



**Agenda
for the Annual Meeting
of the
Royal Berkshire Fire Authority**

Monday, 30th June, 2025

At

6.30 pm

RBFRS Headquarters
Lynda Kenyon Suite
Newsham Court
Pincents Kiln
Calcot
Reading
Berkshire
RG31 7SD

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact:

Committee Team
0118 938 4611

E-Mail at committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD



MEETING: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Annual Meeting

DATE AND TIME: Monday, 30th June, 2025 at 6.30 pm

VENUE: Lynda Kenyon Suite
RBFRS Headquarters
Newsham Court
Pincents Kiln
Calcot
Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD

S U M M O N S

You are hereby summoned to attend the meeting of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority at the time, date and venue indicated above, when it is proposed to deal with the business set out in the enclosed Agenda.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham Britten'.

GRAHAM BRITTEN
Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority:

Councillor George Blundell	Councillor Mohammed Nazir
Councillor Greg Bello	Councillor Andy NG Siu-hong
Councillor Dennis Benneyworth	Councillor Dave McElroy
Councillor Jeff Brooks	Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle
Councillor Tricia Brown	Councillor Owen Jeffery
Councillor Billy Drummond	Councillor Dilbagh S Parmar
Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	Councillor Wayne Smith
Councillor Peter Frewer	Councillor Zafar Satti
Councillor Paul Gittings	Councillor Helen Taylor
Councillor Wendy Griffith	Councillor Simon Werner

Copy to: Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

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MEETING: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Annual Meeting

DATE AND TIME: Monday, 30th June, 2025 at 6.30 pm

VENUE: Lynda Kenyon Suite
RBFRS Headquarters
Newsham Court
Pincent's Kiln
Calcot
Reading, Berkshire RG31 7SD

AGENDA

- 1. Election of Chair for 2025/26 Municipal Year**
- 2. Appointment of Vice-Chair for 2025/26 Municipal Year**
- 3. Apologies for Absence**
- 4. Declarations of Interest**

Purpose:

To receive declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.

- 5. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2025 (Pages 7 - 16)**

Recommendation:

That the Minutes of the meeting and any recorded actions held on 17 April 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

- 6. Petitions and Questions from the Public under Standing Orders 19 and 25**

Purpose:

To receive any questions from members of the public, in accordance with Standing Orders 19 and 25.

- 7. Receipt of Announcements**

Purpose:

To receive any announcements from the Chair or the Chief Fire Officer.

8. Issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee

Recommendation:

That it be noted that no reports have been referred by the Audit and Governance Committee.

9. Questions from Members under Standing Order 30

Purpose:

To receive any questions from Members under Standing Order 30.

10. Notices of Motion under Standing Order 44

Purpose:

To receive any notices of Motion under Standing Order 44.

11. Recommendations of Committees

Recommendation:

To note that:

- Item 16 (Annual Report on Governance) has been recommended from Audit and Governance Committee on 24 March 2025.

12. Appointment of Committees, Lead Member, Member Champions, Working Parties and Outside Bodies (Pages 17 - 56)

Purpose:

To agree the nominations received for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Committees, Special Responsibility Allowances positions, Working Parties and Outside Bodies.

13. Members Handbook Update and Agenda Pack Consideration (Pages 57 - 94)

Purpose:

To agree updates to Standing Orders and Constitution (Appendices A & B) and consider providing consent to receive electronic agenda packs from 1 July 2025.

14. HMICFRS Update (Pages 95 - 102)

Purpose:

To note HMICFRS update.

15. Annual Report (*Pages 103 - 142*)

Purpose:

To note the Annual Report for publication on rbfrs website.

16. Annual report on Governance (*Pages 143 - 156*)

Purpose:

To note the Annual report on Governance.

17. TVFCS Annual Report 2024/25 (*Pages 157 - 162*)

Purpose:

To note TVFCS Annual Report 2024/25.

18. Forward Plan (*Pages 163 - 166*)

Recommendation:

That the Forward Plan be noted.

19. Minutes of the Standing Committees

Recommendation:

To note Minutes of recent meetings were published on RBFRS website
<http://www.rbfrs.co.uk/about-us/fire-authority/fire-authority-meetings/>

20. Date of the next Meeting

Purpose:

Provisional Meeting: Monday 22 September 2025, 7.30pm at RBFRS
Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SG.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AUTHORITY**



Held on Thursday, 17th April, 2025 at 6.30 pm

RBFRS Headquarters, Pincents Kiln, Newsham Court, Calcot,
Reading RG31 7SD

- Members:** (*present)
- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| * Councillor George Blundell | * Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey |
| * Councillor Zafar Satti | * Councillor Peter Frewer |
| * Councillor Harjinder Gahir | * Councillor Paul Gittings |
| * Councillor Mohammed Nazir | * Councillor Wendy Griffith |
| Councillor Greg Bello | Councillor Dave McElroy |
| * Councillor Dennis Benneyworth | * Councillor Owen Jeffery |
| Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle | Councillor Wayne Smith |
| * Councillor Jeff Brooks | * Councillor Helen Taylor |
| * Councillor Tricia Brown | * Councillor Lou Timlin |
| * Councillor Billy Drummond | * Councillor Simon Werner |

- In Attendance:** Mark Arkwell (Deputy Chief Fire Officer, DCFO)
Tom Brandon (Area Manager Response and Resilience, AM R&R)
Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning and Development, HHR&L&D)
Graham Britten (Monitoring Officer, MO)
Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P)
Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx)
Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead, DSL)
Michaela Smith (Democratic Support Assistant, DSA)
Mark Antell (Communications and Engagement Lead)
David Crease (Area Manager, Prevention and Protection, AM P&P)
Christian Riley (Communications and Engagement Officer)
Angela Smith (Programme Officer & Inspection Manager)
Tim Readings (Group Manager, Intelligence Risk and Performance Manager)

Action

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Tina McKenzie Boyle, Dave McElroy, Wayne Smith and Greg Bello.

38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest received from Members in accordance

with the provisions of the Fire Authority's Local Code of Conduct. There were no Declarations of Interest received from Officers.

39. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2025

The Chair corrected a typo in the agenda list (page 3 of the meeting agenda pack) which should be read as **recorded**, not *recoded*.

The following amendments were made to the minutes as follows:

- On page 16 the first paragraph for the Pay Policy Statement 2025/26, amended to: *She stated a small number of updates to the following areas were made to include car provision, on-call allowances and staff uniform.*
- On page 17 there was a typo in the fourth paragraph, it should read as *£100,000.*

In relation to the action captured in the minutes on page 16, Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning Development, HHR&L&D) confirmed the figure for Consultancy was £337,346 and for Capital Projects it was £232,835 with £167,014 of that figure recovered.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2025, be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the above two amendments being made.

40. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDERS 19 AND 25

There were no petitions and questions from the Public under Standing Orders 19 and 25.

41. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

There were no issues arising from the Audit and Governance Committee.

42. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

There were no questions from Members under Standing Order 30.

43. NOTICES OF MOTION UNDER STANDING ORDER 44

There were no notices of Motion under Standing Order 44.

44. RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations of Committees.

45. RECEIPT OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements.

Governance Update

The Government recently published a White Paper on English Devolution, which aims to provide greater freedoms and flexibilities at a local level.

The Government has announced that it will facilitate a programme of local government reorganisation for two-tier areas and for those unitary councils where there is evidence of failure or where their size or boundaries may be hindering their ability to deliver sustainable and high-quality services for their residents.

These plans are still in their early stages, but we wanted to provide reassurance to you that while devolution plans may affect unitary authorities within Berkshire, we are not aware of any planned changes to the way that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) operates at this time.

We are having conversations through the Local Government Association about what this may mean for the fire and rescue sector. We will provide further updates in due course.

Fire and Rescue Services Move to MHCLG

From 1 April 2025, responsibility for the fire and rescue sector was transferred from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

This change was [announced by the Government](#) in response to one of the recommendations from the Grenfell Phase 2 Inquiry report.

This change will bring responsibility for building safety and fire under a single Secretary of State. The Home Office will retain management of the Airwave Service Contract on behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and will remain responsible for the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

Arrival of New Fire Appliances

At the last Fire Authority Meeting, the Chair provided an update on the newest fire appliance set to join the Service imminently.

In March, a team of four representatives from the Service and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service visited Emergency One in Scotland to undertake the final sign-off the three newest Volvo fire appliances.

After two days of multi-point checks on the appliances, all three appliances have now been signed off and have travelled to Hampshire's Fleet Maintenance Centre for some final work before landing in Berkshire this month.

Once they arrive, there will be a round of final checks before they are delivered to Newbury and Theale fire stations for operational use. These newest appliances represent a substantial investment into the Services' fleet from the Fire Authority. The Chair stated he was delighted that they will soon be deployed to protect communities across Berkshire.

Wokingham Fire Safety Prosecution

On Wednesday, 26 March, Mr Artan Hyseni, a property manager in Wokingham, was ordered to pay more than £26,000 for fire safety breaches following a successful prosecution brought by Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

The fine was issued at Reading Magistrates' Court, after Mr Hyseni plead guilty to three charges under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The guilty plea came after an extensive investigation conducted by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service in 2023, which found that there were three serious fire safety deficiencies at a property owned by Mr Hyseni on Reading Road in Wokingham.

The breaches included a lack of fire detection and firefighting equipment at the property, the lack of a Fire Risk Assessment and inadequate means of escape in an emergency.

Mr Hyseni was ordered to pay £6,666 for each of the three offences for which he was convicted. Combined with the victim surcharge and Fire Authority's prosecution fees, the total fine that Mr Hyseni has been issued amounts to £26,441.35.

On behalf of the Fire Authority, the Chair thanked the Protection team, whose diligence in conducting inspections and investigations resulted in a successful court case, therefore promoting adequate Fire Safety standards in buildings across Berkshire.

Whitley Wood Training Learning & Development Centre Update

The first phase of works at the new Learning and Development Centre at Whitley Wood is nearly complete and staff had moved into the building on Friday, 11 April.

The new building will provide the Learning and Development Team with a functional, fit for purpose facility.

The Driver Training Centre Team will also be moving to the new facility in early May and will have a permanent home at the new Training Centre.

Phase Two of the works will commence on Tuesday, 15 April, with an asbestos survey at the green portacabin next to Whitley Wood Fire Station.

The project is planned to be complete by early July, in time for the Opening Ceremony that will be held on Friday, 25 July.

Charity Car Washes

Throughout March, several RBFRS stations supported a national fundraising campaign launched by The Fire Fighters Charity to raise money through car washes.

Between Sunday, 16 March and Saturday, 29 March, firefighters at Wokingham, Crowthorne, Bracknell and Newbury fire stations all held car washes to support the campaign.

They were helped by volunteers, fire cadets and, in the case of Wokingham's car wash, firefighters from Slough Fire Station.

The Chair stated over £5,000 was raised for The Fire Fighters Charity in March, the exact figure is yet to be confirmed. The Fire Authority congratulated everyone involved in raising this fantastic sum for a great cause.

Multi Agency Exercise in Reading

On Monday, 31 March, crews from across the Service were joined by their blue light partners for a high-rise training exercise at the University of Reading.

During the exercise, crews rescued several 'casualties' from the building whilst working to extinguish the 'fire' which spread across two storeys.

They were joined at the scene by crews from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire fire and rescue services, Berkshire Lowland Search and Rescue, Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and Ambulnz, a private ambulance company.

On behalf of the Authority, the Chair thanked everyone involved with organising and carrying out this useful training exercise. He also thanked the Casualties Union, Explorer Scouts and volunteers from across the Service, who acted as 'casualties' during the exercise, and the University of Reading for allowing this training on their campus.

ICT Check

Every month, starting in May, the Democratic Support Team will contact all Fire Authority members with a 'TEST' email to their RBFRS email account followed by text to their mobile phone.

Members will be required to respond to the message (either by text or email) with simple wording for example 'Email and text received'. This new process will confirm Members are receiving information from RBFRS and will assist in capturing and recording any ICT related issues in a timely manner.

46. CULTURE PLAN

Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx) provided Members with a verbal update on the Culture Plan for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS).

Nationally there had been an increase in culture awareness within fire and rescue services and this had been worked on by several people including Becci Jefferies (Head of Human Resources and Learning Development, HHR&L&D) and Hazel Anderson-Turner (Organisational Development, OD). Engagement sessions were held with over 100 different staff groups and leaders across the organisation to build the culture plan. The clear message that came through was that staff want a safe, supportive and inclusive culture. The plan was launched at the Leadership Forums in January and February this year.

There are five components within the plan – *people, places, communications and engagement, structure and governance and processes and systems*.

The **People** part of the plan supports delivery of the People Strategy, EDI Objectives and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. **Places**, supports delivery of the Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF), Property Asset Management Strategy, Sustainability Strategy and Fleet and Equipment Management Strategy. **Processes and Systems** supports delivery of the ICT Strategy and the Efficiency and Productivity Plan. **Communication and Engagements** supports the delivery of the Communication and Engagement Strategy, and the last component is **Structure and Governance** which supports the Services governance structures, professional standards and assurance.

Nikki Richards confirmed that updates on the plan would be provided via the quarterly performance report at Audit and Governance meetings and annually via the Annual Report.

In response to Councillor Drummond's staff survey question, Nikki Richards confirmed that the engagement strategy will help to embed the message that if a member of staff raises a query the Service will take note and where possible act.

Councillor Jeffery stated he had read the Culture Plan and was very impressed with the content and felt it was a positive document. Councillor Brown echoed

Action

DSA

the above comments and asked if the presentation could be sent to Members. Nikki Richards confirmed a copy of the presentation would be circulated to Members.

The Chair mentioned the Employee Value Proposition (EVP) was to be reviewed following a suggestion from the Recruitment and Retention Working Party. This was a separate staff recruitment and retention survey, seeking what attracted them to work for RBFRS. The Chair felt this was very important and the Service can learn a great deal from the results.

For a copy of this presentation please contact committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

47. ANNUAL PLAN

Angela Smith (Programme Officer & Inspection Manager) introduced the Annual Plan 2025/26 stating the plan outlines the strategic direction and key objectives for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) for the upcoming year.

She touched on some of the recent successes including the Training Centre development, LED lighting, the implementation of Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Priority 6, Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) policy and the Summer Internship programme had now become business as usual and was an annual event.

The strategic commitments within the Annual Plan were developed at the Members / Officers workshop held in January this year. These act as guidance for the Service and are detailed in the Corporate Plan within CRMP.

The plan also proposed changes to the corporate measure targets for the coming year. These changes are a result of risk analysis within the community, evaluation of the Service' current performance and are further detailed within appendix B.

The Chair, referencing target data within the tables on pages 40-43 of the Annual Plan, requested a change to the plan for next year. He asked for a separate document which detailed how the Service performed against the targets that were set.

Councillor Jeffery queried the 'changes' that were captured within the penultimate paragraph on page 31 of the plan, and the 'new ways of working' when dealing with contaminants on page 33. Nikki Richards (Deputy Chief Executive, DChEx) explained changes included the Behavioural Competency Framework amongst others that were covered as part of the Culture update earlier in the meeting and contaminant zoning (red, amber, green and grey) of all stations.

In response to a question from the Chair, Nikki Richards confirmed performance was monitored every quarter and results were discussed at the Strategic Performance Board and presented to Audit and Governance Committee.

In response to a question from Councillor Brown, Nikki Richards confirmed risk management, sustainability, culture and capability were the four key short-term medium priority risks that the organisation was addressing.

Councillor Brown asked if the above details could be made clearer visually, and Nikki Richards confirmed they could be amended

PO&I
Manager

Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement, HF&P) confirmed the Service should save money over the medium-term after Councillor Drummond raised a question about streamlining the finance system which was detailed on page 33 of the Plan.

Conor Byrne and the Chair stated that Members would not have direct access to the new finance system (detailed on page 33 of the Plan) but would see reports and extracts from the system. This was in answer to a question from Councillor Shepherd-DuBey.

The Chair moved the recommendations, and it was seconded by the Vice-Chair.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Annual Plan 2025/26 (appendix A) be approved for publication.

48. CORPORATE CALENDAR 2025/26

The Chair commented there was a large gap in the calendar between the first Fire Authority meeting in June and the next one planned for November. He stated the Standing Orders require Fire Authority meetings to be held every quarter which the proposed dates don't achieve. The Chair asked for an amendment to the calendar - he suggested an additional 'placeholder' meeting is added on 22nd September directly before a planned Fire Authority Member Workshop. If there were no pressing items, then this meeting would not need to take place.

The Chair moved the recommendations, and it was seconded by Councillor Drummond.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the 2025/26 Corporate Calendar be agreed, subject to adding in a further Fire Authority 'placeholder' meeting date on 22nd September.

49. LEAD MEMBER AND CHAMPION ANNUAL REPORTS

The Annual Reports were presented by the Lead Members and Member Champions.

- a) Finance Lead Member – Councillor Jeff Brooks.

- The Chair confirmed that the Service is potentially looking at an underspend of £40-50,000 for the financial year. He thanked Conor Byrne and his team for all their continued hard work on the budget, and the Directors for their careful spending of the budget.
 - Achieving the 'fiver for fire' meant the Service was able to set an ambitious budget and that the finances were in a good place.
 - Although it had been a harder budget than in previous years, the Service has still been able to plan work at several stations including Newbury and Caversham Road.
- b) Collaboration Lead Member – Councillor Simon Werner.
- Councillor Werner confirmed the collaboration across the Thames Valley had been working very well.
 - Two of the objectives for the collaboration partnerships five-year plan had been met.
 - The relationship between the partnership has grown since it began, trust has increased, and all partners had worked towards a common goal.
- c) Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) Lead Member – Councillor Paul Gittings.
- Delivering the CRMP had been challenging, and the Vice-Chair was pleased that Priority 6 had been implemented.
 - A key focus for this year is Priority 3.
 - The Vice-Chair thanked Officers for their help in what has been another busy year for the Service.
- d) Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead Member – Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.
- Councillor Shepherd-DuBey was pleased that LED lighting has been installed in HQ and in most stations reducing RBFRS' carbon output.
 - She was also pleased that controls were now in place to ensure a safer environment for those involved with contaminants.
- e) Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead Member – Councillor Wendy Griffith.
- Councillor Griffith reported she was pleased there has been an increase in female apprentices approaching the Service, along with the increase in people from underrepresented groups.
 - She was interested in the work that the Service was doing on neurodiversity as she believes this is an important part of Service culture and was pleased that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) were on board with this work.
- f) Community Safety Member Champion – Councillor Owen Jeffery.
- Councillor Jeffery confirmed that community safety targets the most vulnerable members of the community.
 - Safe & Well visits have evolved over the years helping those most

at risk.

- He was particularly impressed with last summer's cohort of Fire Cadets who showed commitment and effort during their time with the Service.

g) Honorary Armed Forces Member Champion – Councillor Rachelle Shepherd–DuBey.

- Councillor Shepherd-DuBey confirmed she had attended most of the Armed Forces Hub events that had been scheduled and felt the work the Service did with veterans was an important learning exercise.

The Chair moved the recommendations, and it was seconded by Councillor Shepherd-DuBey.

On being put to the vote, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Lead Member and Member Champion Reports be noted.

50. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

51. MINUTES OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that it be noted the Minutes of recent meetings were published on RBFRS website.

52. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Monday 30 June 2025, 6.30pm at RBFRS Headquarters, Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading RG31 7SD.

