK
- 21 CROMWELL PL
- 22 PENROBE RD
- 23 TOWN MILLS
- 24 MANSION HOUSE ST
- 25 MARKET PL

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



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

MEETING: **Annual Meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**

DATE AND TIME: **Wednesday 25 June 2003 at 6.30pm**

VENUE: **Council Chamber, West Berkshire District Council, Council Offices, Market Place, Newbury, 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.

D C H Williams
Clerk to the Authority

To: MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

M Adams, Mrs C Bateson, Mrs P Bray, Miss C Borgars, J C G Brooks,
Dr P Bryant, Tom Crisp, G S Findlay, John P Green, J S Grewal,
D Howes, Mrs V Howes, Owen E Jeffery, C Maskell, T Mills, J E R Mole,
Peter North, B J S Patman, A J Ross, D J Smith, D Swindells, R Webb,
S Werner, P Weston, D J Wilson

Briefing Meetings:

Conservative Group: 5.30pm – Committee Room 1 – First Floor
Labour Group: 5.30pm – Committee Room 3 – First Floor
Liberal Democrat Group: 5.30pm – Chairman’s Office – First Floor

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

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2003



AGENDA

PART I AGENDA

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CONSTITUTIONAL ITEMS

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| | <i>To elect a Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ensuing year.</i> | |
| 2 | Election of Vice-Chairman 2003/2004 | 1 |
| | <i>To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ensuing year.</i> | |
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| 7 | Chairman's Communications (if any) | - |
| 8 | Petitions and Questions from the Public Under Standing Orders 8 & 9 | - |
| 9 | Questions from Members under Standing Order 10 (if any) | - |
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To note that the next Fire Authority meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 10 September 2003 in the Council Chamber, Slough Borough Council, Town Hall, Bath Road, Slough commencing at 6.30pm

The December Fire Authority Meeting (Budget) will take place on Wednesday 17 December 2003 in the Council Chamber, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Reading, commencing at 6.30pm.

| | | |
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**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2003**

AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM 1: ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2003/2004

To elect a Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ^{31 Dec}ensuing year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor be elected
Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ^{31 Dec}ensuing year.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2003/2004

To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED: That Councillor be elected Vice-
Chairman of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the ensuing year.

AGENDA ITEM 3: APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

**AGENDA ITEM 4: MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 25 June 2003
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

B PROPOSED ACTION

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

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is no contribution to the Strategic Plan

E SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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

Bracknell Forest Borough Council (3) – Representation Changed

T Mills (Con), **Peter North (Con)**, **Mr M Adams (Lab)**

Reading Borough Council (4) – Representation Changed

Ms C Borgars (Lab), **Tom Crisp (Lab)**, C Maskell (Lab), **P Weston (Lib/Dem)**

West Berkshire District Council (5) – Representation Changed

J C G Brooks (Lib/Dem), Dr P Bryant (Con), O E Jeffrey (Lib/Dem),
G S Findlay (Con), J E R Mole (Lib/Dem),

Slough Borough Council (3) – No Change

J S Grewal (Lab), D J Smith (Con), R Webb (Lab)

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (5) Representation Changed

Mrs C Bateson (Con), Mrs V Howes (Lib/Dem), **D Howes (Lib/Dem)**,
Cllr S Werner (Lib/Dem), D J Wilson(Con)

Wokingham District Council (5) - Representation Changed

Mrs P Bray (Lib/Dem), John P Green (Con), B J S Patman (Con), A J Ross (Con),
D Swindells (Lib/Dem)

2 The Political Parties breakdown is as follows:

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Conservative | 10 |
| Labour | 6 |
| Liberal/Democrat | 9 |
| Total | 25 |

3. For Members information the following are no longer Members of the Fire Authority:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Bracknell Forest Borough Council: | R A Flood, E L Glasson |
| Reading Borough Council: | D Morgan, P Hingley |
| West Berkshire Council: | D Liddiard |
| Royal Borough of W&M: | P Love, M Scott |
| Wokingham District Council: | C Clacey |

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Confirmation of appointments received from District/Borough Councils in Berkshire

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

AGENDA ITEM 5: MINUTES:

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WOKINGHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL, SHUTE END, WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE ON WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2003 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AND CONCLUDED AT 8.34PM.