(The meeting concluded at 7:34pm)

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, LEAD MEMBER, MEMBER CHAMPIONS, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES
LEAD OFFICER	GRAHAM BRITTEN, MONITORING OFFICER
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To approve Member nominations received for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Committees (Tables 5 and 6) in accordance with the Group Leaders' wishes, Constitution and the rules relating to political balance, and to agree nominations for Member Roles outlined in Tables 7 – 10.
- 1.2 Nominations for appointments in Tables 7 - 10 will be tabled during the meeting and Members will be requested to vote on each position where more than one nomination is received for a position.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire Authority:

- 2.1 **APPOINT** nominations received from the Group Leaders onto the Audit and Governance Committee and Management Committee (**Table 5**);
- 2.2 **APPOINT** two ungrouped Members (**Table 5**) onto the Management Committee);
- 2.3 **AGREE** nominations received for Special Responsibility Allowance roles in **Table 6**;
- 2.4 **AGREE** nominations received for the appointments listed in **Tables 7 – 10**; and

Agenda Item 12

- 2.5 **NOTE** Role Descriptions for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members (attached as Appendix C).

3. **REPORT**

- 3.1 There were no local elections across the six Unitary Authorities in May 2025 and no change to the political balance of Bracknell-Forest, Reading, Wokingham, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and West Berkshire Councils.
- 3.2 In May 2025, the political balance of Slough Borough Council changed following its annual meeting to 20 Conservative, 11 Labour, 10 Liberal Democrat and 1 Independent Member¹. As a result, Slough Borough Council has nominated one Member from each political group (Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat) onto the Fire Authority.
- 3.3 Table 1 shows the number of Fire Authority seats per Unitary Authority. The Fire Authority has 20 seats comprised of 8 Liberal Democrats, 6 Labour, 4 Conservatives, 1 Green and 1 Independent. In 2025/26 Municipal year, the Fire Authority has gained 1 additional Liberal Democrat Member and lost 1 Independent Member.
- 3.4 In March 2025, each Berkshire Unitary Authority was asked to nominate the number of Councillors outlined in the table below, based on data received from the number of registered local government electors as of 1 December 2024.

Table 1

Unitary Authority	Seats
Bracknell	3
Reading	3
Slough	3
RBWM	3
West Berks	4
Wokingham	4
Total	20

- 3.5 **Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Section 15(3)** Duty to allocate seats to political groups: “Where at any time the representation of different political groups on a body to which this section applies falls to be reviewed under this section by any relevant authority or committee of a relevant authority, it shall be the duty of that authority or committee, as soon as practicable after the review, to determine the allocation to the different political groups into which the members of the authority are divided of all the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by that authority or committee.”
- 3.6 **Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Section 16(1)** Duty to give effect to allocations: “Where any relevant authority or any committee of a relevant authority have determined the allocation to different political groups of the seats on a body to which section 15 above applies, it shall be the duty of that authority or committee so to exercise their power to make appointments to that body as to

¹ In June 2024, Slough Borough Council political balance was 20 Conservative, 11 Labour, 7 Slough Independent Group, 3 Liberal Democrats and 1 Independent.

give effect—(a) ...as soon as practicable after the determination... to such wishes about who is to be appointed to the seats on that body which are allocated to a particular political group as are expressed by that group. ”

3.7 **Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Schedule 1, paragraph 3(2)**
 “Regulations under this paragraph may make provision modifying the provisions of sections 15 and 16 of this Act in relation to any case in which some of the members of a relevant authority fall to be treated as members of one or more political groups and the others do not.”

3.8 **Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (SI 1990/1553), Regulation 16(1)** “In relation to any such case as is described in paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 1 to the 1989 Act, the provisions of sections 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act shall be modified as mentioned in paragraphs (2) and (3).

“(2) Section 15(3) of the 1989 Act shall have effect as if for the words from "to determine" to the end there were substituted the words "to determine the allocation to each of those groups of such of the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by that authority or committee as bear to the total of all of those seats the same proportion as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority."

“(3) Section 16 of the 1989 Act shall have effect as if, after subsection (2), there were inserted the following subsection-"(2A) Where appointments fall to be made to seats on a body to which section 15 applies otherwise than in accordance with a determination under that section, it shall be the duty of the authority or the committee, as the case may be, so to exercise their power to make appointments as to secure that the persons appointed to those seats are not members of any political group."

3.9 Set out below are tables which indicate the overall allocation of Fire Authority places per Political Group and the total number of places, each group would be allocated subject to confirmation that all of the political groupings remaining affiliated by political party alone and assuming that the Green and Independent Members remain ungrouped.

Table 2

Total number of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members

	Number of seats on RBFA	% of seats on RBFA
Liberal Democrats	8	40%
Labour	6	30%
Conservative	4	20%
Green (ungrouped)	1	
Independent (ungrouped)	1	
	20	

Table 3

Total number of places on Audit and Governance Committee

	Number of seats on RBFA	% of seats on RBFA		Number of seats Audit and Governance Committee
Liberal Democrats	8	40%	3.6	4
Labour	6	30%	2.7	3
Conservative	4	20%	1.8	2
Green	1			0
Independent	1			0
	20			9

3.10 **Table 3:** There are 9 seats on Audit and Governance Committee (A&GC), (below) the first cut of the figures gives an entitlement of seats to 3 Liberal Democrat, 2 Labour, and 1 to Conservative. Entitlement to the seventh, eight and ninth seats goes to Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat respectively.

Table 4

Total number of places on Management Committee

	Number of seats on RBFA	% of seats on RBFA		Seats Management Committee
Liberal Democrats	8	40%	4.4	4
Labour	6	30%	3.3	3
Conservative	4	20%	2.2	2
Green	1			1
Independent	1			1
	20			11

3.11 **Table 4:** (above) There are 11 seats on the Management Committee. The first cut of the figures gives an entitlement of seats to 4 Liberal Democrats, 3 Labour and 2 Conservative, with the tenth and eleventh seats available to the ungrouped members (Green and Independent).

3.12 Unitary Authority Council annual meetings were held in May 2025 and made nominations to the Fire Authority to reflect their respective political balance. Two new Members have been appointed from Berkshire Unitary Authorities. Councillor Andy Ng Siu-hong from Wokingham Borough Council and Councillor Dilbagh Parma from Slough Borough Council.

3.13 Table 5 below shows the number of seats available on each committee per political group. Table 6 shows Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) positions available.

Table 5

<p>Audit and Governance Committee (9 seats)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Lib Dem) 2. (Lib Dem) 3. (Lib Dem) 4.(Lib Dem) 5. (Lab) 6. (Lab) 7. (Lab) 8. (Con) 9. (Con)
---	---

<p>Management Committee (11 seats)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (Lib Dem) 2. (Lib Dem) 3. (Lib Dem) 4. (Lib Dem) 5. (Lab) 6. (Lab) 7. (Lab) 8. (Con) 9. (Con) 10. (Independent) 11. (Green)
--	--

Table 6 – Special Responsibility Allowance Roles²

<p>Position Chair of Authority Vice-Chair of Authority Audit and Governance Chair Opposition Leader (s) Finance Lead Collaboration Lead Community Risk Management Plan Lead Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead</p>

² Member Scheme of Allowance April 2024 - MA9. A Member may not receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) at any one time. Therefore, a Member holding more than one of the positions of special responsibility must notify the Monitoring Officer to the Authority in writing which Special Responsibility Allowance he/she wishes to be paid.

No more than 10 SRAs are payable '1-SRA only' rule.

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Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead Community Safety Champion

- 3.14 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee has representation from each Fire Authority and County Council partners: Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA), Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Meetings are held on rotation at Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters hosting for the year. This year, TVFCS Joint Committee meetings will be held at Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP20 1BD.
- 3.15 Table 7 shows two seats for RBFA Member representation on TVFCS Joint Committee and two substitute Members. The appointment of TVFCS Joint Committee Chair is made on an annual rotational basis between appointed Members of RBFA, BMKFA and OCC. This year, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority member will be elected as Chair of TVFCS Joint Committee at its annual meeting 10 July 2025. The TVFCS Joint Committee Chair, will also Chair the Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group meetings, which are usually held on the same date as Joint Committee meetings.

Table 7 – Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee appointments³

Position

TVFCS Joint Committee (2 seats)

Two substitute Members for TVFCS Joint Committee
--

- 3.16 The quorum for Working Groups is three. Members may wish to nominate between five to seven cross party Members on to the Working Groups listed in table 8. It is also at the discretion of the Chair, subject to business need to establish additional Working Groups during the year.

Table 8- Working Group appointments

Position

Budget Working Party – minimum three Members
--

Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group - minimum three Members
--

- 3.17 The Fire Authority are required to appoint a representative onto its Outside Body, Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission meetings. This report is seeking the appointment of one representative and one substitute representative to attend LGA Fire Commission meetings, twice a year in London.

³ Appointments to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee are exempt from the political balance rules under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It is a joint committee constituted by two or more authorities under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 but to which the Authority appoints fewer than three members.

LGA representative and substitute LGA representative do not attract a special responsibility allowance.

Table 9 – Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative⁴

Position
Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative (1 seat)
Substitute Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission representative (1 seat)

3.18 Outlined in Table 10 shows Armed Forces Honorary Member Champion does not attract a SRA. Appendix A provides further detail to the Member roles outlined in this report.

Table 10 – Honorary Champion roles (non-Special Responsibility Allowance)

Position
Honorary Armed Forces Champion

3.19 The Fire Authority approved its Member Allowance in February 2025. The special responsibility roles listed in Table 6 are entitled to receive special responsibility allowances attached as Appendix B.

3.20 Attached as appendices C and D are Calendar of meetings in 2025/26 (approved by the Fire Authority on 17 April 2025, minute reference 48) and scheduled Member Development training courses throughout the year.

3.21 A new Member Induction course will be held on Thursday 10 July 2025 at 5pm (in-person) prior to Audit and Governance Committee commencing at 6.30pm. Democratic Support will contact Fire Authority Members to book Members onto Member Development courses held throughout the Municipal year.

3.22 The election and nominations for appointments of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Management Committee and Audit and Governance Committee will be held at their inaugural meetings in July 2025.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

4.1 Not applicable.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This is in accordance with Members Scheme of Allowances.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

⁴ Meetings are held twice a year in London, (Bevan Hall, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ)

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6.1 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

The Authority is required by the above Regulations to review the basis of allocation of seats amongst the Political Groups either at its Annual Meeting, or as soon as practicable thereafter, or following a change in its Membership. In making its review, the Authority is required, so far as reasonably practicable, to comply with the following principles:

- (i) Not all seats on each Committee are to be allocated to the same Group.
- (ii) The majority of seats are to be allocated to a particular Group if the number of persons belonging to that Group is a majority on the Authority.
- (iii) Subject to the above paragraphs, the number of seats on the Committees allocated to each Group should bear the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the Committees as that borne by the number of Members of that Group to the Membership of the Authority.
- (iv) Subject to paragraphs (i) to (iii) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to different political groups bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

6.2 The modifications to these principles in respect of the presence of ungrouped Members is set out in the body of the report.

6.3 Appointments to the TVFCS Joint Committee are exempt the political balance rules under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as it is a joint committee appointed by two or more authorities under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 but to which the Authority appoints fewer than three members.

6.4 The Authority is required to make appointments to committees and outside bodies in accordance with the wishes of the respective Political Groups.

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no risk management implications.

9. **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

10. **CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

10.1 Not applicable.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1 Chief Fire Officer

The Chief Fire Officer was consulted during the preparation of this report.

11.2 Chief Finance Officer

The Chief Finance Officer was consulted during the preparation of this report.

11.3 Monitoring Officer

Report sponsor.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 RBFA Member Allowance Review - 2025

13. APPENDICES

13.1 Calendar of meetings 2025/26 – Appendix A

13.2 Member Scheme of Allowances – Appendix B

13.3 Member Role Descriptions - Appendix C

14. CONTACT DETAILS

14.1 Fayth Rowe (Democratic Support Lead) 07500 991975

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Meeting	Start time	Venue	2025							2026				
			June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	
Fire Authority	6.30 pm	HQ	30			22 - FA mtg and Workshop		25			20 - Workshop	23		30
Audit and Governance Committee	6.30 pm	HQ		10			20			26		16		
Management Committee	6.30 pm	HQ		14			7		10		10			16

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SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES

April 2025



MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, in exercise of the powers conferred by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, hereby makes the following scheme:

NAME AND DURATION

- MA1. This scheme may be cited as the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members' Allowances Scheme.
- MA2. **This scheme shall have effect for the financial year 2025/26.** The Scheme may be amended at any time by resolution of the Authority.

BASIC ALLOWANCE

- MA3. A **Basic Allowance** at a rate of £2,913.05¹per annum shall be paid to each member in monthly instalments.
- MA4. For the avoidance of doubt, 'Member' in this context means a person appointed to the Authority under the provisions of the Royal Berkshire Fire Service Combination Scheme.
- MA5. The Basic Allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of Members including calls on their time at meetings with officers and constituents. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of Members' homes.
- MA6. Where a Member's term of office does not extend throughout a complete year, the amount payable shall be pro rata to the number of days during which his/her term of office subsists.

¹ Indexed to local government percentage allowance increase agreed by NJC on 22 October 2024.

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

- MA7. A **Special Responsibility Allowance** shall be paid in monthly instalments to those Members who hold the special responsibilities in relation to the Fire Authority, in recognition of the additional duties and time commitment such positions entail. These Special Responsibility Allowances are specified in Schedule 1.

Schedule 1

Position	Special Responsibility Allowance²
Chair of Authority	£14,566.28
Vice-Chair of Authority	£7,282.63
Chair of Committees	£4,369.58
Lead Members	£4,369.58
Opposition Group Leaders	£2,913.05
Member Champions	£1,456.53
RBFA Chair of Thames Valley Joint Committee (if applicable)	£2,913.05
Co-optees' Allowance	£159.90 per meeting

- MA8. Where a Member holds one of the above positions for part of a year, the amount payable shall be pro rata to the number of days he/she holds that position.
- MA9. A Member may not receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance at any one time. Therefore, a Member holding more than one of the positions of special responsibility must notify the Monitoring Officer to the Authority in writing which Special Responsibility Allowance he/she wishes to be paid.

CO-OPTEEES' ALLOWANCE

- MA10. The Co-opted Independent Person (s) shall be entitled to receive a payment of **£159.90** per meeting.
- MA11. Independent Persons are entitled to receive only the allowances under this scheme for the duties they undertake on behalf of the Fire Authority.

² Indexed to local government percentage allowance increase agreed by NJC on 22 October 2024.

SCHEDULE 2 – APPROVED DUTIES

MA12. Members and the Independent Persons shall be entitled to claim travelling and subsistence allowances for the following duties:

- (1) Meetings of the Authority, committees and task and finish groups formally convened by the Monitoring Officer, including (a) seminars, etc. to which all Members have been invited and (b) cases where a Member is invited and officially notified to attend a meeting of a committee of which they are not a Member;
- (2) formal briefings by the Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive or other officers, provided Members of at least two political groups have been invited to attend;
- (3) on-site inspections or visits authorised in advance by the Authority or a committee;
- (4) official and courtesy visits undertaken by the Chair of the Authority or, in the case of a particular visit, such other Member may ask to represent him/her.
- (5) attendance as an officially appointed representative of the Authority on any other body, including a committee, sub-committee or working party of that body, or a further body to which that body has appointed the representative provided there is a connection with the functions of the Authority;
- (6) attendance at outside conferences, courses, seminars and like meetings, subject to prior approval by the Authority or a committee, or by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive after consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair;
- (7) attendance at medal presentation ceremonies and other events of a public relations nature to which Members of the Authority have been formally invited;
- (8) subject to the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, such other duties for the purpose of or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Authority as the Authority may from time to time determine;
- (9) attendance at meetings with officers of the Service where a Member has been formally invited in his/her capacity as reference holder;
- (10) visits to Fire and Rescue Service premises undertaken as part of a planned programme;

MA13. The amounts of allowances paid by the Authority are set out in paragraphs MA3 and MA7.

INDEXATION OF ALLOWANCES

- MA14. The Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees' Allowances shall be adjusted annually in line with percentage allowance increase agreed by the NJC for Local Government Services. Adjustment of the allowance shall take effect from the beginning of the financial year for the year the index is applied to staff.
- MA15. The rates of travel allowances shall be the same as those approved by the HMRC (HM Revenue and Customs) and shall be adjusted and take effect in line with alterations made from time to time by the HMRC.
- MA16. The rates of subsistence allowances shall be the same as those agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- MA17. The Chief Finance Officer shall have delegated power to approve the adjustment in accordance with paragraphs MA15 and MA16 above.

RENUNCIATION OF ALLOWANCES REPAYMENT

- MA18. A Member may, by notice in writing given to the Monitoring Officer, elect to forego, assign or transfer all or part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

CLAIMS

- MA19. Basic, special responsibility and co-optees' allowances do not need to be claimed.
- MA20. Claims for travelling and subsistence must be made on the approved form. Expenses claims should be made monthly. Claims submitted after three months from the date of expenditure occurred will not be accepted, except in exceptional circumstance and approved in writing by the Chief Finance Officer.
- MA21. Where re-imbursment of travelling and subsistence is being claimed, receipts should be attached to the claim form.
- MA22. All expenses can be claimed on one form (except Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances which are paid automatically).
- MA23. Time and place of departure may be from work, it does not have to be a home to home journey but claims must show clearly where you are travelling from and to. Completed forms should be sent to Democratic Support who will forward them to the Payments Section following approval.

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MA24. Allowances are paid at the end of each month. The usual payment date is the last working day of the month. To ensure payment is received by the end of the month, claims should be submitted **by the 7th of each month**.

SCHEDULE 3 - TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

MA25. Councillors are entitled to receive payments for travelling and subsistence for the purpose of performing approved duties.

MA26. The cost to the Authority of the use of public transport for medium and long distance journeys may often be less than the cost of a Member's use of a private car. There is an expectation that before making medium or long distance journeys Members will consider the cost to the Authority as well as the convenience of the mode of transport. Where public transport is available, convenient, and cheaper, a Member may choose to use his or her own private vehicle but the total amount claimed for mileage shall not exceed the ordinary standard public transport fare.

MA27. For travel by a Member in his/her own private car or one provided for his/her use, the rate shall be that [approved HMRC](#) (HM Revenue and Customs).

MA28. Claims for expenses should only be made when actually incurred, i.e. rail/bus, taxis, hotel accommodation. Receipts must be provided.

MA29. The rates of subsistence allowances shall be the same of those agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Copies of the rates agreed for officers of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service are available from Democratic Support committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

Member Role Description

June 2024



[f RoyalBerksFRS](#) [@RBFRSOfficial](#) [@RoyalBerkshireFire](#)

[in Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service](#) www.rbfrs.co.uk

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Appendix C

INTRODUCTION

This document should be read alongside the Member and Officer Protocol and Member Charter and is linked to the Member Scheme of Allowance and Fire Authority Terms of Reference. It contains the role description for Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members and specific Member appointed roles. All Member roles listed below are appointments made annually at the Annual Fire Authority meeting held in June, Extraordinary meetings; or, whenever a vacant position becomes available mid-year.

- Member of the Fire Authority
- Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority
- Chair and Vice-Chair of Fire Authority Committees
- Lead Members
- Member Champions
- Honorary Member Champion
- Local Government Association Fire Commission Representative;
- Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Representatives; and
- Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group Representative

For clarity, where the document refers to Fire Authority this means Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA).

FIRE AUTHORITY MEMBER - ROLE DESCRIPTION

1 Accountabilities

- To Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and Royal County of Berkshire
- All Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct and Member / Officer Protocol.

2 Role and Functions of all Councillors

- To represent the interests of the population of the whole area of the Fire Authority
- To represent the views and interests of the constituent Unitary Authority and its communities on the Fire Authority
- To liaise with other Elected Members, principal authorities, officers and partner organisations to ensure Strategic Commitments of the Fire Authority are identified, understood and supported
- To be a channel of communication to the community on Fire Authority strategies, policies, services and procedures
- To be an advocate for the Fire Authority

2.1 Making decisions and overseeing Fire Authority performance

- To attend and participate in Fire Authority meetings, and appointed Committees and Working Groups reaching and making informed and balanced decisions, and overseeing performance
- To adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision-making
- To promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of Fire Authority services.

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2.2 Representing the Authority (subject to appointment)

- To represent the Fire Authority on outside bodies as an appointee of the Fire Authority
- To represent and be an advocate for the Fire Authority on local and national bodies and events

2.3 Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- To promote and support good governance of the Fire Authority and its affairs
- To provide leadership and promote citizenship as a representative of the Fire Authority

2.4 Personal and role development

- To participate in opportunities for development provided for members by the Fire Authority in line with the Member Development Strategy.

3 Rights and Duties

- Councillors will have such rights of access to documents, information, of the Fire Authority as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (section 100B)
- Councillors will not make public, information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Fire Authority or the subject of the information, or divulge personal information or information given to them in confidence to anyone other than a Councillor or officer entitled to know it without consent.
- For these purposes, “confidential” and “exempt” information are defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
- Councillors will adhere to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Member Code of Conduct, Member and Officer Relations Protocol.

4 Allowance

- All 20 Fire Authority Members receive a Basic Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

FIRE AUTHORITY CHAIR (AND VICE-CHAIR) ROLE DESCRIPTION

5 Chair - Role and Purpose of Activity

5.1 The Fire Authority Chair as the elected leader and as a symbol of the Authority's democratic powers are required to:

- To uphold the democratic values of the Authority
- To be the elected representative' figurehead for the Authority and be the principal political spokesperson for the Authority
- To be recognised as a media contact in liaison with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service Communications and Engagement Team
- To provide leadership in building a political consensus around the Authority's policies
- To provide strong, clear leadership in the coordination of policies, strategies and service delivery
- To represent the Authority at civic and ceremonial functions
- To chair meetings of the Authority in line with its Standing Orders
- To brief Group Leaders and other political representatives of the Fire Authority, ensuring they are aware of issues and risks
- To ensure learning and development of all Fire Authority Members via Group Leaders and political representatives

5.2 Managing and leading the work of the Authority

- To ensure the work of the Authority meets national policy objectives
- To advise and mentor other Authority members in their work; to prepare and manage an annual work programme for the Authority to meet its legal and statutory obligations (e.g. budget setting, Community Risk Management planning etc.)

5.3 Participating in the collective decision making of the Authority

- To work closely with other Authority members to ensure the development of effective Authority policies and the budgetary framework for the Authority, and the delivery of high-quality services to the local community
- To accept collective responsibility and support decisions made by the Authority once they have been made

5.4 Working with officers to lead the organisation

- To liaise with the Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive, and other appropriate officers, on a regular basis
- To work with employees of the Authority in relation to the strategic commitments and direction of the Authority

Vice-Chair

5.5 To fulfil the duties of the Chair in his/her absence

- To assist the Chair in specific duties as and when required
- Therefore, to understand and carry out the Chair's job purpose as set out above.

5.6 Allowance

- The Chair and Vice-Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF A COMMITTEE

6. Committee Chair

6.1 Provide leadership and direction

The Committee Chair are required to:

- To provide confident and effective management of meetings to facilitate inclusivity, participation and clear decision making
- To demonstrate integrity and impartiality in decision making in accordance with legal, constitutional and policy requirements
- To delegate actions to sub committees and Working Parties as appropriate

6.2 Promoting the role of the Committee

- To act as an ambassador for the Committee, facilitating understanding of the role
- To act within the constitutional requirements to oversee the functions of the committee fairly and correctly
- To ensure thoroughness and objectivity in the Committee, receiving and responding to professional advice in the conduct of meetings
- To promote and support good governance by the Authority

6.3 Effective meeting management

- To set agendas containing clear objectives and outcomes for the meeting
- To ensure that the necessary preparation is done beforehand
- To ensure that all participants have an opportunity to make an appropriate contribution
- To report on progress against the work programme to the Authority.

6.4 Committee Vice-Chair

- To fulfil the duties of the Chair in his or her absence
- To assist the Chair in specific duties as required.

6.5 Allowance

- 6.5.1 The Chair of Committees are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

LEAD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTION

7 Lead Member Appointments

7.1 The structure of the Fire Authority allocates the following Lead Member roles:

- Collaboration
- Community Risk Management Plan
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development
- Finance; and
- Strategic Assets and Sustainability;

7.2 Role and Responsibilities

7.2.1 **Collaboration Lead**

- The Collaboration Lead is one of two appointed representatives onto Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee meetings and is the sole Member attendee from RBFA that attend Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group meetings.
- Attend briefings with Deputy Chief Fire Officer and Area Manager Collaboration and Policy.
- Chair Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee and Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group on a rotational cycle with Thames Valley blue light partners. See Paragraph 11 and 12 for a detailed role description of Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee representatives, and function of Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group.

7.2.2 **Community Risk Management Plan Lead**

- Attend briefings with Head of Corporate Services.
- Promote Fire Authority consultations to local community alongside Communication and Engagement Team
- Serve as a liaison between the community and Service to increase community awareness.

7.2.3 **Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Cultural Development Lead**

- To attend quarterly RBFRS EDI Network meetings, these are internal meetings held with employees from across the Service to support and promote RBFRS EDI objectives
- To foster positive cultural relations and encourage shared learning at all levels within the Service/ Authority.
- To review the EDI action plan and objectives in Quarterly Performance Reports provided to Audit and Governance Committee.
- To represent the Authority in external EDI initiatives and partnerships.
- To stay informed in emerging trends and best practice in diversity, equity and inclusion and hold officers to account on cultural improvements.
- Promote cultural awareness and sensitivity.

7.2.4 **Finance Lead**

- Attend briefings with the Head of Finance and Procurement.
- Chair Budget Working Party meetings
- Attend external committee meetings / Board as a key stakeholder (organised by Berkshire Unitary Authorities)
- In liaison with Head of Finance and Procurement provide budget and other financial updates to Committees and Fire Authority

7.2.5 **Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead**

- Attend briefings with Head of Finance and Procurement, Head of Business and Information Systems and Head of Assets.
- Chair Estates Development and Sustainability Working Group meetings

7.2.6 In addition Lead Members are required to:

- To understand appointed area of business within the Fire Authority.
- To be involved in the content of the annual report to be presented to the last Fire Authority meeting of the Municipal Year.
- To provide assurance to the Management Committee and / or Fire Authority that recommendations and decisions arising from the business area are

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sound and evidence based, have followed appropriate processes, and are aligned to strategic commitments / policy direction.

- To attend conferences/seminars relevant to area of business.
- To be a recognised media contact directed via Communication and Engagement Team.

7.3 Allowance

7.3.1 Lead Member appointments are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

ROLE OF MEMBER CHAMPION

8 Member Champion

8.1 The structure of the Fire Authority allocates the following Member Champion role:

- Community Safety Champion

8.2 Roles and Responsibilities

8.2.1 The Member Champion role is to:

- To arrange regular briefings with Area Manager Prevention and Protection for an update on area of business:
- To develop the content of annual report on area of business
- To encourage and support positive relationships between Fire Authority, the Service and community.
- To raise awareness of the Service's prevention and protection activities to business and community of Berkshire via the following initiatives:
 - Fire Safety advice provided on rbfrs website to community (www.rbfrs.co.uk/your-safety/safety-at-home/)
 - Safe and Well visits to eligible residents
 - Free online Fire Protection sessions aimed at landlords, businesses and carers (Fire Safety in the Workplace and Adults at Risk Programme)

8.3 Allowance

8.3.1 Member Champions are entitled to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in line with Member Scheme of Allowance.

ROLE OF HONORARY MEMBER CHAMPION

9 Armed Forces Honorary Member Champion

9.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- To act as an advocate for Armed Forces.
- To attend Armed Forces Board, Veterans Hub meetings and events.
- To represent the Fire Authority at such meetings.

9.2 Allowance

- 9.2.1 Honorary Member Champions do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (LGA) FIRE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE

10 Local Government Association (LGA) Fire Commission Representative

10.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- To attend and actively engage and participate at LGA Fire Commission meetings, representing and advocating for the Fire Authority.
- To report LGA's priorities and policy lines in relation to fire to the Fire Authority.
- To attend conferences and other events initiated by the LGA in relation to fire.
- To read and understand all LGA Committee papers in advance of any meetings, and to keep abreast of all developments locally and nationally in relation to the policy areas covered by the LGA.

10.2 Allowance

10.2.1 The Local Government Association Fire Commission representatives do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance.

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE (TVFCS) JOINT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE(S)

11 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee Representatives

11.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- Two seats / representation are required on Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Joint Committee.
- Two TVFCS Joint Committee meetings are held within the Municipal Year and an annual Member and Officers Workshop.
- Two substitute members are appointed on an annual basis and are required to attend meetings in the absence of primary Member (as and when required).
- On a rotational annual basis between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA), Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), Chair TVFCS Joint Committee meetings (please refer for item 6, Committee Chair roles and responsibilities and Joint Committee terms of Reference)
 - When appointed as Chair of TVFCS Joint Committee - To liaise on the content of annual reports on work undertaken and progress of TVFCS for consideration by the Fire Authority.
- To uphold and adhere to the principles set out in the TVFCS Inter-Authority Agreement
- To attend and actively engage at TVFCS Joint Committee meetings providing strategic direction for TVFCS
- To attend conferences and workshops organised by TVFCS and Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities (RBFA, BMKFA and OCC)).
- To monitor the performance of TVFCS
- To recommend the annual Budget and any other relevant report to the Fire Authority for approval.

11.2 Allowance

- 11.2.1 Thames Valley Fire Control Service appointments do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowances except for when Royal Berkshire Fire Authority chairs the Joint Committee, which is reflected in the Scheme of Allowances.

THAMES VALLEY COLLABORATION STEERING GROUP

12 Thames Valley Steering Group Representative

12.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Collaboration Lead Member (See Item 7.2.4) sits on Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group. One seat / representation from Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) is required on Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group.
- On a rotational annual basis between five Blue light partners, (Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority, Oxfordshire County Council/Fire and Rescue Service, Police and Crime Commissioner and South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust) Chair Steering Group meetings.
- To uphold and adhere to the principles set out in the Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group Terms of Reference.
- To attend and actively engage at meetings providing strategic overview of project status and future plans.
- To provide overall guidance, challenge and direction on the successful implementation of projects.
- To attend conferences and workshops organised by Thames Valley Blue Light partners.
- To publish annual reports on work undertaken of the progress of Thames Valley Collaboration.

12.2 Allowance

- 12.2.1 Thames Valley Steering Group representation do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance.

Appendix 1

Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Charter of Support

The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority fully supports the aims of the Service to deliver all elements of the Services' Vision. We will stand with the Service in creating a safe environment for staff to thrive, providing the best public service possible for the communities of Royal Berkshire.

To support this:

- **We put the interests of our communities first.**
- **We work together to achieve our vision and objectives.**
- **We act with integrity, being open, honest, and consistent in everything that we do.**
- **We are all committed to creating a safe, dignified and trustworthy Service.**
- **We treat everyone with dignity and respect, making decisions objectively based on evidence, without discrimination or bias.**
- **We are positive visible role models, continuously demonstrating flexible and resilient leadership.**
- **We are all accountable for our own actions and behaviours and will challenge behaviour that falls short of the highest standards.**
- **We will prioritise the wellbeing and expertise of staff, since without them we can do none of the above.**

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Appendix C

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	MEMBERS HANDBOOK AND AGENDA PACK CONSIDERATION
LEAD OFFICER	ANNIE PRATT, HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR JEFF BROOKS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To review the Constitution and amend Standing Orders, and to consider receiving electronic Fire Authority and Committee agenda packs from 1 July 2025. In line with Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 4(1B)}

“(1B)In sub-paragraph (1A)—

(iii) where the member has given consent for the summons to be transmitted in electronic form to a particular electronic address (and consent has not been withdrawn), sending it in electronic form to that address.”

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **AGREE** Amended Standing Orders (Appendix A);
- 2.2 **AGREE** that the Constitution has been reviewed by the Fire Authority on 30 June 2025 to include and a small amendment made to a job title (Appendix B); and
- 2.3 That each Fire Authority Member **CONSIDER** giving their consent to Democratic Support to receive electronic agenda packs from 1 July 2025 to further support the ICT Strategy and Efficiency and Productivity Plan approved by the Fire Authority.

3. REPORT

Handbook update

- 3.1 The Fire Authority review its constitution / Members handbook on a regular basis and make amendments to reflect business need or legislative changes. In addition, the Service’s Internal Auditor, RSM and External Auditor, Grant Thornton carry out annual Governance and Risk audits to provide assurance to the Audit and Governance Committee the Authority’s processes are compliant.

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- 3.2 At the last Fire Authority meeting on 17 April 2025, it had been identified that Fire Authority meetings were not held each quarter in line with Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) Standing Order SO2 which state:

'Ordinary meetings shall be held at such places and times as the Authority may determine, at least once per quarter, in accordance with a timetable agreed at the final Meeting of the Municipal Year.'

- 3.3 This report is seeking Fire Authority approval to amend the wording in SO2 to *'Ordinary meetings shall be held at such places and times as the Authority may determine, and shall normally be held in February, April and November once per quarter, in accordance with a timetable agreed at the final Meeting of the Municipal Year'* (see Appendix A), for the following reasons:

- The Fire Authority Municipal year commences in June (quarter 1) starting with its Annual meeting, followed by the inaugural committee meetings (Audit and Governance, and Management Committee) in July. There are usually no committee meetings scheduled in August, therefore historically there is an insufficient amount of business for a Fire Authority meeting to be held in September or October.
 - The proposed amendment allows for flexibility, to ensure four meetings are held each year without any restrictions on the timing.
 - SO4 states an *'Extraordinary meeting of the Authority may be called at any time by the Chair of the Authority'*, therefore subject to emerging business need, additional meetings may be required throughout the Municipal Year.
- 3.4 The Fire Authority Constitution was last reviewed in June 2017. In order to remain compliant and to reassure our Internal and External Auditors, RSM and Grant Thornton this report is seeking a review. A small amendment to a job title was made highlighted in yellow (Appendix B).

Agenda Packs

- 3.5 Sustainability has been high on the Fire Authority's agenda for a number of years, supported by Members decision-making and approval of the following key documents:
- Emergency Services Sustainability Charter – approved by the Fire Authority on 15 February 2023, minute reference 63.
 - Sustainability Strategy – approved by Management Committee on 8 October 2024, minute reference 27.
 - ICT Strategy - approved by Management Committee on 4 December 2024, minute reference 43.
 - Efficiency and Productivity Plan - approved by Fire Authority on 19 February 2025, minute reference 28.

- 3.6 The above documents have set out plans for Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) to make savings and to improve ways of working in an environmental and sustainable way. As part of the Emergency Services Sustainability Charter, RBFRS set out its commitment to address climate emergency through four strategic themes:
- 3.6.1 Our People - Collaborating with the stakeholders to promote sustainability and empower the sector, community and teams to reduce the impacts and create a sustainable future.
- 3.6.2 Guardianship - Support and create a safer community by reducing wildfires, flooding and contaminants to protect the community and environment.
- 3.6.3 Consumption Reduction – Conserve scarce natural materials through the reduction of RBFRS consumption.
- 3.6.4 Decarbonisation – Reduce the amount of carbon emissions produced by RBFRS and to prevent additional carbon emissions affecting the climate.
- 3.7 This report is seeking the Fire Authority to consider giving their consent to receive electronic agenda packs from 1 July 2025 to support sustainability and productivity initiatives. The Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 4(1B) sets out the legal position on receiving summons and agendas for committee meetings highlighted in bold.

“(1B)In sub-paragraph (1A)—

(a)“authenticated” means signed or otherwise authenticated in such manner as the proper officer thinks fit; and

(b)the reference to sending the summons to a member by an appropriate method is to—

(i)leaving it at, or sending it by post to, the member’s usual place of residence, or

(ii)where the member has specified an address other than the member’s usual place of residence, leaving it at, or sending it by post to, that different address, or

(iii)where the member has given consent for the summons to be transmitted in electronic form to a particular electronic address (and consent has not been withdrawn), sending it in electronic form to that address.”

- 3.8 There are both direct and indirect cost savings associated with this consideration. From 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 the Fire Authority spent approximately £2,202.43 on printing, postage, envelopes and paper. Across RBFRS, the reduction of paper and printing has already been implemented. The cost of postage increases each year, and the current cost of postage stamps of large letter agenda packs vary from £3.00 to £5.00 per envelope per Fire Authority member, subject to the weight of the agenda pack. There are also indirect administrative cost savings, reducing the need for printing, storage, postage and handling of paper documents. This also enables improved efficiency in document retrieval and version control.

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- 3.9 The Fire Authority has tasked the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to make efficiency savings across the Service and have already ceased receiving printed agenda packs at their SLT meetings.
- 3.10 Reducing printing supports our net zero carbon goals and reducing paper use aligns with nature and climate protection commitments under the Climate Change Act 2008 and Environment Act 2021.
- 3.11 Printed documents pose data protection risks (e.g., GDPR breaches from misplaced or un-shredded documents). Digital documents offer secure access control, audit trails, and easier redaction or disposal.
- 3.12 This consideration demonstrates our leadership and accountability in the public sector's contribution to national carbon targets.
- 3.13 Increasing expectations from staff, residents, and partners for public bodies to model sustainable, responsible behaviours.
- 3.14 Many local authorities and fire & rescue services have already implemented successful paper-lite or paper-free policies.
- 3.15 In the last two years, all Fire Authority Members have had RBFRS email accounts installed on their personal mobile phones and devices. It has been identified that Members using Council supplied devices have experienced challenges in accessing their RBFRS accounts due to Local Authority firewalls. ICT has supported Fire Authority Members in the installation of RBFRS accounts on their respective devices and will continue to support this function going forward. The Democratic Support Team has started to send test emails (from April 2024) to all Members via their RBFRS email accounts to identify issues in its early stages.
- 3.16 Subject to Member approval, Democratic Support will send emails to Members RBFRS accounts with a link to the meeting agenda (published on website) five clear working days in advance of the meeting. Part II agenda pack will be attached in the email separately (as Part II papers are not published on the website).
- 3.17 In addition, an electronic copy of the agenda pack will also be visible at each Fire Authority and committee meetings.
- 3.18 An additional paragraph has been included in SO17 (Appendix A) to specify, subject to Member consent an alternative to printed copies via electronic form to a particular address.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.
- 4.2 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

4.3 People: We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Savings of approximately £2,202.43 will be made on ceasing printing and posting agenda packs each year.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None identified.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 This paper is seeking Members to consider receiving electronic agenda packs, however the option to receive printed copies via post will always be available in line with Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 4(1B).

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The RBFRS has to ensure its data is protected against cyber-attacks, therefore RBFRS email accounts have / will be installed on each Members device.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 In line with the ICT Strategy and Efficiency and Productivity Plan, environmental savings will be made.