Present: J C G Brooks (Chairman), B J S Patman (Vice-Chairman), E L Glasson (Leader of the Labour Group), Ms C Borgars, Mrs P Bray, Dr P Bryant, R A Flood, John P Green, Owen E Jeffery, P Love, J E R Mole, A J Ross, D J Wilson

Apologies: Mrs C Bateson, J S Grewal, D W Liddiard, C Maskell, T Mills, D J Smith, E J Webb

1.01/03 MEMBERSHIP OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

Members were advised (Agenda item 2 – not reproduced) that Slough Borough Council had appointed Councillor R Webb as one of their Fire Authority representatives in place of the late Councillor Dennis McCarthy.

NOTED

1.02/03 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 3 – not reproduced) that following a national advertisement for the vacant position of Chief Fire Officer the selection and appointment process had taken place on the 24 and 27 February 2003. At the conclusion of the process the Authority's Appointments Panel appointed Mr Iain Cox, the current Assistant Chief Fire Officer, as Chief Fire Officer designate. Mr Cox will take up his post as Chief Fire Officer on 1 April 2003.

The Chairman advised Members that unfortunately Mr Clement-Green was unable to attend this meeting due to personal circumstances but had he been able to do so this would have been his last meeting after thirty-two years in the Fire Service. Having spent seven years as Deputy Chief Fire Officer Mr Clement-Green has been Royal Berkshire's Chief Fire Officer for the last two and half years. The Chairman wished to place on record his sincere thanks to Mr Clement-Green for his hard work and for the very valuable contribution that he had made to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. He wished him good health and every happiness in his forthcoming retirement.

The Chairman referred to the fact that this was also the last meeting for Mr Donald Illingworth, the Authority Treasurer, as he was retiring on 31 March 2003. He wished

to place on record his thanks to Mr Illingworth for the very professional way in which he had controlled the Authority Accounts for the last five years and wished him good health and every happiness in his forthcoming retirement. The Chairman also welcomed Andrew Vallance, to his new role as Authority Treasurer/Head of Financial Services with effect from 1 April 2003.

Mr Illingworth in thanking the Chairman for his very kind comments wished both the Fire Authority and Andrew well in the future.

NOTED

1.03/03 MINUTES: 18 DECEMBER 2002

The Part I Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 18 December 2002, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

1.04/03 PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 5 – not reproduced) Performance Review and Audit Panel, Personnel Committee, Community Safety Panel, Urgency Committee and Fire Liaison Group meetings that had taken place since the last meeting in December 2002. Members were advised that copies of the Part I Minutes are available on request from the Committee Administrator (0118) 932 2288.

NOTED

1.05/03 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman introduced and welcomed John Daly, the Brigade's/Fire Authority's partnership for Common Sense Co-ordinator.

NOTED

1.06/03 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.

1.07/03 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

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

1.08/03 NOTICES OF MOTION

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

1.09/03 PROCEDURE FOR DISPUTES PANEL HEARINGS

The Authority was requested (Agenda item 10 – not reproduced) to consider whether the existing policy that all Disputes Panel recommendations be considered, at least initially, in Part II of the Authority's business should be adhered to.

At its meeting in June 2002, the Authority had considered a number of recommendations emanating from meetings of the Disputes Panel in September 2001 and March 2002 when a number of procedural issues between management and Fire Brigades' Union (FBU) regarding the determination of disputes had taken place. One of the recommendations adopted read as follows:

“That the outcome of the Disputes Panel hearing should be reported to the Fire Authority under the Part II Agenda but where deemed appropriate the decisions so made be capable of being promulgated to staff.”

At a Fire Liaison Group (FLG) meeting in June 2002 the FBU expressed reservations about this proposal and were of the opinion that Disputes involving policy should be considered in the Part I Agenda whereas those concerning individuals should be considered in Part II. Having raised the issue at subsequent FLG meetings the Chairman asked the Personnel Committee to reconsider this particular issue with a view to making a recommendation to this Authority meeting.