10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

10.1 None identified.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1 Councillor Jeff Brooks, 2024/25 Chair

11.2 Chief Fire Officer

11.3 Monitoring Officer

11.4 Head of Finance and Procurement

11.5 Senior Leadership Team

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12. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 Emergency Services Sustainability Charter – approved by the Fire Authority on 15 February 2023, minute reference 63.
- 12.2 Sustainability Strategy – approved by Management Committee on 8 October 2024, minute reference 27.
- 12.3 ICT Strategy - approved by Management Committee on 4 December 2024, minute reference 43.
- 12.4 Efficiency and Productivity Plan - approved by Fire Authority on 19 February 2025, minute reference 28.
- 12.5 [Local Government Act 1972](#), Schedule 12, Paragraph 4(1B)

13. **APPENDICES**

- 13.1 Standing Orders – Appendix A
- 13.2 Constitution – Appendix B

14. **CONTACT DETAILS**

- 14.1 Fayth Rowe, Democratic Support Lead, rowef@rbfrs.co.uk

STANDING ORDERS OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

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Appendix A

STANDING ORDERS

Interpretation

SO1. In these Standing Orders:

- a) the day of issue and the day of delivery of an agenda, or day of the receipt of a written notice of a question, and the day of the meeting are excluded from the calculation of "clear days";
- b) the day of issue and the day of delivery of an agenda and the day of the meeting, Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, statutory bank holidays and a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning are excluded from the calculation of "clear working days";
- c) "Combined Area" means the Fire Authority area comprising the areas of Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

Ordinary Meetings

SO2. Ordinary meetings shall be held at such places and times as the Authority may determine, and shall normally be held in February, April and November once per quarter, in accordance with a timetable agreed at the final Meeting of the Municipal Year.

SO3. The Authority shall hold its Annual Meeting at a place and time and on a day in May or June for which summonses will be sent within seven calendar days after the date of the latest of the Annual Meetings of the six councils within the Combined Area.

Extraordinary Meetings

SO4. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority may be called at any time by the Chair of the Authority.

SO5. If the Chair refuses to call an Extraordinary Meeting after receiving a requisition for that purpose, signed by six Members of the Authority or if, without so refusing, the Chair does not call an Extraordinary Meeting

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within seven days after receiving the requisition then any six Members of the Authority, on that refusal or on the expiration of those seven days, as the case may be, the Members in question may forthwith call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority.

Timing of Meetings

SO6. Meetings shall be held at 6.30pm, unless otherwise agreed.

Chair and Vice-Chair

SO7. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed at the Annual meeting of the Authority.

SO8. The first item of business on the agenda for the Annual Meeting shall be the appointment of a Chair for the coming year for which (subject to SO9) the Vice-Chair from the preceding year shall preside.

SO9. If the Vice-Chair is absent from a meeting of the Authority or is present and wishes to be considered for nomination for the office of Chair, another Member chosen by the Members present shall preside in the manner set out at SO10A-SO10B.

SO10. If the office of Chair or Vice-Chair becomes vacant at any time, the Authority shall elect from its Members a person to replace the office holder. Such an election to replace the Chair shall take place no later than the next ordinary meeting of the Authority after the office has become vacant conducted in accordance with SO8 and SO9.

SO10A. Where there are more than two persons nominated for any position to be filled (including any Chair or Vice-Chair) and there is not a majority of all votes cast in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken, and so on until one person receives a majority of all the votes cast.

SO10B. If there is no Member presiding, in the event of an equality of votes between nominees in the last round of open voting the position between them will be determined by secret ballot. If the result of the ballot remains tied the nominees will agree that the position will be determined by the drawing of lots.

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Appendix A

Agendas and Reports

SO11. At least five clear [working] days before any meeting of the Authority, a summons to attend the meeting, specifying the business to be transacted thereat and signed by the Monitoring Officer shall be left at or sent by post to the usual place of residence of every Member of the Authority or to such address (including email address) as a Member may notify for that purpose to the Monitoring Officer.

Attendance Book

SO12. Every Member of the Authority attending a meeting of the Authority shall sign his/her name in the attendance book or sheet provided for that purpose.

Quorum

SO13. The quorum at a meeting of the Authority shall be 7 Members.

SO14. If, during any meeting of the Authority, the Chair, after counting the number of Members present, declares that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned. The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to a time fixed by the Chair at the time the meeting is adjourned, or, if such a time is not fixed, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.

Order of Business

SO15. Subject to what follows, the order of business at every meeting of the Authority will be:

- a) to choose a person to preside if the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent;
- b) to deal with any item required by statute to be done before any other item;
- c) to receive any apologies for absence and any changes in Membership since the last meeting of the Authority.
- d) to approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Authority;

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- e) to receive petitions and questions from the public;
- f) to receive such communications as the Chair may desire to lay before the Authority;
- g) to dispose of business (if any) remaining from a previous meeting;
- h) to receive and consider the recommendations of Committees;
- i) to answer questions by Members asked under Standing Order SO30;
- j) to consider Motions under Standing Order SO43 in the order received;
- k) other business, if any, specified in the Agenda; and
- l) to note minutes of Committees.

SO16. The order of business (with the exception of items (a), (b) (c) and (d)) may be altered by the Chair of the Authority, or by a resolution following a motion moved, seconded and put to the meeting without debate.

Minutes

SO17. The minutes of the business considered and decisions reached at each meeting of the Authority shall be printed and a copy sent to each Member with or prior to the Agenda to attend the next meeting of the Authority. **Alternatively, where the member has given consent the minutes of the business considered and decisions reached shall be transmitted in electronic form to a particular address.**

SO18. When the minutes of a previous meeting come before the Authority, the Authority shall firstly determine any questions raised as to their accuracy and when approved the Chair shall sign the minutes. No other motion or discussion shall take place upon the minutes, except that a Member may request information as to progress or further development of any matter referred to in the minutes.

Petitions

SO19. Any petition to be submitted to the Authority must be in writing and signed by at least 25 local government electors of the Combined Area who shall also state their addresses. Any Petition must be submitted to the

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Monitoring Officer not less than seven clear working days before the meeting at which it is first to be presented. The Monitoring Officer shall date and number each petition on receipt of it and enter it in a book which anyone may inspect.

- SO20. No petition shall relate to any matter of a personal nature.
- SO21. The Monitoring Officer, upon receiving a petition shall present the same, to the next meeting of Authority.
- SO22. Any local government elector of the Combined Area who is a signatory to a petition may be present at the Authority meeting and may speak upon the petition for not more than five minutes, which period of time may be extended with the consent of the Authority. Only one elector may speak upon any petition. No Member of the Authority shall be permitted to speak under this Standing Order.
- SO23. No petition shall be accepted if a petition with the same or similar object has been heard by the Authority, within a period of six months prior to the receipt by the Monitoring Officer of the petition.
- SO24. A petition once received may be acted upon by the Authority.

Questions from the Public

- SO25. At any ordinary meeting of the Authority, any registered local government elector within the Combined Area and any individual acting on behalf of a trade union recognised by the Authority, may ask one question relating to the business of the Authority, **provided that written notice has been given of the question to the Monitoring Officer no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting of the Authority** at which the question is to be asked.
- SO26. The Monitoring Officer may, having consulted the questioner, reword any question received before circulation to Members of the Authority to bring it into proper order or delete improper or unbecoming language.
- SO27. Questions under SO25 shall be taken by the Chair in the order in which they are received by the Monitoring Officer. Questions shall be asked and answered without discussion. The Chair may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another Member to answer it on his/her behalf.

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- SO28. A person asking a question may ask one supplementary question arising directly from the answer given, provided that it is relevant to the original question and does not introduce any new subject matter.
- SO29. The time allowed for written and supplementary public questions shall not exceed 25 minutes. Questions not answered within that period shall be the subject of a written reply.

Written Questions by Members

- SO30. If the Member has given the notice required by SO31 he/she may ask up to three questions at anyone meeting on any of the functions of the Authority or any business relating to a joint committee or body to which the Authority appoints representatives.
- SO31. A Member wishing to ask a question under SO30 shall send a signed copy of the question to be asked to the Monitoring Officer via committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk, **to be received no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting of the Authority** at which the question is to be asked.
- SO32. In cases of urgency as determined by the Chair, Members may submit questions without complying with the timetable specified in the preceding subsection.
- SO33. Every question asked under SO30 shall be put when the item "Questions" is reached on the agenda.
- SO34. No such question shall be the subject of a speech or motion.
- SO35. One supplementary question may be asked by the questioner providing it introduces no new matter, or, if the questioner does not exercise this right, another Member of the Authority.
- SO36. The time allocated to questions shall not exceed thirty minutes.
- SO37. Questions shall be taken in the order in which they are received by the Monitoring Officer and questions not answered within the allocated time shall be the subject of a written reply within seven days to all members.
- SO38. A Member submitting a question may indicate if he/she wishes the question to be the subject of a written reply to be circulated to all Members

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of the Authority before the meeting. If the Chair of the Authority is able to and chooses to accede to such request, the question and answer shall be circulated to all Members and published.

- SO39. Where a Member is unable through absence to put a question under SO30 when it is reached on the agenda, such question shall be deemed to have been put and shall thereupon be answered if the Member has indicated his/her willingness for it to be so put in the notice given in accordance with SO31.
- SO40. Where the reply to any question cannot conveniently be given orally, the answer shall be circulated to Members of the Authority at the outset of the meeting.
- SO41. A question may be answered by the Chair, the Chair of a committee or by such other Member or Members as the Chair of the meeting may decide.
- SO42. No question shall be asked at any meeting summoned by the Chair or by the requisition of members under Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 unless it is relevant to the business for which such a meeting is called. The Chair shall decide whether the question is relevant.

Motions and Amendments without notice

- SO43. A Member may move without notice any of the following Motions and amendments:
- a) To appoint a Chair for that meeting or the remainder of the Meeting.
 - b) Motions relating to the accuracy of the Minutes.
 - c) To vary the order of the Agenda.
 - d) That a matter be referred or referred back to a Committee
 - e) To give leave to withdraw or amend Motion.
 - f) To extend the time limit for speeches.

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- g) To move on to the next item on the Agenda.
- h) To put the question immediately to the vote.
- i) To adjourn the debate.
- j) To adjourn the meeting.
- k) To suspend one or more Standing Orders.
- l) To exclude the public from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972
- m) Not to hear a Member further.
- n) By the Chair to require a Member to leave the meeting.
- o) To give any consent required by these Standing Orders.

Notices of Motion

- SO44. A Motion not listed in SO43 must be given in writing to the Monitoring Officer at least seven clear working days before the Authority meeting and be signed by the Member(s) giving the notice.
- SO45. Motions must relate to matters where the Authority has powers or duties or which affect the Combined Area.
- SO45A. A Notice of Motion of No Confidence may be given concerning any Member in a position for which a Special Responsibility Allowance is listed in the Authority's Scheme of Allowances unless by virtue of being a Group Leader (irrespective of whether such allowance is claimed or paid). It must be signed by no less than seven Members before being given in accordance with SO44 and the following provisions apply:
- a) The Notice must detail the reasons for the Motion of No Confidence and have regard to the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct.

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- b) No amendments will be allowed to the Motion of No Confidence at the meeting where the matter is discussed.
 - c) If a Motion of No Confidence is passed which results in the removal of a Chair or Vice-Chair, the Authority or the Committee (as the case may be) will be required to consider the appointment of its Chair or Vice- Chair (as appropriate) at its next scheduled meeting.
- SO46. The Monitoring Officer shall:
- a) date and number each Notice of Motion on receipt of it and enter it in a book which anyone may inspect; and
 - b) set out in the Agenda for the Authority meeting all Motions which comply with the requirements of SO44, SO45 and SO45A of these Standing Orders in the order they have been received, unless the Member(s) has (have) in writing either withdrawn it or stated a wish to move it at a later meeting.
- SO47. The Authority will treat as withdrawn any Motion not moved at the meeting at which it appears upon the Agenda, unless its postponement is agreed.
- SO48. Any Motion the subject matter of which comes within the province of any Committee(s) may:
- a) be referred without discussion to such Committee(s); or
 - b) be referred without discussion to such other Committee(s) as the Authority may decide; or
 - c) be dealt with at the meeting at which it is moved if the Authority considers that it would be convenient to do so.
- SO49. The Member who has moved the Motion must be notified by the Monitoring Officer of the meeting(s) of the Committee(s) which it has been referred, and has the right to attend the meeting(s) and to explain the Motion.
- SO50. If it appears to the Monitoring Officer that a motion of which he/ she has received notice is not in order, or is framed in improper or unbecoming language, he shall take the direction of the Chair as to whether and in what form it shall be placed on the agenda, and the decision of the Chair, after consultation if possible with the giver of the notice, shall be final.

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- SO51. If a Motion, notice of which has been given in the Authority agenda, be not moved by the Member who has given notice thereof, such Motion may, with the consent of the Authority given by a show of hands without debate, be moved by some other Member, otherwise it shall be deemed to have been withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- SO52. No Motion to rescind any resolution passed within the preceding six months, and no motions or amendments to the same effect as one which has been rejected within the preceding six months, shall be proposed unless the notice thereof bears the name of at least seven Members of the Authority. When any such motion or amendment has been disposed of by the Authority, it shall not be open to any Member to propose a similar motion within a further period of six months. This SO52 shall not apply to motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee.

Committee Recommendations and Minutes

- SO53. Any Member of the Authority may ask the Chair of a Committee any question upon an item in the recommendations or Minutes of that Committee then before the Authority, if the question is put before the consideration of these items by the Authority has been concluded.
- SO54. The Chair concerned may at any time nominate his/her Vice-Chair or any other Member with special responsibility to answer any such question.
- SO55. Whenever a Committee, in exercise of power delegated to it, resolves to take action or to take no action on any matter, there shall be no debate on this decision except that:
- a) any Member may comment on the decision;
 - b) if a decision shall state no action, a motion may be put to ask the Committee to reconsider its decision;
 - c) a motion may be put to express the Authority's disapproval of the action taken.

Matters to be included in Agendas

- SO56. Members' requests for items to be included on the agenda for a meeting of the Authority shall be in writing and received by the Monitoring Officer at least ten clear days before the next ordinary meeting of the Authority, failing which they shall not be so included without the express approval of the Chair of the Authority.

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Rules of Debate for Authority Meetings

- SO57. Whenever the Chair signals during a debate, a Member then speaking and all Members except the Chair shall be silent.
- SO58. A Member seeking to speak shall so indicate by raising his/her hand and shall speak when called to do so by the Chair.
- SO59. A Member, when speaking, shall address the Chair.
- SO60. A Member shall direct his/her speech strictly to the subject matter under discussion.
- SO61. Unless with the consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, no Member shall speak for more than five minutes on the question under discussion with the exception of the mover of the original motion giving rise thereto, who in moving his/her proposition shall not, save with the like consent, speak for more than ten minutes.
- SO62. Any extra time agreed to by the Authority shall be limited to one period of five minutes only.
- SO63. SO61 shall not apply to a speech by the Member moving the Budget, for the ensuing year, but shall apply to his/her reply.
- SO64. No motion or amendment shall be spoken upon except by the mover until it has been seconded.
- SO65. Any Member may formally second a motion or an amendment, in which case he may speak later in the debate.
- SO66. A Member shall not (except in the exercise of his/her right to reply) speak more than once on the same motion or amendment except to a point of order, or by way of personal explanation. The mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on his/her amendment.
- SO67. Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
- a) to refer a subject of debate to a Committee for consideration or re-consideration;
 - b) to leave out words;
 - c) to leave out words and insert or add others;

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d) to insert or add words;

but such omission, insertion or addition of words shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Authority.

- SO68. When an amendment is moved and seconded, no other amendment shall be taken into consideration until the first has been disposed of, provided that the Chair may permit 2 or more amendments to be considered together (but not voted upon), if, in his/her opinion, this course will facilitate the proper conduct of the Authority's business.
- SO69. If an amendment be carried, it shall displace the original motion and become itself the substantive motion, upon which any further amendment may be moved, provided such further amendment is not inconsistent with the alterations of the original motion made by the amendment which has been carried, and provided that any further amendment is not a direct negative of the motion.
- SO70. A Member may, with the consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, alter an original motion which he has moved, or proposes to move, provided that the alteration be such as could be moved as an amendment under this Standing Order.
- SO71. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of a seconder and of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, and no Member may speak upon it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal; unless such permission shall have been refused.
- SO72. The mover of a motion, or of an amendment which has become the substantive motion, shall have a right of reply. After reply, the motion shall be put from the chair without further debate. The mover of an original motion, or of an amendment which has become a substantive motion, shall not introduce new matter in his/her reply.
- SO73. A Member of the Authority, other than the mover or seconder of a motion or amendment before the Authority, may at any time formally move "that the Authority proceed to the other business of the day" on the formal seconding of which the Chair shall immediately put the same to the Authority without speech or debate, and if carried by show of hands, the subject in debate shall be considered as disposed of.

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Appendix A

- SO74. It shall be competent for a Member of the Authority, other than the mover or seconder of a motion or amendment before the Authority, at any time to move formally "that the question be now put", and upon being formally seconded, it shall be put forthwith without speech or debate. Where an amendment is under discussion, the motion shall apply only to that amendment. If the motion be carried, then, if the question before the Authority be the original motion or a first amendment, the Chair shall call upon the mover of the original motion to reply before putting the question.
- SO75. Upon the motion for an adjournment, all the speakers shall limit their observations to the question of adjournment. After a motion for adjournment of a debate, or the adjournment of the Authority has been rejected, another motion for the same or the like purpose shall not be moved within thirty minutes, except by consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by show of hands without debate. On resuming an adjournment debate, the Member who moved the adjournment shall be entitled to speak first.
- SO76. The Chair may at any time upon being satisfied that any motion or other matter has been fully debated by the Authority require that "the question be now put" but before the question be put, the mover of the original motion shall be entitled to exercise his/her right of reply.
- SO77. The ruling of the Chair, on the advice of the Monitoring Officer, as to the construction or application of these Standing Orders, or as to proceedings of the Authority, shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Authority.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION AND POINTS OF ORDER

- SO78. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of an earlier speech by the Member and on which a misunderstanding has occurred.
- SO79. A point of order is a request by a Member to the Chair of the Authority to rule on an alleged irregularity in the constitution or procedure in the meeting.
- SO80. A Member may rise on a personal explanation or a point of order at any time and is entitled immediately to address the Chair of the Authority on the matter; but the Member who raises a point of order must specify immediately a Standing Order or statutory provision, and say how it has

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been broken or infringed and in either case the Member's speech must be confined to the personal explanation or point of order.

- SO81. The ruling of the Chair of the Authority on the advice of the Monitoring Officer on a personal explanation or point of order is not open to discussion.

ORDER AT AUTHORITY MEETINGS

- SO82. If at a meeting any Member of the Authority, in the opinion of the Chair, notified to the Authority, misconducts his/her self by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Authority, the Chair, or any other Member, may formally move "that the Member named be not further heard" and the motion, upon being formally seconded, shall be put and determined without speech or debate.

- SO83. If the Member named continues his/her misconduct after a motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the Chair shall either:

- a) move "that the Member named do leave the meeting" (in which case, the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or
- b) adjourn the meeting of the Authority for such a period as his/her discretion shall consider expedient.

- SO84. In the event of general disturbance which, in the opinion of the Chair, renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the Chair in addition to any other power vested in him/her may, without discussion, adjourn the meeting of the Authority for such period as in his/her discretion shall consider expedient.

- SO85. The Chair may call a Member to order for irrelevance, repetition, imputation of

dishonourable conduct or improper remarks, unseemly language, offensive gestures or any breach of order and may direct a Member, if speaking to discontinue his/her speech and any Member of the Authority may rise to call the attention of the Chair to any of the said matters during the speech of a Member.

- SO86. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may warn him/her. If they continue to interrupt, the Chair may order his/her removal from the meeting room.

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VOTING

SO87. The mode of voting at meetings of the Authority shall be by show of hands. Members must be seated when the vote is taken.

SO88. Where immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting:

- (a) any Member may require that his/her vote cast for or against the question or whether he/she abstained from voting is recorded in the Minutes;
- (b) any Member of the Authority may require, the number of those voting on any question shall be recorded and entered in the Minutes of the Meeting;
- (c) any Member, supported by two other Members, so requires, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show how each Member present, and voting, gave his/her vote;
- (d) which is a budget decision meeting of the Authority there shall be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the Members who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.

SO89. In the case of equality of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

INTEREST OF MEMBERS IN CONTRACTS AND OTHER MATTERS

SO90. A Member who has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

- a) if the interest has not been registered, shall disclose the interest; and
- b) shall not participate in discussion of the matter, or vote on the matter and shall leave the Chamber/room when the matter is being considered unless he or she has been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer.

SO91. Members shall have regard to the provisions of the [Fire Authority's Code of Conduct](#) when taking decisions at meetings of the Fire Authority and its Committees.

INTEREST OF OFFICERS IN CONTRACTS

SO92. If any officer of the Authority has an interest, direct or indirect, within the meaning of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 in any contract,

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proposed contract or other matter under consideration by the Authority, he/she shall withdraw from the meeting, unless the contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration by the Authority as part of the Minutes of a Committee or Sub-Committee and is not itself the subject of debate.

CANVASSING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

- SO93. Canvassing of Members of the Authority directly or indirectly, for any staff appointment under the Authority shall disqualify the candidate concerned for that appointment. The purport of this paragraph shall be brought to the attention of applicants.
- SO94. A Member of the Authority shall not solicit for or against any person for any staff appointment under the Authority, but this shall not preclude a Member from giving a written testimonial of a candidate's character for submission to the Authority with an application for appointment.

RELATIVES OF MEMBERS OR OFFICERS

- SO95. A candidate for any appointment under the Authority who knows that he/she is related to any Member or senior officer of the Authority shall, when making application, disclose that relationship. A candidate who fails to disclose such a relationship shall be disqualified for the appointment and if appointed, shall be liable to dismissal without notice. Every Member and senior officer of the Authority shall disclose to the Monitoring Officer any relationship known to him to exist between himself and any person who he knows is a candidate for an appointment under the Authority.

The Monitoring Officer shall report to the Authority, or to the appropriate Committee, Sub-Committee or person having power to make the appointment, any such disclosure.

- SO96. SO95 shall be drawn to the attention of applicants and for the purpose of this, SO95 "senior officer" means the Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Support Services and Chief Finance Officer or equivalent.
- SO97. In all other cases declarations shall be made to the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive.

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APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SO98. Where the Authority proposes to appoint a Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer shall:

- a) draw up a statement specifying:
 - i) the duties of the officer concerned; and
 - ii) any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed;
 - iii) make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it, and;
 - iv) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned in paragraph;
- b) above to be sent to any person on request.

SO99. Where a post has been advertised as provided in SO98 the Authority shall:

- a) interview all qualified applicants for the post; or
- b) select a short list of such qualified applicants and interview those included on the short list.

SO100. Where no qualified person has applied, the Monitoring Officer shall make further arrangements for the post to be advertised in accordance with this Standing Order.

MEMBERS' ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS

SO101. On application to the Monitoring Officer and subject to the remaining paragraphs of this Standing Order, a Member of the Authority may, for the purposes of his/her duty as such a Member but not otherwise, inspect any document which has been considered by the Authority or by a Committee or Sub-Committee and, if copies are available, shall on request be supplied for the like purposes with a copy of such a document.

SO102. No Member may knowingly call for the inspection nor call for any copy of any document relating to a matter in which he/she are professionally interested or in which he/she have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and whether disclosed or not, within the meaning of the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

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SO103. The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document which has been or is to be considered by a Committee or Sub-Committee which in his/her opinion discloses exempt information of a description for the time being falling within paragraphs 1 to 7, of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

SO104. Any document or information contained within a document which is inspected by or copied to a Member of the Authority shall remain subject to the same restrictions on its disclosure as existed before the inspection or copying. In particular, any confidential information within the meaning of Section 100A(3) or exempt information within the meaning of Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 remains confidential or exempt, as the case may be.

INSPECTION OF LANDS, PREMISES etc

SO105. Unless duly authorised, no Member of the Authority shall issue any order respecting any works which are being carried out by or on behalf of the Authority, nor claim by virtue of their membership of the Authority any right to inspect or to enter upon any Fire Stations land or premises which the Authority has the power or duty to enter or which are owned by the Authority.

EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS

SO106. No group of Members or individual Member, other than a duly constituted committee or sub-committee acting in exercise of its delegated powers where applicable and in accordance with its terms of reference, shall be entitled to take any action on behalf of the Authority or to issue any instruction to an officer of the Authority to take executive action.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

SO107. The Authority shall every year at the Annual Meeting decide by resolution which Committees it intends to establish as "Standing Committees", and shall appoint Members to such Committee.

SO107A.No Committee shall be summonsed to convene on either the date of the Annual Meeting nor the date of another Committee.

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SO107B. At the first meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Authority, the Committee or Sub-Committee will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for the year as follows:

- a) a Member will be chosen by vote to preside over the election of the Chair for the year. Where there are more than two persons nominated to preside and there is not a majority of all votes cast in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken, and so on until one person receives a majority of all the votes cast;
- b) if an equality of votes results in no Member being chosen in accordance with SO107B(a) the Vice-Chair from the preceding year shall preside over the election of the Chair for the year and SO89 will therefore apply
- c) If the Vice-Chair from the preceding year is absent from the meeting or is present and wishes to be considered for nomination for the office of Chair in the event of an equality of votes between the nominees in the last round of open voting the position between them will be determined by secret ballot. If the result of the ballot remains tied the nominees will agree that the position will be determined by the drawing of lots.

SO108. Any Committee may appoint sub committees to discharge any of its functions, subject to the approval of the Authority as to the particular functions to be discharged.

SO109. The term of office of each Committee (or Sub-Committee) Member shall expire at the Annual Meeting next after their appointment, or at such earlier time as the Authority shall determine, or by resignation.

SO110. Where a Member is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee, or a Sub-Committee, the Member, or representative of that Member's political group may nominate another Member of the Authority to attend as their substitute, provided the Monitoring Officer is given notice of the proposed change whereupon the provisions of SO [119] and SO[120] shall apply.

SO111. The quorum of the Management Committee shall be 4 and the quorum of the Audit and Governance Committee shall be 3. The quorum for additional Committees or Sub-Committee shall be 3 Members of the Committee or Sub-Committee concerned or such greater number of Members as the Authority may determine.

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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SO112. The Monitoring Officer shall summon any Committee or Sub-Committee or group of Members appointed by a Committee or Sub-Committee to consider or deal with a specific matter at the time and date previously resolved, or on request of the Chair, or without request to deal with business of urgency which, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer necessitates a meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee.

PROCEDURE AT COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SO113. The Standing Orders of the Authority shall apply to Committee and Sub-Committee meetings, except SO2 - SO10; SO13- SO42 and SO44-SO52.

RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

SO114. Any Member of a Committee may resign his/her membership of a Committee, Sub-Committee or other body by notice in writing signed by him and delivered to the Monitoring Officer, which shall become effective immediately.

CONFIDENTIALITY

SO115. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 all Authority, Committee and Sub-Committee reports and documents marked as "Confidential" shall be treated as confidential at all times. In relation to reports and documents marked "Exempt" they shall be treated as confidential until they become public in the ordinary course of the Authority's business and the following classification shall be used for reports to the Authority or its Committees and Sub-Committees:

- a) "CONFIDENTIAL - Not for publication at any time by virtue of Section 100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972" - Reports dealing with information supplied by a Government Department on condition that it is kept confidential or where the disclosure of information in the report is prohibited by statute or court order.
- b) "EXEMPT - Not for publication unless authorised by the Authority/Committee/Sub-Committee. Report contains exempt information by virtue of paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972" - Reports which the Proper Officer considers contain exempt information and are likely to be considered in private.

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(NOTE: The Authority, Committee or Sub-Committee may still resolve to deal with the report in public at the meeting itself)

THE SEAL AND EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS

- SO116. The Common Seal shall be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Monitoring Officer.
- SO117. Any decision of the Authority, a Committee or Sub-Committee or Officer exercising delegated functions shall be deemed to authorise the affixing of the Common Seal to that document and the affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer.
- SO118. Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Authority, it shall be signed by the Monitoring Officer or such other officer as may be designated by him unless any enactment requires otherwise provided that the Authority or a Committee or Sub-Committee exercising delegated powers, if legally entitled, may authorise some other officer to execute any such document.

SUBSTITUTION

- SO119. The nomination of a substitute given in accordance with SO110 shall be in writing specifying the Committee to which it relates and the period or periods of time for which the substitution shall apply, and shall be signed and sent by the substituted Member's political group representative for the purpose of the Authority, to the Monitoring Officer to the Authority. Upon receipt, the Monitoring Officer will amend the Members' Register accordingly.
- SO120. A Member attending as substitute shall, at the commencement of the Meeting, identify the Member on whose behalf he attends, who shall then be excluded from participation in that Meeting.
- SO121. A Member, attending as a substitute in the absence of the Member from any Meeting of the relevant Committee shall be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Meeting (but not, in the case of the nominating Member being the Chair or Vice-Chair, to exercise the rights and functions of that office).

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VARIATION OR REVOCATION OF STANDING ORDERS

SO122. These Standing Orders shall not be amended, added to or rescinded unless notice shall have first been given to the Members in the Authority Agenda and such notice shall state the terms and effect of any proposed variation or revocation of these Standing Orders.

SO123. The Authority will review the operation of these Standing Orders no later than every four years.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

SO124. Except in respect of SO7 to SO10 (Chair and Vice-Chair), SO44 to SO52 (Notices of Motion), SO17 & SO18 (Minutes); SO87 to SO89 (Voting); SO92 to SO97 (Staff /interests) and SO107 (Appointment of Committees and Sub-Committees), any Member may, for any stated purpose, move the suspension of any Standing Order of the Authority and the motion, on being seconded, shall be put forthwith without speech or debate.

STANDING ORDERS TO BE SUPPLIED TO MEMBERS

SO125. The Monitoring Officer shall arrange for a printed or electronic copy of these Standing Orders to be provided to each Member of the Authority upon being first appointed a Member of the Authority.

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Appendix A

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY CONSTITUTION

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INTRODUCTION

NAME

CN1. The name of the Authority shall be the "Royal Berkshire Fire Authority".

MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

CN2. "The Authority shall consist of not more than 20 members save that, where each constituent authority shall, so far as is practicable, appoint such number of representatives to be members of the Authority as is proportionate to the number of local government electors in its area in relation to the number of such electors in each of the other constituent authorities' areas".

CN3. The Authority shall consist of members of the constituent authorities of Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

CN4. Seats on the Fire Authority shall be calculated annually based on 20 seats based on the electoral numbers provided by the constituent authorities.

CN5. Members appointed by a constituent authority shall be appointed and continue in office in accordance with paragraphs 13 to 16 of the Schedule to the Berkshire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997.

CN6. A Member of the Authority may resign his / her membership by giving the Monitoring Officer written notice to that effect.

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INDEMNITY TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

- CN7. In exercise of its powers under The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004. SI 2004 No. 3082, the Fire Authority has given an indemnity to Members and Officers of the Authority as set out in CN8 - CN22.
- CN8. The Royal Berkshire Fire Authority will, subject to the exceptions set out below, indemnify each of its Members and Officers against any loss or damage suffered by the Member or Officer arising from his / her action or failure to act in his / her capacity as a Member or Officer of the Fire Authority.
- CN9. This indemnity will not extend to loss or damage directly or indirectly caused by or arising from:
- a) any criminal offence, fraud or other deliberate wrongdoing or recklessness on the part of the Member or Officer;
 - b) any act or failure to act by the member or employee otherwise than in his / her capacity as a Member or Officer of the Fire Authority; or
 - c) failure by the Member to comply with the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct for Members.
- CN10. The Fire Authority will, subject to the exceptions set out below, indemnify each of its Members and Officers against the reasonable costs which he / she may incur in securing appropriate legal advice and representation in respect of any civil or criminal proceedings or Part 3 proceedings to which he / she are subject.
- CN11. "Criminal proceedings" includes any interview or investigation by the Police, and any proceedings before a criminal court, in the United Kingdom.
- CN12. "Part 3 proceedings" means any investigation or hearing in respect of an alleged failure to comply with the authority's Code of Conduct for Members under Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- CN13. "Officers" means the officers listed on page 5 of this Constitution.
- CN14. This indemnity will not extend to Part 3 proceedings where the allegation has been referred to the Monitoring Officer for local investigation and/or determination by the Authority's Audit and Governance Committee
- CN15. This indemnity shall not extend to any advice or representation in respect of any claim or threatened claim in defamation by or against the Member or Officer.
- CN16. Where any Member or Officer avails him / herself of this indemnity in respect of defending him / herself against any criminal proceedings or Part 3 proceedings, the

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Appendix B

indemnity is subject to a condition that if, in respect of the matter in relation to which the Member or Officer has made use of this indemnity –

- a) the Member or Officer is convicted of a criminal offence in consequence of such proceedings; or
- b) a Case Tribunal or the Audit and Governance Committee determine that the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members; and
- c) the conviction or determination is not overturned on appeal, the Member shall reimburse the Fire Authority for any sums expended by the Fire Authority pursuant to the indemnity.

CN17. Where the Fire Authority arranges insurance to cover its liability under this indemnity, the requirement to reimburse in Paragraph CN10 shall apply as if references to the Fire Authority were references to the insurer.

CN18. For the purpose of these indemnities, a loss or damage shall be deemed to have arisen to the Member or Officer “in His / her capacity as a Member or Officer of the Fire Authority” where:

- a) the act or failure to act was outside the powers of the Fire Authority, or outside the powers of the Member or Officer, but the Member or Officer reasonably believed that the act or failure to act was within the powers of the Fire Authority or within the powers of the Member or Officer (as appropriate) at the time that he / she acted or failed to act, as the case may be;
- b) the act or failure to act occurred not in the discharge of the functions of the Member or Officer as a member or officer of the Fire Authority but in their capacity as a member or employee of another organisation, where the Member or Officer is, at the time of the action or failure to act, a member or employee of that organisation either –
 - i. in consequence of his / her appointment as such member or officer of that organisation by the Fire Authority; or
 - ii. in consequence of his / her nomination for appointment as such member or officer of that organisation by the Fire Authority; or
 - iii. where the Fire Authority has specifically approved such appointment as such a member or employee of that organisation for the purpose of these indemnities.

CN19. The Fire Authority undertakes not to sue (or join in any action as co-defendant) an Officer of the Authority in respect of any negligent act or failure to act by the Officer in his / her capacity as an Officer of the Fire Authority, subject to the following exceptions:

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- a) any criminal offence, fraud or other deliberate wrongdoing [including discrimination, bullying and/or harassment of another officer of the Fire Authority] or recklessness on the part of the Officer; or
- b) any act or failure to act by the Officer otherwise than in his/her capacity as an Officer of the Fire Authority.

CN20. These indemnities and undertakings will not apply if a Member or Officer, without the express permission of the Fire Authority or of the appropriate Officer of the Fire Authority, admits liability or negotiates or attempts to negotiate a settlement of any claim falling within the scope of the resolution.

CN21. These indemnities and undertakings are without prejudice to the rights of the Fire Authority to take disciplinary action against an Officer in respect of any act, omission or failure to act.

CN22. These indemnities and undertakings shall apply retrospectively to any act, omission or failure to act which may have occurred before this date and shall continue to cover all acts omissions or failure to act that occur during his / her membership of or employment by the Fire Authority and the indemnity shall apply to cover such matters even if subsequently the Member or Officer has ceased to be a Member or Officer of the Fire Authority.

OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY

CHIEF FIRE OFFICER / CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE / DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT CORPORATE SERVICES

DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

MONITORING OFFICER

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	HIS MAJESTY’S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES INSPECTION REPORT OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE
LEAD OFFICER	ANGELA SMITH
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE AND APPROVAL

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of the report is to note the findings of the recent inspection of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in October and November 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire authority:

2.1 **NOTE** the findings in His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services report on the performance of Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service, and to **APPROVE** the action plan to address the Areas for Improvement (AFI).

3. REPORT

3.1 In October 2024, His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) commenced their inspection of RBFRS to look at how we perform when inspected against their methodology covering effectiveness, efficiency and people.

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3.2 Services are assessed against the characteristics of good performance as defined by HMICFRS. For this round of inspections HMICFRS have expanded the previous four-tier system of graded judgements to five with the introduction of adequate and these now include:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Adequate
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

3.3 HMICFRS states that *“a reduction in grade, particularly from good to adequate, doesn’t necessarily mean there has been a reduction in performance, unless we say so in the report”*.

3.4 Each Fire & Rescue service receives eleven graded judgements rather than three overall ones provided in previous inspections. RBFRS received gradings of good in eight areas and adequate in three others. The below table shows the gradings awarded to us against each question and which sections the AFIs apply to.

Question	Grade	AFI given
Understanding the risk of fire and other emergencies	Good	
Preventing fires and other risks	Good	
Protecting the public through fire regulation	Good	Y
Responding to fires and other emergencies	Good	
Responding to major and multi-agency incidents	Adequate	Y
Making best use of resources	Adequate	Y
Making the fire and rescue service affordable now and in the future	Good	

Promoting the right values and culture	Good	
Getting the right people with the right skills	Good	
Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity	Good	
Managing performance and developing leaders	Adequate	Y – x2

3.5 The report summarised three main findings.

- The service continues to provide an effective prevention, protection and response service to the public, working well with other fire and rescue services and organisations such as the police, local authorities and health providers.
- The service is working hard to transform its estate and technology and make sure staff are productive at work, which is supporting the service to improve its ways of working and provide a more efficient service to the public.
- Staff are proud to work for the service and feel able to raise concerns, which are addressed appropriately as the service has a positive culture, looks after its people, and supports them to put the community at the heart of what they do.

3.6 The report has highlighted AFIs for RBFRS, which we acknowledge and welcome. These findings have been considered, and a plan of action is attached in APPENDIX A for approval. It should be noted these were risk areas already identified and as a result, plans were already in place to address these. HMICFRS now have an online portal where regular progress updates on the AFIs will be uploaded to.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Prevention: We will reduce the risk to our communities through our partnership duties and prevention education activities, ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.2 Protection: We will support those with responsibility for premises to understand their duties in ensuring the safety of all people using buildings covered by the Building Safety Act 2022 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, whilst ensuring that our services are accessible to all.
- 4.3 Response: We will ensure that our people are trained and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.
- 4.4 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.

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4.5 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

4.6 People: We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 HMICFRS has powers of inspection under the Fire and Rescue Act 2004, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017. As outlined in the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, all fire and rescue authorities must cooperate with the inspectorate and its inspectors to enable them to deliver their statutory function.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No equality and diversity implications as a result of this report.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no risk implications as a result of this report.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no sustainability implications as a result of this report.