In noting that it is always open to the Authority to move a Part II item into Part I, the Personnel Committee considered three options that were open to the Authority as set out in paragraph 6 of the report (not reproduced). Whilst recognising the FBU's concerns, Members were of the opinion that even during a Dispute concerning policy matters there is a real possibility that reference could be made to an individual or individuals during the Hearing, as was the case at a recently held Disputes Panel during consideration of a policy matter.

Having considered the issue in depth the Personnel Committee agreed that no variation be made to the existing policy and that the decision be referred to the Authority with a recommendation to that effect.

A suggestion by Councillor Ms C Borgars that Dispute Panels, when making their decisions on disputes involving policy matters should separate those references to individuals into a Part II Minute was not supported.

RESOLVED: That no change be made to existing policy which provides for all Disputes Panel recommendations to be considered in Part II of the Authority's business, unless the Authority decide to move the discussion into Part I.

1.10/03 LGA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP FOR COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITIES

The Authority's support was sought (Agenda item 11 – not reproduced) to a proposal from the Devon Fire Authority to be put to the Local Government Association (LGA) to form a Special Interest Group for Combined Fire Authorities within the umbrella of the LGA.

A copy of a letter from the Secretary to the Devon Fire Authority seeking the Authority's support, together with the draft proposal was presented in Appendix A (not reproduced). Devon has indicated its willingness to co-ordinate the Special Interest Group via the Authority's Secretary in the first instance.

RESOLVED: That the proposal from the Devon Fire Authority to seek the formation of a Special Interest Group for Combined Fire Authorities within the umbrella of the Local Government Association be supported and approved.

1.11/03 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND STRATEGY 2002/2004

The Authority's approval was sought (Agenda item 12 – not reproduced) to the Treasury Policy Statement and Strategy Statement for 2003/2004 and it was also requested to determine the Fire Authority's overall borrowing limit and the limit on the proportion of total interest payable which might be payable at a variable rate.

In noting the main requirements of the CIPFA Code of practice on Treasury Management in Local Authorities as set out in paragraph 1 of the report (not reproduced), Members were advised that Treasury Management Practices would be drawn up to cover how treasury management activities are actually implemented in accordance with the Treasury Policy Statement and Statement Strategy, a copy of which was presented as Appendix 2 (not reproduced).

In addition the Authority had a statutory duty to determine its borrowing limits as explained in the remainder of the report (not reproduced).

RESOLVED: That:

- 1. The proposed Treasury Management Policy Statement and Strategy Statement for 2003/2004 be approved.**
- 2. The following determinations be made for 2003/2004:**
 - a An overall borrowing limit of £3,745,000**
 - b A short term borrowing limit of £1,181,000**
 - c A maximum limit of 50% of total interest paid, being on variable rate loans**

1.12/03 THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE FIRE SERVICE – THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE BAIN REPORT

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 13 – not reproduced) of the key implications of the Bain Report published on 16 December 2002 resulting from an independent review of the Fire Service (IRFS), carried out over a three month period by Sir Anthony Young, Professor Sir Michael Lyons and its Chairman, Sir George Bain. The review is entitled “The Future of the Fire Service: Reducing Risk, Saving Lives”.

In all the report makes thirty-six recommendations covering eight areas as summarised in paragraph 2 of the report and detailed in Appendix 1 (not reproduced). In addition the IRFS gives some indication of the timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations, notably the pay increments, and these were summarised in Appendix 2 (not reproduced). This is a very ambitious timeframe and is closely interrelated and already there has been some slippage from the original proposals.

The implications to the Authority of the Review can be placed under three main headings, Governance, Paybill and Retained, as summarised in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report (not reproduced). There are however other implications arising from the report, notably on Control Rooms, New Dimensions, Resilience, Multi-tier Entry and Procurement. In essence the report recommends fundamental reform, suggesting that “the Fire Service needs to be changed from top to bottom, to bring it into line with best practice at the start of the twenty-first century. It will however be impossible to implement change along the lines proposed in the report until such time as the current dispute is resolved.