10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

10.1 No implications with our duty to collaborate as a result of this report.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1 No implications to consult on regarding this report.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 [Fire and Rescue National Framework for England](#)

13. APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A – Areas for Improvement action plan.

14. CONTACT DETAILS

14.1 Angela Smith, Programme Office and Inspection Manager, smitha@rbfrs.co.uk

Appendix A - HMICFRS Plan of Action - Areas for Improvement (AFIs)

AFI	Owner	Action Plan	Timescales	Progress RAG	Governance
The service should assure itself that its use of enforcement powers prioritises the highest risks and includes proportionate activity to reduce risk	Dave Crease	Report was agreed at the Senior Leadership Meeting in March and agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renewed strategy to expedite the remediation of High-Rise Residential Buildings (HRRBs) identified as unsafe due to flammable materials and compartmentation concerns. • Agree that will address non-compliance with the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, requiring the submission of EWS information and building plans. • A more formal method for remediation, including issuing formal notices for buildings requiring remediation and informal notices for non-compliance. 	Issue formal notices to all HRRBs under interim measures by April 30, 2025, and to those needing remediation by December 30, 2025	Green	Protection Advisory Board Portfolio Board
The service should make sure it has an effective method to share fire survival guidance information with multiple callers and that it has a dedicated communication link in place	Tim Readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are continuing to develop an electronic system to manage Fire Survival Guidance. This will help co-ordinate search and rescue operations at fires in high rise buildings where there are multiple people that need to be evacuated or rescued. 	Q2 25/26	Amber	Thames Valley Interoperability Board

AFI	Owner	Action Plan	Timescales	Progress RAG	Governance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The electronic system is being developed collaboratively by Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services. Two Thames Valley, multi-agency exercises have been held to test and provide feedback on the system. Further development is ongoing. 			
<p>The service needs to show clear rationale for the resources allocated between prevention, protection and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risks and priorities set out in its community risk management plan.</p>	<p>Katie Mills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work towards this area for improvement is through the existing CRMP and it's defined priorities. Various projects have been underway, for example, Priority three, Response Model Review and governance is also in place for reporting and involving the Fire Authority in this work. 	<p>The detailed timeline is being reviewed within the CRMP Programme governance – tbc March 2027</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>CRMP Programme Board</p> <p>Portfolio Board</p>
<p>Process to identify, develop and support high potential staff and aspiring leaders</p>	<p>Becci Jefferies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following pilot completion, an Evaluation Report, was written in April 2025 reviewed the <i>Talent Management: Developing Potential</i> proposals The evaluation identified key areas for improvement and offered recommendations to support the successful Service-wide rollout which will lead to identifying, developing all talent. 	<p>Rollout to start March 2026</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>People Programme</p> <p>Portfolio Board</p>

AFI	Owner	Action Plan	Timescales	Progress RAG	Governance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many of these recommendations have already been integrated into the upcoming PDR process, including enhancements to objective setting and linking these to RBFRS' Strategic Commitments. In the lead up to rollout, further design to be completed and links to the new System Development System will be developed. 			
Understanding and application of Personal Development Reviews (PDRs)	Becci Jefferies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following a review of the Behavioural Competency Framework (BCF), the PDR form has been simplified with associated guidance updated. The LMS package relating to setting SMART objectives has been updated and is available to all staff. Awareness sessions will be open to all staff and will take place in Q1 25/26. The aim of these sessions will be to provide an overview of the PDR process for this year, in addition to how this links to the BCF and Talent Management. 	Review October 2025	Green	People Programme Portfolio Board

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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025
LEAD OFFICERS	ANNIE PRATT, HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES
LEAD MEMBER	N/A
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR NOTE

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Annual Report to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority summarising performance in 2024/2025.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To **NOTE** the Annual Report prior to external publication.

3. **REPORT**

- 3.1 The Fire Authority agreed its Annual Plan 2024/2025 for delivery of the Strategic Commitments as set out in the Corporate Plan 2023-2027. Within the Annual Plan were a number of Corporate Measures against which our performance was monitored by Officers and Members via the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 3.2 The Annual Report provides a summary of performance in 2023/24, highlighting a number of achievements and challenges in delivering services for the people of Berkshire.
- 3.3 As part of our commitment to transparency, following consideration by the Fire Authority, the Annual Report will be published on our website.

4. **CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS**

- 4.1 The Annual Report sets out delivery against the Strategic Commitments in 2023/24.

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5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 No direct financial implications.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 No direct legal implications.

7. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 No direct equality and diversity implications.

8. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 No direct risk implication.

9. **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

10. **CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE**

10.1 The Annual Report highlights a number of areas in which we have demonstrated our commitment to the duty to collaborate.

11. **PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION**

11.1 The Annual Report has been developed in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team.

12. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12.1 Annual Plan 2023/24

12.2 Corporate Plan and Community Risk Management Plan 2023-2027

13. **APPENDICES**

13.1 Appendix A - Annual Report 2023/24

14. **CONTACT DETAILS**

14.1 Annie Pratt, Head of Corporate Services, 07786 145153

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Annual Report
» 2024-2025

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» Welcome

Welcome to the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) Annual Report. Over the past year, staff and volunteers for the Service have once again shown tremendous professionalism and commitment when delivering our vital services to the community.

This is a view that has been backed up in the latest inspection by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), which has assessed that overall, RBFRS is providing a good service to the public. Of the 11 areas they inspected, RBFRS received 'Good' grades for eight of them. The remaining three were graded as 'Adequate'.

In an increasingly challenging inspection process, with the addition of the 'adequate' grade which maps against the previous 'good' grade, the Service is rightly proud of the continued improvement recognised by HMICFRS in this inspection.

To further improve upon the already high standards set, this year the Fire Authority set out a comprehensive investment programme in the Service's people, estate, training and equipment. For example, around £4 million is due to be invested in new fire engines in the coming years, and we will invest in IT systems that are modern and efficient to improve productivity across the Service.

Additionally, plans to refurbish the Training Centre in Whitley Wood, Reading are nearing completion

with the installation of a modular building on site. Once fully completed, this new Training Centre will ensure that we have access to modern, first-class and sustainable facilities to train and develop our firefighters, enabling them to continue to provide the high level of public service that residents of Berkshire enjoy.

We must also continue to be alert to the risks that our communities face. The climate emergency has been recognised by fire and rescue services across the country and, over the last two decades, services have responded to a growing number of emergency incidents that are associated with the effects of climate change.

Two recent examples of this are the heatwave in the summer of 2022, which saw record breaking temperatures in England, and the flooding in 2024, that have increased demand on the Service's resources. Therefore, alongside our Community Risk Management Plan, this year we were pleased to announce the launch of RBRFS' Sustainability Strategy, which aimed at improving the Service's efficiency while mitigating the impact it has on the planet.

Before going any further, we would like to take this opportunity to recognise the contributions of staff and volunteers that have made the Service what it is today. While there are too many to recognise in this document, we hope that this report gives you some indication of the fantastic work that is happening across Berkshire each and every day.



**Councillor
Jeff Brooks**

Chair,
Royal Berkshire
Fire Authority



Wayne Bowcock

Chief Fire Officer
and Chief Executive,
Royal Berkshire Fire
and Rescue Service

» Your Fire and Rescue Service

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service provides Prevention, Protection, and Response to incidents across the Royal County of Berkshire.

Twelve wholtime fire stations and four on-call fire stations cover 488 square miles from Langley in the East to Lambourn in the West. The Service protects a diverse cultural population of approximately 959,000, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Service's highly-trained fire crews deal with incidents ranging from road and rail accidents to fuel and chemical spills, aviation and waterway accidents, collapsed buildings, large animal rescues, and, of course, fires.

Along with providing a swift and effective response to incidents, one of the Service's aims is to educate people on how to prevent fires and other emergencies. Our Service works with schools, businesses, residents, and community groups throughout Royal Berkshire to raise awareness and educate people about a wide variety of safety issues.

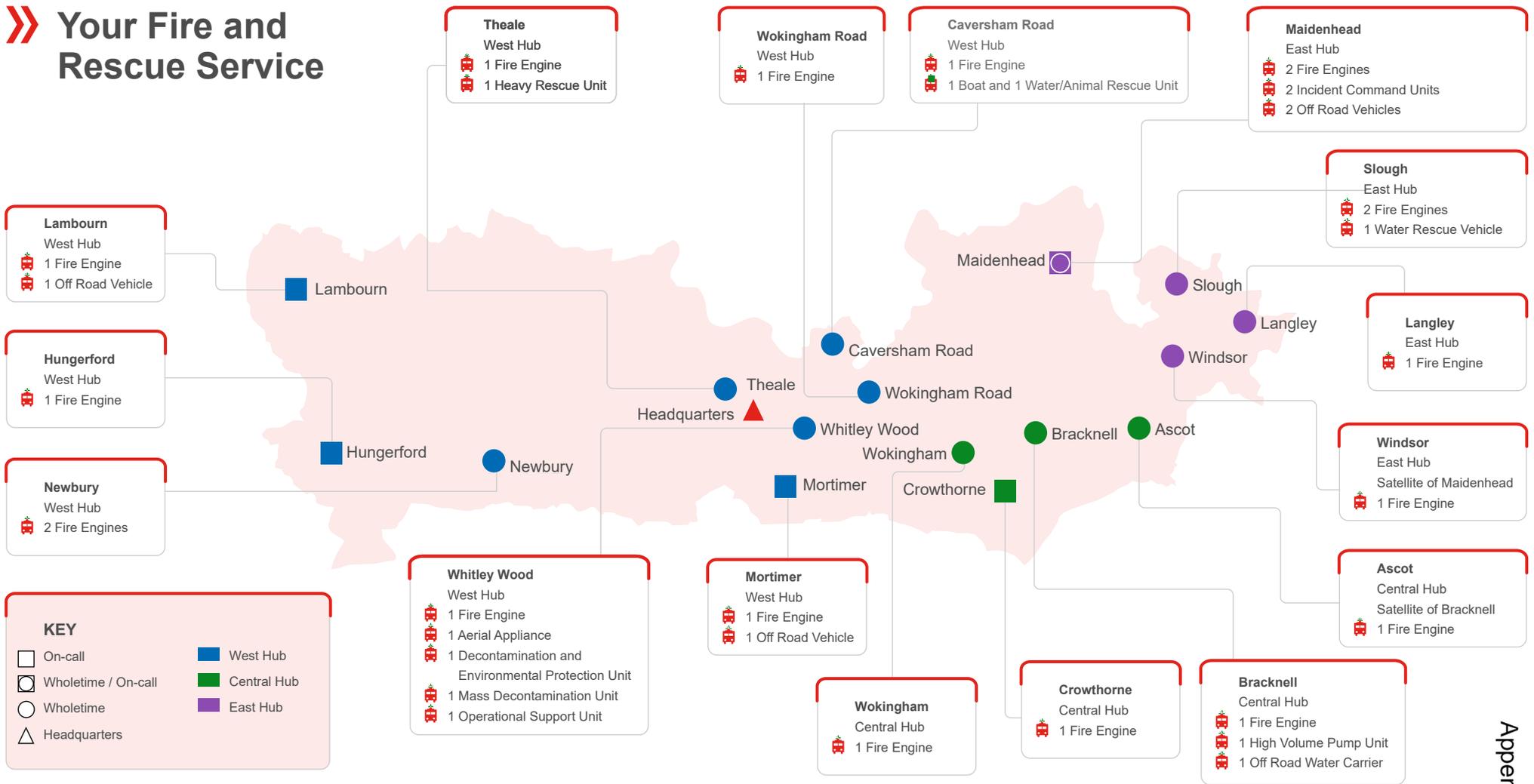
The Service has joined forces with Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service and Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service to establish a shared emergency call handling centre, Thames Valley Fire Control Service.



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Appendix A



» Your Fire and Rescue Service



Fire Stations		Staff		Incidents attended		Prevention & Protection	
	2024-2025		2024-2025		2024-2025		2024-2025
Wholetime	11	Non-operational	197	All Emergency Incidents	7549	Safe and Well Visits	5462
On-call	4	Wholetime	382	Fires in the home	390	Fire Safety Audits	673
Wholetime and On-call	1	On-call	60	Fires in other buildings	146	Building consultations	2231
		Control Staff	41	Road traffic collisions	437		
		Volunteers	14	Outdoor fires	725		
				Water rescues	86		
				Flooding Incidents	216		

» About Us - Community Risk Management Plan

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service produces a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to ensure we deliver the right resources at the right time, in the right place.

The CRMP balances resources against risk. Our CRMP contains information on what RBFRS is going to do over a four-year period and is supported by annual action plans.

RBFRS has a Programme Board to ensure that it meets the statutory requirements of the CRMP process whilst supporting the achievement of the strategic commitments and objectives.

The board provides leadership and support for the delivery of the CRMP programme, which is outlined in the Corporate Plan and CRMP 2023-27, which outlines six key priorities for the four year period:

1. We will develop our Integrated Service Delivery Strategy to meet the changing profile of risk in Berkshire due to climate change, societal and technological shifts.
2. We will develop a Risk Based Prevention Programme to target those most vulnerable and at risk from emergency incidents.
3. We will develop our response model to ensure that we are providing the most effective response to incidents within Berkshire, ensuring that it is aligned to the risks identified, sustainable and provides value for money

4. We will review the incidents that do not form part of our core statutory responsibilities, to better understand the implications for the Service in attending these incidents. Notwithstanding the review of our response and the gathering of this data, public safety will remain the primary priority of the Service.
5. We will develop our Service to reduce the impact of fire safety issues in commercial buildings.
6. We will maintain 19 frontline fire appliances, and a baseline service provision of 14 frontline fire appliances, utilising wholetime and on-call staff as effectively as possible, through local management.

The Programme Board makes recommendations for consideration by the Fire Authority through its CRMP Working Party.

We manage the risks we identify through an integrated approach. This means we consider the full range of treatments we have at our disposal and identify the most effective and efficient way to reduce community risk.

» About Us - Awards and Nominations

In 2024-25, the Service was recognised as part of several national schemes and awards presentations for our work in the fire and rescue sector. Some of the highlights from the year include:

Thames Valley Fire Investigation

The Thames Valley Forensic Fire Investigation Unit (FFSIU) was honoured with a nomination for the Collaboration Award at the Excellence in the Fire and Emergency Services Awards in December 2024.

The FFSIU represents an unparalleled partnership between Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service and the Fire and Rescue services of Buckinghamshire, and Royal Berkshire.

Since its launch, the unit has attended over 116 fire investigations across the Thames Valley region. Its remit includes providing forensic fire investigation services for incidents suspected to involve criminal activity, serious injuries, or fatalities.

As the largest forensic fire investigation collaboration between fire services and police in the UK, the FFSIU is truly unique.

It operates under a shared quality management system with Thames Valley Police, fostering a cohesive "one team" approach.

The unit's forensic contributions have already supported evidence in a number of crown and coronial cases across the Thames Valley, underscoring its critical role in delivering justice and supporting community safety.

Apprentice Awards

During National Apprenticeship Week 2025, seven of our Wholetime Firefighters were nominated for awards at the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Apprenticeship Awards in London.

The seven Apprentices were all nominated for the Operational Apprentice of the Year Award, competing with other Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices from fire and rescue services across the UK. Well done to Cameron, Firefighter at Slough Fire Station, who was recognised as the runner-up for the Award.

Robin, one of our Station Managers, was also recognised for his efforts in supporting our apprentices with a nomination for the Excellence in Apprenticeship Support Award. This Award aims to recognise an outstanding team or individual that provided the best support for their apprentices, with Robin being one of the finalists.

Disability Confident Leader

In May, we were pleased to hear that we had maintained our status as a Level Three 'Leader' in the Disability Confident scheme.

The Disability Confident Scheme includes over 20,000-member organisations from across the country and, as a Leader, the Service ranks amongst the top 600 organisations in the Scheme.

To become a Disability Confident Leader, organisations must demonstrate how they have pioneered disability inclusion. The accreditation process involved the submission of evidence of the Service's disability inclusion work, and was

validated by Business Disability Forum, an existing Disability Confident Leader organisation. This status lasts for three years before Leader organisations are required to resubmit evidence for further revalidation.

Over the past three years, the Service has proven its commitment to disability inclusion by undertaking several initiatives. It actively participate in Leonard Cheshire's Change100 scheme, aimed at providing opportunities for university students with disabilities. RBFRS was the first fire and rescue service to sign up for the scheme in 2017 and has supported the programme every year since.

The Service became a member of the Disability Confident scheme in 2018, before becoming a Disability Confident Employer, the second level of the scheme, in 2019 and a Disability Confident Leader, the highest level of the scheme for the first time in 2021.

» About Us - Awards and Nominations

Make a Difference Awards

We were delighted that Red Watch at Caversham Road Fire Station and a member of our Control staff were shortlisted as finalists in the BBC Radio Berkshire Make a Difference Awards.

They were shortlisted in the Bravery Category for their efforts in rescuing two people trapped in a vehicle in Land's End Ford near Twyford on 10 May 2023.

The caller was unsure of his exact location, but a member of our Control staff calmly gathered all the information he could to pass onto attending crews. He gave lifesaving advice and managed to stay on the line reassuring them until the crews arrived at the scene.

When crews arrived in the area, they followed their intuition and attended Land's End Ford before searching downstream for several hundred meters.

They found the vehicle almost fully submerged with two people trapped inside. Both were desperately trying to keep breathing in a small air pocket just a few inches deep.

Two of our firefighters entered the water and managed to force entry to the vehicle, before pulling the occupants to safety. The crew then provided immediate emergency care and assisted the ambulance service, as they were in a very serious medical condition.

Both people survived after a period in hospital thanks to the composure and bravery of firefighters and control staff.

The Service is a 'good fit' employer for veterans to transition to and employs at least 25 veterans in a variety of roles.

English Veterans Awards

In 2024, we were delighted to have been shortlisted in the 'Employer of the Year' category at the English Veterans Awards. The Service is committed to promoting the inclusion of those who have served their country, ensuring equality and inclusion as part of our broader Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme.

The Service is a 'good fit' employer for veterans to transition to and employs at least 25 veterans in a variety of roles. We recognise that ex-forces personnel have great strengths and strong transferable skills to bring to any role within our Fire and Rescue Service.

Veterans have a strong commitment to public service and community. We are proud to support those who serve, and who have served, and their families.



» Social Media Highlights



Followers: **10,069**
New followers: **841**
Interactions: **24,681**
Reach: **378,028**



Active users: **366,000**
Page Views: **588,000**
Form Submissions: **13,132**
File Downloads: **17,765**



Followers: **3,037**
New followers: **468**
Interactions: **4,622**
Reach: **29,540**



Subscribers: **600**
New Subscribers: **72**
Views: **39,200**
Hours Watched: **827.4**



Followers: **11,437**
Interactions: **1,025**
Profile visits: **973**
Posts: **601**



Followers: **3,543**
New followers: **642**
Interactions: **4,322**
Page views: **3,720**

» Timeline of the Last Year



Project Delivers Stronger Alignment

Following a successful joint procurement project, all firefighters across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire now use the same breathing apparatus sets and associated equipment. Alignment between the three fire and rescue services of the Thames Valley (TV) is stronger following the successful delivery of a £1.7m collaborative project.

**April
2024**

Welcoming our Newest Cohort of Firefighters

On Friday, 10 May 2024, we welcomed 17 new Wholetime Firefighters during a Graduation Ceremony at Maidenhead Fire Station.



Service Enhances Environmental Protection Capabilities

The Decontamination and Environmental Protection Unit is used at incidents where there is a risk to the local environment or where there is a need to operate in gas tight suits.

**May
2024**

Property Manager Fined for Several Fire Safety Breaches

A property manager in Slough was ordered to pay £22,646.82 for fire safety breaches following a successful prosecution brought by the Fire Authority. The guilty plea followed an investigation conducted by the Service in early 2023.

Supporting Pride Month Across Berkshire

As part of Pride Month, crews from Wokingham, Bracknell, Newbury, Caversham Road and Wokingham Road fire stations attended pride events throughout the summer. During the events, crews, joined by staff from across the Service, took the opportunity to talk about fire safety, and recruitment.