The Chairman sought Members’ approval to the suspension of Standing Orders to enable a representative of the Fire Brigades’ Union to address the meeting. In thanking the Chairman for the opportunity to speak, Mr Lincoln Ball, representing Berkshire FBU, referred to the latest offer from the National Employers Side which can be viewed in full on the Employers and FBU’s Web-Sites and also to the attempts to identify common ground between the FBU and Fire Authority.

Whilst the offer represented 16% over three years with a guaranteed 4% now, it also required changes to the conditions of service by dismantling existing and imposing new Contracts. FBU members across the Country were currently being consulted on the new offer, which, if rejected, will increase the risk of further industrial action. The FBU have also received clarification from the National Employers on the latest offer but this has not yet been considered in detail.

In explaining the FBU’s position as seen at a local level, Mr Ball advised Members that the conditions attached to the pay offer could see the total number of fire-fighters across the Country being reduced by 4,200 which could have a significant effect on the attendance time of appliances responding to an incident. He therefore asked the Fire Authority to sign up to a commitment with the Berkshire FBU to oppose this particular aspect of the modernisation programme.

In conclusion Mr Ball reported that the FBU would be announcing that a further

twenty-four hour strike is scheduled to take place on Thursday 20 March 2003 starting at 18.00hrs.

In thanking Mr Ball for his address, the Chairman reiterated his wish for negotiations to take place at a local rather than a national level. If the Bain report had provided Authorities with more latitude to give the people of Berkshire a better service through local agreement this would have been welcomed. He confirmed however that it was unlikely that the Fire Authority would agree to any reductions in the number of fire-fighters or to a lower level of fire cover in the County of Berkshire.

The Chief Fire Officer reminded Members that Fire Authorities were still awaiting the publication by the ODPM of the White Paper on the Modernisation of the Fire Service in the UK. Once received it would be necessary to consider its implications in great depth and it may therefore be necessary for decisions to be taken on a variety of issues before the next Fire Authority meeting in June 2003. It may therefore be necessary for an Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting to be held.

In welcoming the news that working relationships within the Brigade had remained positive, during the recent periods of strike action and afterwards, Members did express their disappointment that a new strike date has been announced. They reiterated their decision to continue supporting the concept of negotiation between the National Employers and the FBU as the most effective method of resolving the dispute.

In reiterating their support for an increase in fire-fighters' pay some Members expressed their concerns over the impact of any further strike action, both on the public's perception of fire-fighters, the Brigade and possible internal consequences.

Having invited and received a summing up from Mr Ball, the Chairman in his summing up of the debate thanked both the FBU and Members for their contributions and indicated that whilst modernisation should always result in service improvement the Fire Authority remain supportive of Berkshire's Fire-Fighters and will never seek to reduce the operative effectiveness of the Brigade. It was essential however that the Authority should respond to changing times and circumstances and should embrace the concept of modernisation.

NOTED

1.13/03 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 14 – not reproduced) that the Audited Statement of Accounts for 2001/2002 had been published and is available for inspection on the Fire Authority's Web-Site. The Authority is required to advertise the completion of audit and the availability of the Statement of Accounts for inspection by local government electors and this would be achieved through the insertion of an advertisement in relevant newspapers across the County.

NOTED

1.14/03 BUDGET MONITORING

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 15 – not reproduced) of the Revenue and Capital Expenditure against Budgets up to 31 January 2003 as presented in Appendices A and B respectively (not reproduced)

NOTED

1.15/03 2003/2004 BUDGET

Members were provided with details (Agenda item 16 – not reproduced) of the 2003/2004 Budget, consequent on the approval of the overall Revenue Budget of £26.164m by the Fire Authority at its meeting on Wednesday 18 December 2002. Details of the 2003/2004 Budget, using the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy classification, was presented in Appendix 3 (not reproduced) together with details on the 2002/2003 Budget for comparison purposes.

NOTED

1.16/03 2003/2004 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMBINED FIRE SERVICE FUND

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 17 – not reproduced) of the exercise by the Authority Treasurer of his delegated authority to fix the contributions to be made by each Constituent Authority to the Combined Fire Service Fund for 2003/2004. The total contributions to be made by each Constituent Authority together with details of the instalment payments was set out in Appendix 4 (not reproduced).