**June
2024**



Fire Cadets Recognised for Achievements

Thirty-nine Fire Cadets from across Berkshire demonstrated their new skills at a Graduation Ceremony held at Maidenhead Fire Station

Ground Broken at New Fire Service Training Centre

Joined by Members of the Fire Authority, local Councillors and Yuan Yang MP, the Groundbreaking ceremony marked the beginning of works on the new Training Centre.

**July
2024**

Year Three of the Summer Internship

The Scheme encourages those who may not have considered a career in the sector to explore some of the roles available to them. The scheme was open to people from Berkshire who were aged 17-18 and from ethnic groups that are under-represented in the Service.



**August
2024**



Multi-Service Exercise at the AMC Tower.

We led a joint exercise with our blue light partners, local authorities and Thames Valley Fire Control Service at the University of Reading.

Changes to our Automatic Fire Alarm Policy

Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority decided to make the change following a public consultation, which attracted a total of 389 responses during the consultation period.

**September
2024**

» Timeline of the Last Year



Celebrating International Control Room Week

During International Control Room Week, we celebrated Thames Valley Fire Control Service's dedicated staff who help keep our communities safe.

Service Launches Sustainability Strategy

The Service announced the launch of our first Sustainability Strategy, aimed at improving efficiency while mitigating our impact on the planet.

**October
2024**

Excellence Recognised at Awards Ceremony

We celebrated our annual Awards Ceremony on Friday, 29 November 2024, to recognise the exceptional work of our staff, volunteers and partners.

18 New Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices

We welcomed a second cohort of Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices at a graduation ceremony held at Maidenhead Fire Station.

Milestone Moment in Construction of Service's New Training Centre

The last module of our new Training Centre building was hoisted into place, marking a key milestone in the project.

**November
2024**



Thames Valley Forensic Fire Investigation Unit Nominated

The Thames Valley Forensic Fire Investigation Unit was honoured with a nomination for the prestigious Collaboration Award at the Excellence in the Fire and Emergency Services Awards in December. This recognition came just 18 months after the unit's inception in 2023.

**December
2024**

Tri-Service Fire Engine Investment

In January, staff from the Service joined colleagues from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service to finalise the design of our newest vehicles. Built by Emergency One in Cumnock, Scotland, these state-of-the-art vehicles will be deployed at Newbury and Theale fire stations in 2025.



**January
2025**



Apprentices Nominated for National Awards

Seven of our Wholetime Firefighters were nominated for awards at the National Fire Chiefs Council Apprenticeship Awards in London. Robin, one of our Station Managers, was also recognised for his efforts in supporting our apprentices with a nomination for the Excellence in Apprenticeship Support Award.

**February
2025**



New Fire Safety Advisers

The Service welcomed three new Fire Safety Advisers into our Protection Teams, bringing the total number of Fire Safety Advisers in the Service up to 11.

**March
2025**

» Our Year in Numbers



1574

Primary and secondary
fires attended.



7549

Emergency incidents
responded to.



72.0%

Incident response times
within 10 minutes.



5462

Safe and Well Visits
completed.



2231

Other services provided
by RBFRS.



673

Fire Safety Audits
carried out.

» Our Performance

In order to monitor performance and ensure we are working towards our Annual Objectives and CRMP commitments, a number of performance measures were agreed by Royal Berkshire Fire Authority for the 2024/25 Annual plan.

Our performance measures and targets enable us to manage our performance and demonstrate our effectiveness at preventing and protecting against potential risk and responding to incidents to ensure that we provide value for money to the communities that we serve.

These measures monitor the delivery of our statutory obligations and the services we provide, along with how key resources are managed, including Staff, Finance and Health & Safety.

Performance is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Strategic Performance Board and by the Audit and Governance Committee. Our year end performance against the Corporate Measures can be seen on pages 34 to 36.

Response

In 2024/25, there were 7,549 emergency incidents within Berkshire. This is lower than the last two years but aligned with pre-pandemic figures. Whilst we have experienced a reduction in incident numbers, the incidents we respond to are becoming more resource intensive. Flooding and outdoor fires, especially larger wildfires, are examples of resource intensive incidents the crews respond to.

Q1 and Q2 were comparable to last year, however in Q3 and Q4 we did not see as many extreme weather incidents such as storms and flooding (a

14.29 percent decrease in flooding incidents).

Whilst Road Traffic Collision incidents remained consistent with a decrease of 3.32 percent along with fires in “other” buildings, we saw an increase in “fires in the home” (5.64 percent) and “outdoor fires” (6.90 percent). The greatest reduction was in “water rescue” with a drop from 86 to 59 percent (-31.40 percent)

Our wholetime fire engines have been available 96.9 percent of the time this year, under our 99 percent target and a reduction on availability since 2023-24.

This year we substantially increased the number of referrals from our partners by 26.1 percent, to 5376.

Q4 showed an improvement to 98.1 percent as we start to see the benefits of Priority 6 of our Community Risk Management Plan. Our on-call crews have achieved 32.7 percent availability this year. This is lower than our 50 percent target.

However, some areas have seen improvements and many stations are maintaining their standards. Last year, we established an Operational Support Team who have close oversight of resourcing gaps to maximise appliance availability.

The impact of the loss of key personnel has been

minimised whilst our recruitment campaigns have also been successful.

In 2024/25, we attended 72 percent of all emergency incidents within 10 minutes of receiving the call. We did not achieve our Response Standard target of 75 percent. Whilst the number of incidents were lower in Q3 and Q4, the response standard dropped for the travel component.

In September (Q3), we introduced a new AFA policy which we continue to evaluate alongside the response standard and additional Prevention and Protection activities being undertaken.

We have also undertaken work to review the standard during the day and night without any significant conclusion.

Prevention and Protection

Our strategy to prevent fires and other emergencies includes the provision of Safe and Well Visits to those who are at heightened risk of dying or being injured as result of an accidental dwelling fire.

We work closely with partner agencies to ensure individuals with risk factors are referred to us. This approach allows us to support the most vulnerable in our communities. This year we substantially increased the number of referrals from our partners by 26.1 percent, to 5376.

Our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers and Advisers completed nearly 700 Full Fire Safety Audits in premises falling under the Regulatory Reform Order 2005, which outlines our duty to enforce fire safety in non – domestic premises.

» Our Performance

We have continued to embed our new Risk Based Inspection Programme methodology which combines a focus on the inherent risk of premises types.

To ensure we target our resources at the highest risk premises, we identified the Very High and High risk properties and introduced a specific audit time frame of one to three years.

Corporate Health

We lost 6.25 percent of working time to sickness in 2024/25, which means we did not meet our target of a maximum of five percent. We did see an improvement in Q4 after a particularly high Q2 and Q3. There continue to be wider societal trends of increased sickness and absence, including impacts on mental health, and pressures on the NHS which may delay treatment and lengthen absence.

We continue to provide support and assistance to managers and promote early intervention to ensure consistency of policy application across the Service.

Health Partners (Occupational Health) benchmarking data shows for the rolling 12 months to the end of March 2025 that 21 percent of RBFRS cases related to musculoskeletal issues.

This compares to 28 percent for their emergency services clients and 26 percent across their client base. 50 percent of RBFRS cases are related to mental health issues.

This compares to 35 percent for their emergency services clients and 31 percent across their client base.

The gap between RBFRS and other emergency services clients and the client base is widening, which potentially reflects the number of mental health absences linked to employee relations cases.

Audits

In 2024-25, internal audits were carried out across a number of areas of the Service. These areas were:

- Driving Licence Checks
- Payroll Provider – Data Plan
- Risk Information
- Fire Fighter Pension Administration
- Operational Vehicle Compliance
- Key Financial Controls – General Ledger
- Risk Management and Governance

Our auditors found substantial assurance for two of these, reasonable assurance in four and one with partial assurance.

- Cyber Security
- Follow up
- Discipline and Grievance Handling

Three of our audits were completed within the year. However we are awaiting findings or the final report.

Statement of Assurance

We are required by the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England to provide an Annual Statement of Assurance on financial, governance and operational matters to enable our communities, Government, Local Authorities and partners to make a valid assessment of our governance arrangements.

This is produced and published on our website and confirms the extent to which the requirements of the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England have been met.

Our Fire Safety Inspecting Officers and Advisers completed nearly 700 Full Fire Safety Audits in premises falling under the Regulatory Reform Order 2005.

» HMICFRS Inspection

His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has completed their latest inspection of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS), assessing that overall, RBFRS is providing a good service to the public.

This inspection was HMICFRS's third assessment of the Service's effectiveness and efficiency, and how well it looks after its people. Of the 11 areas inspected, RBFRS received 'Good' grades for eight of them. The remaining three were graded as 'Adequate'.

This result comes in an increasingly challenging inspection process, with the addition of the 'adequate' grade which maps against the previous 'good' grade.

The principal findings are as follows:

- The Service continues to provide an effective prevention, protection and response for the public, by working well with other fire and rescue services and organisations such as the police, local authorities and health providers.
- The Service is working hard to transform its estate, technology and ensure staff are being productive at work. This is supporting the service to improve its ways of working and provide a more efficient service to the public.
- Staff are proud to work for the service and the culture is positive. Concerns can be raised and will be dealt with appropriately. The service looks after its people and this enables them to put the community at the heart of what they do.

The Service has addressed many of its areas for improvement from the last inspection in 2022. This includes efforts to reduce the burden of unwanted fire signals following a public consultation and ensuring that it is monitoring the collection of risk information, making it quickly available to staff responding to incidents.

Responding to the report, Councillor Jeff Brooks, Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, said: "This assessment provided by HMICFRS is clear. RBFRS is a fantastic Service, made up of dedicated staff offering exceptional services to our residents.

"As a Fire Authority, we have challenged ourselves to have plans which not only maintain the positive levels of service offered, but crucially invest in equipment, fire stations and training to equip RBFRS for the years ahead.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer, said: "Our staff should be proud of the assessment delivered by this report. RBFRS has consistently been rated as a 'Good' service by HMICFRS and this does not happen by coincidence.

"I am privileged to witness the professionalism and commitment from staff across the Service, working as one team, every day, to make this possible. We will now reflect on this positive assessment and recommendations, before we challenge ourselves to raise the bar even higher, for the benefit of our staff and communities."

You can read the [full inspection report](#) on the HMICFRS website.

Annual Awards Ceremony

The Service celebrated a year of outstanding achievements at its annual Awards Ceremony on Friday, 29 November 2024. This event, which took place at the Select Car Leasing Stadium in Reading, provided an opportunity to give thanks and recognition for the exceptional work of our staff, volunteers and partners.

Proceedings began with the presentation of awards to staff who have served for 20 or 30 years in the fire and rescue sector. These awards were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire, Mr Andrew Try. There were then 11 categories in which Awards were presented. Some highlights of the evening's awards included:

1. The Water Rescue Project received the award for Project of the Year. This was an important piece of work, a Community Risk Management Plan 2023-27 priority, and involved a significant revision of current water rescue provision, resulting in the addition of the necessary training and equipment at Slough Fire Station.
2. Certificates of commendation were awarded to a crane driver and two colleagues who performed a challenging and skilful rescue during a fire on Station Hill in Reading.
3. Mariana Skoknova received the Excellence in Public Service Award for her outstanding and unwavering professionalism and commitment to her duties as a Customer Services Assistant.
4. Newbury Red Watch received the Watch of the Year Award for showing continuous

improvement and development whilst building a strong and diverse team and ultimately reducing risk in their local area.

5. Fayth Rowe received the Culture and Inclusion Award for her unwavering commitment to improving diversity and inclusion within the Service and our communities, particularly through her dedication to enhancing the career prospects of young people and under-represented groups.

Speaking on the Ceremony, Councillor Jeff Brooks, Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority said: "It was a very special evening which enabled us to recognise the Service's achievements and people. This event provides an opportunity for us to thank people on behalf of residents' right across Berkshire for the exceptional work that they do"

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer, said: "I am delighted that we were able to recognise and celebrate the outstanding achievements of all those who work for, and with, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service at the event.

"It really was a hugely uplifting evening that exemplified the fantastic public services provided by RBFRRS and how we put communities at the heart of all we do. Hopefully, all staff know, all year around, how proud I am of their dedication and service."

Several corporate sponsors helped make the 2024 annual Awards Ceremony possible. Thank you to BT, Integrate, Multitone and Lighthouse Events for their generous support ahead of and during the ceremony.



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Appendix A

Summer Internship Scheme

In August, the Service welcomed five young people from across the county as part of the Summer Internship Scheme. The Summer Internship Scheme encourages those who may not have considered a career in the fire and rescue sector to explore some of the many roles available to them.

This year, the scheme was open to people from Berkshire who are aged 17-18 and from ethnic groups that are currently under-represented in the Service. During the five-week programme, interns worked as part of several teams and took part in activities aimed at increasing their awareness of the work done by the Service.

They also visited five different fire stations over the course of their placements, where firefighters and fire safety inspectors taught them more about their roles. As part of these station visits, the interns took part in firefighting drills, worked with firefighters and joined our inspectors on fire safety audits.

Claudia Trott, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Lead, said: "Now in its third year, our Summer Internship Scheme has allowed the Service to engage with young people from across Berkshire who might not have previously considered a career in the fire and rescue sector.

"It was a pleasure to welcome our latest cohort of interns and introduce them to the Service. They made positive contributions during their time with us and developed important professional skills that they will be able to take forward into their future careers.

"The Scheme has also taught the Service valuable lessons, further broadening our understanding of how to engage with younger people and some of the diverse communities within Berkshire. The lessons learned from programmes like the Internship will better allow us to engage with communities across Berkshire and develop new recruitment pathways for people to join the Service."

"The lessons learned from programmes like the Internship will better allow us to engage with communities across Berkshire."

- Claudia Trott, EDI Lead

Leonard Cheshire Change 100 Scheme

The Change 100 Programme was developed by Leonard Cheshire and 2024 marked the seventh year of our Service's participation. As part of the Scheme, the Service welcomed two interns for 100 days over the summer and autumn.

This year, the interns worked as part of the Communications and Engagement and Procurement teams. The Programme provides an opportunity for them to develop new skills and build confidence. All the while, the Service gains increased organisational diversity awareness and broadens its capacity to deliver services.

Culture Plan

As a Service, there are so many positives about our culture and how we work together. It is clear that we have strong foundations, built upon our collective drive to provide a safe, supportive and inclusive service to our colleagues and communities.

A Service's culture is about 'how it feels to work around here', which is of course influenced by things like the behaviour of those you work with, as well as the processes, systems and environments we experience every day.

To ensure we pick up on all these various factors that influence culture, we have published Our Culture Plan, which aims to support the organisation to continue to be one that we all feel proud to belong to.

Our Culture Plan has been shaped by conversations and feedback from across the organisation. What is clear is that whatever our role within the Service, we are connected by a deep desire to serve, joined together by our core purpose – to create safer, more resilient communities by preventing incidents, protecting homes and businesses and responding to emergencies.

This doesn't mean that there aren't things that we still need to improve and work on together. What has been clear through the conversations we've been having and the recent Leadership Forums is that we are both proud of where our culture is now and we are up for continuing to find ways to create an even more safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

» Culture

Fire Fighters Charity Fundraisers

This year has been another successful year for fundraising for the Fire Fighters Charity. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Service held many community events that collected donations for the cause.

Throughout the year, Slough, Crowthorne, Wokingham, Bracknell and Newbury fire stations all hosted car washes that raised money for the Fire Fighters Charity. Between them all, a donation total of over £5,195 was collected.

In May 2024, the Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices raised around £7,000 when they collectively cycled 488 miles on static bikes at the Lexicon in Bracknell.

The next cohort of Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices followed suit, by raising more than £3,000 for the Fire Fighters Charity, when they each rowed 38.5 miles on rowing machines in October.

Maidenhead Fire Station hosted a fun-filled Open Day in June. Around one thousand people attended the event, which resulted in them raising over £1,500 for The Fire Fighters Charity.

In July, firefighters attended the annual Hungerford High Street Carnival, where they collected £433 for the charity.

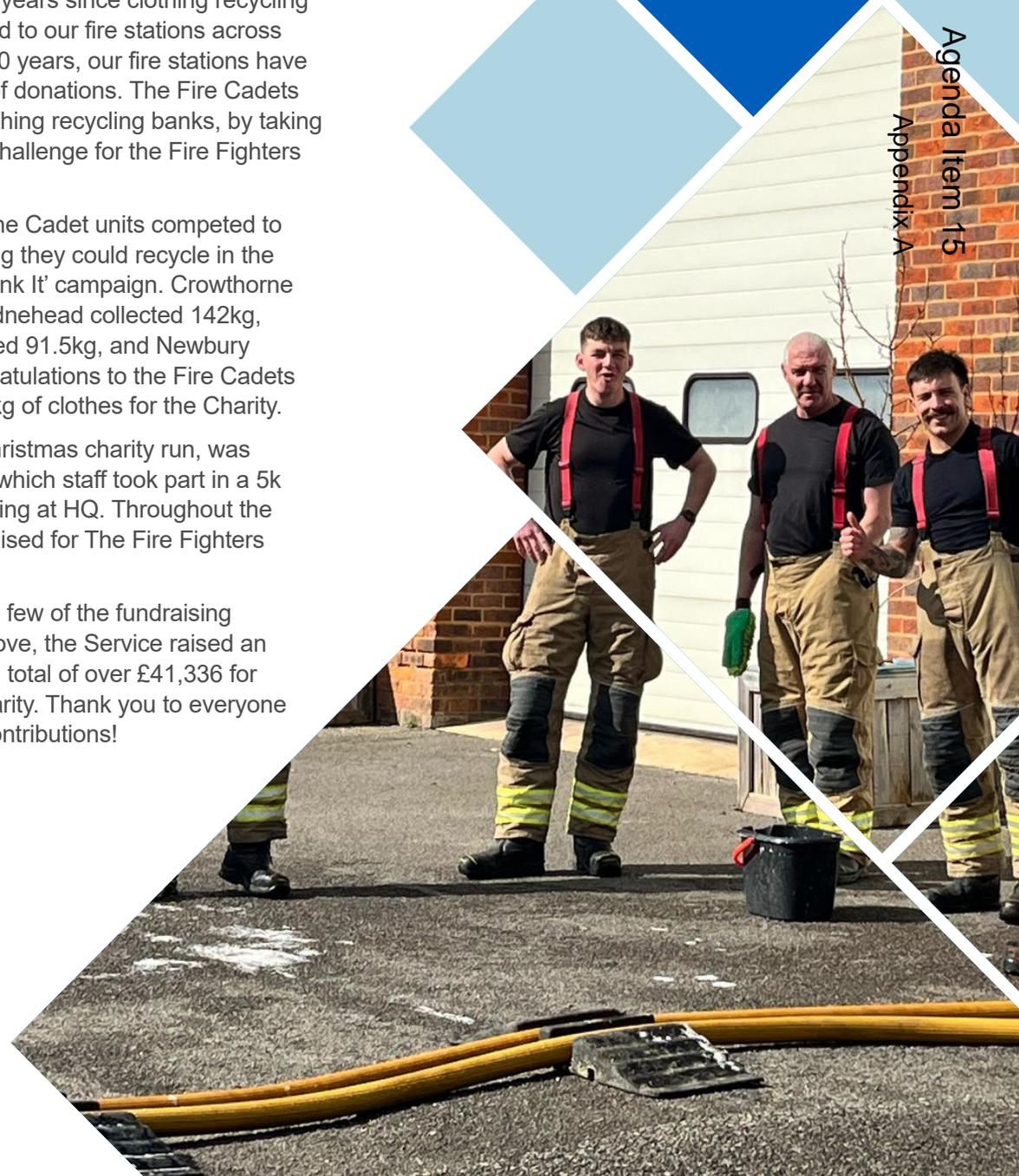
Over the summer Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, ran three ultra-marathons, over 250km, across four days. Persevering through hilly terrains in West Sussex and the Scottish Highlands, Mark completed this challenge and ended up raising £1,375 for the Fire Fighters Charity.