NOTED

1.17/03 IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL APPLIANCE BEST VALUE REVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 18 – not reproduced) of the progress made to date towards the implementation of the Best Value Review of Special Appliances, which had been instigated as part of the settlement of the trade dispute on special appliances.

In taking Members through Appendix 5 (not reproduced) which illustrated the progress made on each of the individual recommendations arising from the original review, the Chief Fire Officer reported that the review had now been completed and a copy of the first report received. This would now require detailed analysis and discussion with the Fire Brigades' Union before a report is presented to the Fire Authority at its meeting in June 2003.

NOTED

**1.18/03 INTEGRATED PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM –
BRIGADE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY PHASE 1 –
OCTOBER 2002 TO MARCH 2004**

The Authority was informed (Agenda item 19 – not reproduced) of the Brigade's Strategy for implementing the Integrated Personal Development System together with details of achievements and progress to date as presented in Appendix A supported by Annex 1 (not reproduced).

In noting the contents of the report Members were advised that the External Verifier had visited the Brigade recently and copies of his report was available at the meeting (not reproduced). Members were advised that every area had received an 'A' Rating and in one instance a particular section was had been taken away by the External Verifier and will be offered as a national model. In noting with pleasure the 'A' Rating the Chairman, on behalf of the Fire Authority, wished to place on record his congratulations and thanks to all those Officers involved for a remarkable achievement.

NOTED

1.19/03 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY WORKS

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 20 – not reproduced) of the progress made in the Equality and Diversity works undertaken with the Supplementary Credit Approval provided by the DTLR/ODPM. The total approval received was £140,000 and having spent £14,200 during the previous financial year there remained a balance of £125,800 to be spent during this financial year. A summary of the works undertaken, totalling £123,044.05, was set out in paragraph 3 of the report (not reproduced) which left a balance of £2,755.95 which will be used to part fund the disabled unisex shower and toilet facilities within the Headquarters office refurbishment programme.

The ODPM has been kept informed of progress and is very satisfied with the areas that have been addressed. It is anticipated that the balance of the money will be spent by 31 March 2003 when a final report will be submitted to the ODPM. The Authority Treasurer reminded members that the money had been achieved through a loan using Supplementary Credit Approval, which had attracted a loan charge of £11,000.

NOTED

1.20/03 DISPOSAL OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 21 – not reproduced) of the disposal of equipment that had been determined to be surplus to requirements. The list of equipment held by the Service and detailed in Appendix 6 (not reproduced) has been determined to be obsolete, defective or otherwise unserviceable and therefore deemed to be surplus to requirements.

Although the Chief Fire Officer, in consultation with the Authority Treasurer, has authority to dispose of surplus equipment in accordance with the Authority's Financial Regulation 15.8 he is required to report such actions to the Fire Authority for information.

The equipment will be donated to Operation Florian, a registered charity established to collect and transport equipment that may be useful to Fire Services in the former Yugoslav states. In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Charity always carries out safety checks on the equipment before it is despatched.

NOTED

**1.21/03 THIRD SOUTHERN COUNTIES EXTRICATION
CHALLENGE**

The Authority was advised (Agenda item 22 – not reproduced) that the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service would be hosting the third Southern Counties Extrication Challenge competition on Saturday 7 June 2003 at Whitley Wood Fire Station.

Expressions of interest have been received from approximately twenty teams together with a guest team from West Palm Beach, Florida. It is hoped that this year's event will be on a more significant scale than last year and involve many partner organisations. Hosting this event will greatly assist in the preparation and planning for hosting the World Championships in 2004 if the Brigades initial expression of interest leads to a successful bid.

In response to a question the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the actual competition day would also be used as a platform for a Community Safety event and a recruitment exercise.

In response to a request from Councillor Ms Borgars the Chief Fire Officer agreed to try and find an alternative word to "Extrication" for use in the publicity material.

NOTED

1.22/03 FIRES, INCIDENTS AND ISSUES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The Authority received a report (Agenda item 23 – not reproduced) which summarised some of the notable incidents attended by the Brigade during the period 1 September 2002 to 28 February 2003.

NOTED

1.23/03 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the Annual Fire Authority Meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 25 June 2003 in the Council Chamber, West Berkshire Council, Market Street, Newbury, Berkshire commencing at 6.30pm.

1.24/03 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

| | Agenda item | Paragraph |
|----|---|------------------|
| 26 | Part II Minutes: Wednesday 18 December 2002 | 1, 7 & 8 |
| 27 | Part II Minutes of Sub-Groups | 1, 7 & 8 |
| 28 | ACTVaR Response to Regional Soundings Exercise | 7 & 8 |
| 29 | Banking Arrangements | 7 & 8 |
| 30 | Development of Commercial Partnerships | 1 |
| 31 | Extension of Clerk and Monitoring Officer's Contract and Appointment of Replacement Clerk and Monitoring Officer. | 1 |

(Note: The following is a summary of the items considered in the Part II Agenda of the Fire Authority meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2003).

1.25/03 PART II MINUTES: 18 DECEMBER 2002

The Part II Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 18 December 2002 were received and approved as a correct record.

1.26/03 PART II MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

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

1.27/03 ACTVaR RESPONSE TO REGIONAL SOUNDINGS EXERCISE

The Authority was advised of the response made by the Association of Councils of the

Thames Valley Region (ACTVaR) to the Regional Soundings Exercise conducted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

1.28/03 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Authority approved Code Word Authorisation for Facsimile Instructions to the Authority's bankers relating to the Authority's Account.

**1.29/03 DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS –
PROGRESS REPORT**

Having been informed of the progress with the Partnership Advisor's plan to seek additional income for the Brigade the Authority considered the future of the post.

(Note: Prior to the consideration of the next Agenda item the Clerk and Deputy Clerk and Monitoring Officer withdrew from the meeting).

**1.30/03 EXTENSION OF CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER'S
CONTRACT AND APPOINTMENT OF REPLACEMENT
CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER**

The Authority agreed to an extension of the Clerk's contract for a further six months and also to the appointment of a replacement Clerk and Monitoring Officer with effect from 1 October 2003.

(Note: The Deputy Clerk returned to the meeting).

AGENDA ITEM 6: PART I MINUTES OF SUB-GROUPS

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 25 June 2003
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members on meetings of the Performance Review and Audit Panel, Community Safety Panel, Fire Liaison Group, Urgency Committee and Personnel Committee that have taken place since the last meeting of the Fire Authority in March 2003.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to NOTE the report.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1 The following meetings have taken place since the last Fire Authority meeting in March 2003:

| | |
|---|--|
| Performance Review and Audit Panel | Tuesday 13 May 2003 |
| Personnel Committee | Thursday 27 March 2003 (Inquorate Meeting) |
| Community Safety Panel | Monday 12 May 2003 |
| Fire Liaison Group | Monday 9 June 2003 |
| Urgency Committee | Monday 9 June 2003 |

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

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Agenda's and Minutes for the above mentioned meetings

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

AGENDA ITEM 11: REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 25 June 2003
Officer Contributing: Clerk and Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To review the present Committee Structure having regard to the framework on corporate governance arrangements recently published by CIPFA/SOLACE.

B PROPOSED ACTION

The Authority is invited to consider whether it wishes to adopt one of the alternative committee structure models put forward in this report and RESOLVE accordingly.

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

D CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

There is not contribution to the Strategic Plan.

E ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMON SENSE

No effect as the existing consultation machinery will be maintained.

F SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 CIPFA/SOLACE have just issued a blueprint for best practice corporate governance in local government. This draws on the recommendations and principles emerging from Cabury, Nolan and Turnbull and covers community relations, service delivery arrangements, structures and processes, risk management and internal control and standards of conduct.
- 2 This report is concerned with structures and processes where the Report authors state the following principles and make the following recommendations:-
 - a A local authority needs to establish effective political structures and processes to govern decision-making and the exercise of authority within the organisation. A local authority should maintain arrangements to:

- define the roles and responsibilities of members and officers to ensure accountability, clarity and ordering of the authority's business.
 - ensure that there is proper scrutiny and review of all aspects of performance and effectiveness.
 - demonstrate integrity by ensuring a proper balance of power and authority.
 - document clearly such structures and processes and to ensure that they are communicated and understood to demonstrate openness and inclusivity.
 - ensure such structures and processes are kept up to date and adapted to accommodate change.
- b Put in place clearly documented protocols governing relationships between members and officers.
- Ensure that the relative roles and responsibilities of executive and other members generally and senior officers are clearly defined.
- c Ensure that members meet on a formal basis regularly to set the strategic direction of the authority and to monitor service delivery.
- 3 Since its formation in 1998, the Authority has never had one political party with overall control. The Conservatives have always been the largest group, followed by the Liberal Democrats, then Labour. The Chairman has been a Liberal Democrat, the Vice-Chairman a Conservative and the Chair and Vice-Chairman together with the Leader of the Labour Group have constituted the Urgency Committee and were also the Appointment Committee for the last senior officer appointment. They also comprise the Members part of the Liaison Panel with the FBU.
- 4 The Authority has set up Committees for Personnel, Community Safety and Performance Review. These have some delegated powers but most items going to them are for information. As a result at Authority level most decisions are taken by the Authority itself or if urgent, by the Urgency Committee.
- 5 Possibly because they are seen to have little power, attendance at the Authority's Committees has been patchy. There have been several occasions when meetings have been inquorate. Attendance at Authority meetings has also been patchy, averaging at just over 50% of the total membership; even for the Budget meeting.
- 6 The Committee Administrator has also found it difficult to find members with the time to sit on Disputes or Appeal Panels. Inevitably he finds himself having to rely on a small pool of members.
- 7 This is not meant as a criticism of Authority members. It is a factual recognition that the Unitary Councils make prodigious demands on their members' time and inevitably this impacts on the ability of members to contribute to the working of this Authority.
- 8 The corollary is that the Fire Service is largely run by the Officers working to the 3 Party Leaders. This is an effective way of working but does not meet the spirit of the principles laid down in the Corporate Governance report.

- 9 Combined Fire Authorities are not obliged to introduce the new Cabinet style Government provision. But they are on the way to becoming precepting bodies and now have the power to draw up a Scheme of Allowances, so that there will soon be little to differentiate them from an elected local authority as regards powers. In view of the problems over ensuring adequate attendance at meetings, it seems opportune, therefore, to consider whether the Authority should adopt Cabinet style government as a voluntary measure.
- 10 A recent trawl around other Fire Authorities discovered several, who had already gone down this route, at least in part.
- 11 In the cases of Cheshire and Avon, the Authorities have reduced their Committee Structures to three – an Executive Committee, a Standards Committee and in the case of Avon an Appointments Committee and in the case of Cheshire a Staff Liaison Committee.
- 12 Cleveland has gone even further down the path to Cabinet style government.

They have:

- i An Executive Committee of 6 (including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman).
- ii A Tenders Committee of 5 (including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman).
- iii A Standards Committee of 5 (including 2 independents).
- iv Joint Consultative Committee of 12 (including Chairman and Vice-Chairman).
- v Best Value Consultation Forum of 3 (chaired by the Executive Members with the BV portfolio).
- vi Best Value Scrutiny Group of 6.
- vii Policy Scrutiny Group of 6.

All the members of the Executive Committee have non-executive Portfolios eg Strategic management, best value, operational and community safety, service support, business development and human resources, each supported by a specific member of the senior management team.

- 13 From the foregoing it would appear the Authority have three choices:

MODEL A

Retain the status quo but improve attendance.

MODEL B

Cabinet Government following the Cleveland Model.

MODEL C

- 1 Constitute a new Executive Committee of say 7 (including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman) appointed proportionally and meeting at least once every two months to exercise all the powers of the Authority.

except the following:

- i approval of the budget.
 - ii approval of any Authority Strategic or Corporate Plan.
 - iii awarding contracts other than on grounds of urgency.
-
- 2 Retain the Personnel Committee to hear any disputes/appeals.
 - 3 Constitute the Standards Committee of 3 members' not on the Executive plus 4 Independents.

NB Under Model C the Executive Committee would be responsible for Chief Officer and 2nd tier appointments and for staff relations.

G BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 CIPFA/SOLACE Report on Corporate Governance.
- 2 Constitution of a members of Fire Authority.

Contact Officer: Clive Williams (0118 932 2284)

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

| Name | Personnel (6) | Budget WP (6) | Prap (9) | Comm Safety (6) |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| M Adams | X | | X | 50 |
| Bateson | | | | |
| Bray | | | ** X | ** X |
| Borgars | | X | ** X | ** |
| Brooks | | ** X | | |
| Bryant | | | | |
| Crisp | | | | X |
| Findlay | | | | |
| Green | | | ** X | |
| Grewal | | ** X | ** X | |
| D Howes | | | X | |
| V Howes | | | | X |
| Jeffery | ** X | | ** X | |
| Maskell | ** X | | | |
| Mills | | ** X | ** X | |
| Mole | | ** X | | |
| North | | | | |
| Patman | ** X | ** X | | |
| Ross | | | | ** X |
| Smith | | | | ** X |
| Swindells | X | | | |
| Webb | | | | X |
| Werner | | | | |
| Weston | | | | |
| Wilson | ** X | | ** X | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Total | | | | |

CONFIDENTIAL No Cloned

**** Denotes Existing Member**

*5th Comm
no Webb no Wilson
no Jeff*

**AGENDA ITEM 12: APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, PANELS
AND WORKING PARTIES**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 25 June 2003
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To invite the Authority to re-appoint, if required, the Personnel and Urgency Committees, the Performance Review and Audit Panel, Community Safety Panel, Budget Working Party for the ensuing year.

B PROPOSED ACTION

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

- 1 The Personnel Committee be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:
2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat
- 2 The Urgency Committee be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:
1 Conservative, 1 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat
- 3 The Performance Review and Audit Panel be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:
3 Conservative, 3 Labour, 3 Liberal Democrat
- 4 The Community Safety Panel be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:
2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat
- 5 The Budget Working Party be re-appointed for the ensuing year with the following membership:
2 Conservative, 2 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

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

Personnel Committee (6)

P Hingley, C Maskell, O E Jeffery, ***D Morgan***, B J S Patman, D Wilson

Urgency Committee (3)

J C G Brooks, ***E L Glasson***, B J S Patman

Performance Review and Audit Panel (9)

Miss C Borgars, Mrs P Bray, ***E L Glasson***, John P Green, J Grewal, Owen E Jeffery, ***D Morgan***, T Mills, D J Wilson

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

Community Safety Panel (6)

Miss C Borgars, Mrs P Bray, ***C Clacey***, ***E L Glasson***, A J Ross, D J Smith

Budget Working Party (6)

J C G Brooks, J S Grewal, ***P Hingley***, T Mills, J E R Mole, B J S Patman

- 3 Those Members shown in ***bold italics*** are no longer members of the Fire Authority. **Members appointed to the Performance Review and Audit Panel (PRAP) may be asked to remain behind at the conclusion of the Fire Authority meeting to arrange a suitable date for its next meeting.**
- 4 It should be noted however that if the Authority decides to approve the establishment of a Executive Committee then the above appointments and meeting of PRAP will not be required.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

AGENDA ITEM 13:**APPOINTMENT OF FIRE AUTHORITY'S
REPRESENTATIVE - LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION'**

To: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
Date: 25 June 2003
Officer Contributing: Clerk & Monitoring Officer

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

B PROPOSED ACTION

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

C FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

D SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 1 The Fire Authority has been invited to its representative on the Local Government Association for the ensuing year. The appointed representative will also represent the Fire Authority at the Annual Meeting and Conference of the Local Government Association's General Assembly to be held in July 2003 in Harrogate.
- 2 As reported at the meeting in March 2000 the Fire Authority, as a result of population changes, are now entitled to a Voting Entitlement of 17 for 2003/2004. A provisional place has been booked for this Authority.
- 3 Councillor Patman has expressed an interest in remaining as the Fire Authority's representative and Members are therefore asked to support this appointment and Resolve accordingly.

E BACKGROUND PAPERS

Invitation from Local Government Association

Contact Officer: David R Weller (0118) 932 2288