2024 also marked 10 years since clothing recycling banks were introduced to our fire stations across the county. In those 10 years, our fire stations have seen large amounts of donations. The Fire Cadets contributed to our clothing recycling banks, by taking part in a fundraising challenge for the Fire Fighters Charity.

At the start of 2025, the Cadet units competed to see how much clothing they could recycle in the annual 'Bag It and Bank It' campaign. Crowthorne totalled 159.1kg, Maidenhead collected 142kg, Whitley Wood gathered 91.5kg, and Newbury obtained 85kg. Congratulations to the Fire Cadets for bagging over 477kg of clothes for the Charity.

The Turkey Trot, a Christmas charity run, was held in December, in which staff took part in a 5k run starting and finishing at HQ. Throughout the morning, £130 was raised for The Fire Fighters Charity.

While these are just a few of the fundraising events mentioned above, the Service raised an approximate donation total of over £41,336 for The Fire Fighters Charity. Thank you to everyone for their efforts and contributions!



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Appendix A

Supporting our Communities

Throughout 2024/25, our staff have worked closely with many of the communities that we serve. We have been hard at work engaging with groups and attending community events across Berkshire. Here are some of the highlights:

In 2024, we attended a record four pride events across Berkshire. Beginning in July, crews from Newbury, Bracknell and Wokingham attended their local pride events alongside staff from our Protection, Prevention and Professional Services Teams.

In September, a crew and fire engine were sent to Reading Pride's parade for the first time. This was followed by an event at King's Meadow where firefighters and other staff from across the Service represented the organisation at Reading Pride.

Crews from across the County have actively engaged with many of our religious communities throughout the year. On Sunday, 5 May 2024, firefighters from Red Watch at Wokingham Road Fire Station joined Vaisakhi celebrations in Reading.

The crew supported the event, visited the local Gurdwara and joined the procession as it passed through East Reading.

Later, on Sunday, 8 September, crews from Slough and Langley Fire Stations joined their local Hindu community to celebrate the festival of Raksha Bandhan. During the festival, the Crews had the opportunity to discuss many of the career opportunities available within the Service, including apprenticeships and internships for young people.

Building on a strong relationship that they had built with the local Baptist Church, firefighters from Wokingham Fire Station hosted a series of coffee and cake mornings at Wokingham Baptist Church to help brighten that time of year so many find the toughest.

January can be one of the loneliest months for the elderly and vulnerable. To help counter this, Wokingham Green Watch hosted several sessions throughout January 2025 to offer people a chance to get together and meet up.

Speaking on the sessions, Sam Batten, Watch Manager for Wokingham Greens, said: "Each event had a great turnout and made a real difference to the lives of those we met."

Finally, at the end of February 2025, Saleem Sheikh, Safe and Well Technician, and Ashok Kumar, Community Safety Adviser, visited Mosques in Reading ahead of Ramadan.

There, the pair offered Safe and Well visits to people at the Mosques. One visit to Aisha Masjid and Islamic Centre in Reading resulted in 51 requests for Safe and Well Visits.

Speaking on the visit, Saleem said: "It was fantastic to see such a positive uptake in our Safe and Well offering.

"Some of the individuals who signed up are considered high-risk and might have been overlooked without the proactive approach we've taken."

"Some of the individuals who signed up are considered high-risk and might have been overlooked without the proactive approach we've taken."

**Saleem Sheikh,
Community Safety Adviser**

» Culture

Armed Forces Veterans' Hubs

To support members of the armed forces community, we hosted several Armed Forces Veterans' Hub events throughout 2024/25.

Our Veterans' Hubs offer a place for veterans to come together and meet other veterans or organisations who can provide them with further support.

The Armed Forces Veterans' Hub programme was launched on Saturday, 7 November 2020, following receipt of the Gold Award in the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme in 2020. This affirms the Fire Authority and Service's ongoing commitment to the Armed Forces community.

This year, our Veteran's Hub events have been well attended, with dozens of people turning out at fire stations across the county.

At our last event in the financial year, held at Bracknell Fire Station, we were delighted to be joined by Peter Swallow, MP and Cllr Jenny Penfold, Mayor of Bracknell Forest.

Our Veteran's Hubs are hosted at fire stations across the county. During the 24/25 financial year, we hosted events at Crowthorne, Maidenhead, Newbury and Bracknell fire stations.

Future events have been planned throughout the rest of 2025 at Whitley Wood, Newbury and Maidenhead fire stations.

Health and Wellbeing

This year, the Service made several policy changes and supported schemes to help support the health and wellbeing of our staff:

Restructure of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team and New Strategy

During the year, the Health and Safety and Health and Wellbeing Teams were restructured to create the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team. This recognised the synergies and collaborative working that has always existed between the two departments.

The restructure has created additional capacity to enable us to be more proactive and preventative in respect of delivering the aims of our Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy: safe and healthy people, safe and healthy places, safe and healthy processes. As a new department we have published a new, ambitious strategy for 2025 – 2028 which sets out our priorities for the period.

Mental Health Awareness LMS Package

In July, the face-to-face Mental Health Awareness training was adapted into an LMS training package. New starters now have to complete the LMS course (Mental Health Awareness Part 1) before booking onto the face-to-face session (Mental Health Awareness Part 2).

By changing the format of the Mental Health Awareness course, staff can now revisit the Mental Health Awareness Part 1 course on LMS at any time, as a refresher.

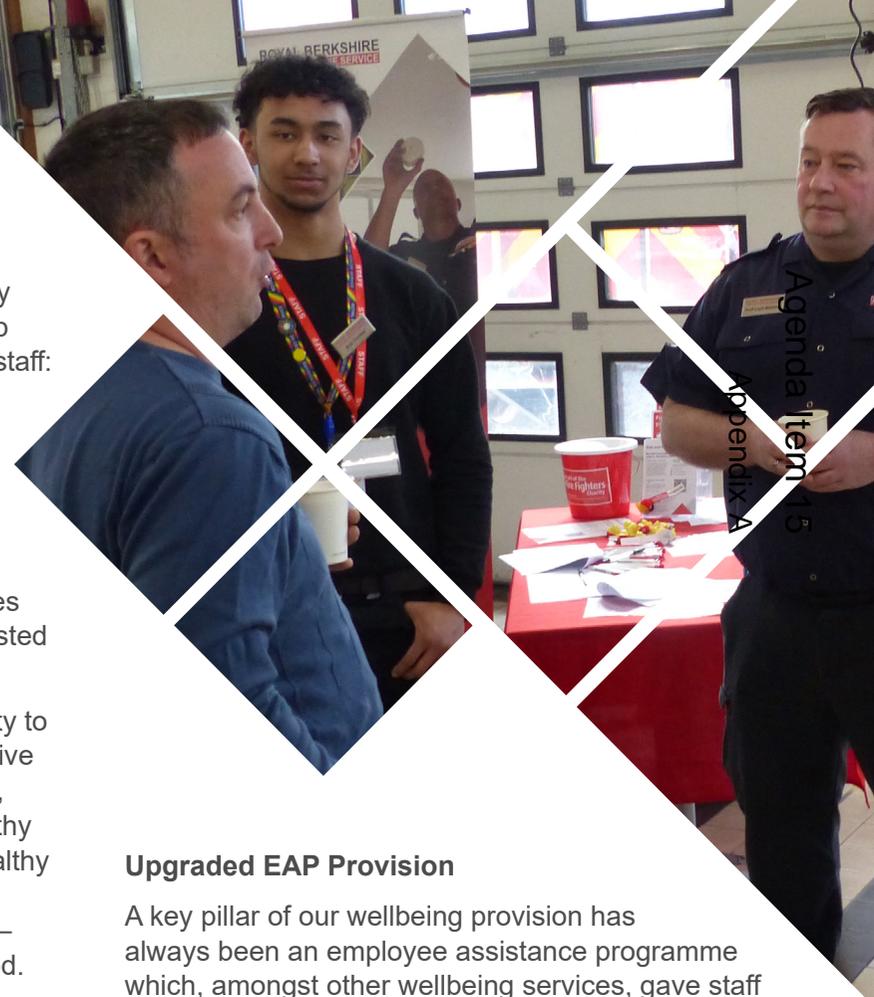
Upgraded EAP Provision

A key pillar of our wellbeing provision has always been an employee assistance programme which, amongst other wellbeing services, gave staff access to six counselling sessions.

In response to rising mental health related sickness absence across the organisation we upgraded this provision to include 12 counselling sessions.

The enhanced number of sessions facilitates a longer therapeutic journey and minimises the additional expenditure previously incurred when further sessions were required.

The upgraded EAP provision also includes access to coaching for all employees which supports our coaching strategy.



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Flu Vaccinations

The Service once again encouraged staff to get the flu vaccination ahead of the 2024/25 winter season. If staff were not eligible for the free vaccine, RBFRS offered the opportunity to claim back up to £22 via Certify.

This annual opportunity helps to support staffing levels by preventing winter flu absences.

Cycle2Work Scheme

This year, the Service continued to provide opportunities to apply to the Cycle2Work scheme. RBFRS's Cycle2Work scheme is provided by Halfords, and benefits employees by offering a cost-effective way of getting cycle equipment.

The scheme encourages fitness as a way of commuting to workplaces, while enabling staff to save tax and National Insurance contributions via salary sacrifice. This year, Cycle2Work had a total of 11 applicants.

Supporting National Awareness Campaigns

Throughout the year, RBFRS continued to support national awareness campaigns that offer advice and resources for various health and wellbeing causes, such as mental health, women's health and men's health.

To name just a few, we supported: Stress Awareness Month, Testicular Cancer Awareness Month, Mental Health Awareness Week, Alcohol Awareness Week, World Suicide Prevention Day, Stoptober, World Menopause Day, Time to Talk Day, Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, and Dry

January.

The Service Delivers Improved Maternity and Adoption Pay

Changes to the Service's maternity and adoption leave now offer those eligible an increased maternity and adoption pay provision of up to 52 weeks full pay.

Following the changes, those eligible are entitled to 45 weeks full pay made up of both statutory and enhanced maternity and adoption pay, which inclusive of annual leave, bank holidays and keeping in touch days, making up to 52 weeks full pay.

This is a significant increase to previous provision available.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer said: "I am delighted that we are able to increase our enhanced maternity and adoption pay offering.

"Our people are at the core of what helps us deliver our critical services to the people of Royal Berkshire. We need to ensure that they are well looked after and this is just one step we are taking to ensure this.

"This change, which was consulted on with staff and trade unions, further embeds our commitment to continue to build an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued."

The changes are part of a broader programme that focuses on supporting positive working arrangements to attract and retain highly skilled and valued staff.

"Our people are at the core of what helps us deliver our critical services to the people of Royal Berkshire."

Mark Arkwell,
Deputy Chief Fire Officer

» Capability

Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices

We formally welcomed 35 new Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices to the Service in 2024, with a further eight currently completing their initial training course.

Two cohorts of Wholetime Firefighter Apprentices graduated in two ceremonies held at Maidenhead Fire Station. The first, held on Friday, 10 May 2024 recognised 17 of the new recruits who began their training earlier in 2024.

The second ceremony took place later in the year on Friday, 1 November, when the remaining 18 firefighters who began their training in July 2024 completed their basic training course.

Both cohorts of graduates celebrated successfully completing their training alongside family and friends at the ceremonies, and were presented with certificates by Chief Fire Officer, Wayne Bowcock, Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Jeff Brooks, and High Sheriff of the Royal County of Berkshire, Mr Alexander Barfield.

Much like previous cohorts of Wholetime Firefighter recruits, anyone, from any background or walk of life could apply to be a Firefighter Apprentice, as long as they were new to the role.

During the training course, the Firefighter Apprentices were thoroughly tested with a range of practical and theoretical training, core skills, breathing apparatus, fire behaviour, water rescue and road traffic collision training.

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer, said: "Whilst their initial training is now complete, these

"I know our new Graduates will make us proud as they work to protect the people of Royal Berkshire."

- Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer

ceremonies mark just the beginning of their journey as Firefighters. In taking up their roles, they will continue our proud commitment to serving our communities. I know our new Graduates will make us proud as they work to protect the people of Royal Berkshire."

Councillor Jeff Brooks, Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, said: "Whilst our apprentices come from many different walks of life, they all have one thing in common. None of them had any prior firefighting experience before beginning their training in July. Now, they stand ready to serve the community, and I am pleased that they have chosen to begin their firefighting careers here in Berkshire."

As part of the apprenticeship, the recruits are asked to organise an event to raise money for The Fire Fighters Charity. This year, both cohorts together raised a combined total of more than £10,000 by completing two fundraising challenges.

The Apprentices have now joined their new watches at fire stations across the county to continue their development.



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» Capability

Exercises at the University of Reading

In September, we were joined by Thames Valley Fire Control Service and blue light partners from across the Thames Valley for a major training exercise in the AMS Tower at the University of Reading.

The exercise saw crews respond to a fire on the fourth floor of the tower, with casualties, made up of volunteers from the Service, Wokingham CLASP and actors from the Casualty Actors Union, being scattered across the fifth and sixth floors above the 'fire.'

Crews from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire worked alongside Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service, Ambulanz, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough responded to the 'incident' on the evening of Monday, 16 September.

"Crews were subjected to challenging conditions throughout the exercise and there is some really valuable learning for us to take away from it."

- Matt Weldon, Watch Manager

Starting at 7:30pm, the exercise lasted for several hours as firefighters equipped with breathing apparatus worked their way through the building. At the same time, staff at Thames Valley Control Service responded to a high number of calls from actors involved in the exercise, feeding that information back to the fireground to inform crews at the scene.

Speaking on the exercise, Matt Weldon, Watch Manager, said: "This scenario was a great opportunity to test our multi-agency response to a major incident in a high-rise building. Crews were subjected to challenging conditions throughout the exercise and there is some really valuable learning for us to take away from it.

On Monday, 31 March 2025, we held a second exercise at the AMS Tower involving crews from across the Service and our blue light partners.

Following calls to Thames Valley Fire Control Service, which Control staff used as an opportunity to practice delivering fire survival guidance, firefighters responded to another simulated high-rise flat fire.

We were again joined at the scene by crews from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire fire and rescue services. Berkshire Lowland Search and Rescue, Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service and Ambulanz also supported the exercise. The Casualties Union and Explorer Scouts joined staff from across the Service to act as casualties during the exercise, which was made possible by the University of Reading for allowing us use of their facilities.



» Capability

Incidents in Berkshire

In 2024/25, the Service responded to a dynamic range of incidents in and around Berkshire. Some of the more significant incidents include:

Rescue From Height in Caversham

A rescue from height on Sunday, 21 April, when we received reports of people trapped on a fairground ride on George Street in Caversham. Crews from Wokingham Road and Theale fire stations were sent to the scene alongside an aerial ladder platform and an Officer. Upon arrival, crews rescued three people trapped six metres off the ground on a fairground ride.

Fire at Broadmoor Hospital

Crews responded to a large incident on Saturday, 25 May when we were called to a fire in a derelict building at the old Broadmoor Hospital site near Crowthorne. At the height of the fire around 40 firefighters from Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey attended the fire, alongside three Officers. Crews worked alongside Officers from Thames Valley Police and Berkshire Lowland Search and Rescue Service. Firefighters extinguished the fire using two aerial ladder platforms.

Paul Bremble, Area Manager, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, said: "This was a significant fire at a derelict building on the old Broadmoor Hospital site which required a large response from our Service and our partners. Although there was significant damage inside the building, crews worked effectively to contain the fire and prevent it from spreading."

Hazmat Incident in Thatcham

A Hazardous Material (Hazmat) incident on Thursday, 11 July, where we received reports of an unknown substance on Bath Road in Thatcham.

Two crews from Newbury Fire Station were sent to the scene alongside an Officer and the Decontamination and Environmental Protection Unit from Whitley Wood Fire Station.

On arrival, crews discovered a large barrel leaking an unknown substance onto the road. Firefighters worked with Thames Valley Police to close the road and contain the unknown substance in an overdrum.

High-rise fire in Slough

A high-rise fire in Slough on Thursday, 22 August where crews from across the entire county were sent to the scene alongside an Incident Command Unit, Aerial Ladder Platform and five Officers.

Several crews from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service were also sent to the scene and in total, more than 50 firefighters responded to the fire.

Upon arrival, crews discovered a fire on the eighth floor of an apartment complex. Firefighters equipped with breathing apparatus used seven main jets and the aerial ladder platform to extinguish the fire.

Crews also supported the evacuation of 282 people from the property, ensuring that everybody in the building was accounted for and uninjured.

An investigation into the cause of the incident found that a faulty lightbulb fitting was the source of the fire.



» Capability

“Although there was significant damage inside the building, crews worked effectively to contain the fire and prevent it from spreading.”

- Paul Bremble, Area Manager

Road Traffic Collision in Bracknell

Whilst we respond to many road traffic collisions, an incident on Friday, 20 December involved a more complex rescue on Market Street in Bracknell. Crews from Bracknell and Ascot fire stations were sent to the scene alongside an Officer. Upon arrival, they discovered a person trapped under a car. Firefighters rescued the person before placing them in the care of South Central Ambulance Service.

Animal Rescue in Reading

An animal rescue on Wednesday, 22 January, when we received reports of a swan in need of rescue on Thames Side Promenade in Reading.

A crew from Theale Community Fire Station was sent to the scene, alongside the Animal and Water Rescue Unit from Caversham Fire Station. Upon arrival, the crews found a swan which had a leg trapped behind a metal railing and were able to release it.

Service Acquires Three New Appliances

In early 2025, the Service acquired three new appliances in a joint procurement process undertaken alongside our partners at Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

As part of the acquisition, Berkshire received three brand new fire appliances built on Volvo platforms by Emergency One in Cumnock, Scotland. In January 2025, a joint team from all three Thames Valley fire and rescue services visited Emergency One's workshop to finalise the designs.

While the stowage layout differs slightly from other Thames Valley appliances, the new vehicles have been designed in collaboration with all three Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services to ensure maximum consistency and familiarity. The new appliances also feature the latest equipment available to UK fire and rescue services. These include Holmatro e-cutting and spreading tools, as well as out-of-cab breathing apparatus storage.

With a design agreed, Emergency One built the vehicles before sending them to Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service's workshops in Eastleigh where work has been underway to onboard our new appliances.

This work will ensure that all essential systems are working effectively such as the new particle filtration systems. The vehicles are expected to arrive in Berkshire in June 2025 where they will have the final equipment enhancements before being formally delivered to Newbury and Theale Fire Stations.



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» Risk Management

Contaminants Management

Since the Fire Brigades Union and University of Central Lancashire published their 'Interim Best Practice Report: Minimising Firefighters' Exposure to Toxic Fire Effluents' report – which showed evidence of firefighters being at risk of developing types of cancers due to breathing and ingesting contaminants – the Service has been dedicated to reducing the risk of coming into contact with contaminants.

This year, we have continued to develop our work on decontamination by implementing new measures that prioritise the health and safety of our operational staff. The Estates Development Programme ensured that the layout of our fire stations is optimal for managing the risk of contaminants, by zoning areas and improving layouts of facilities.

The use of nitrile gloves was also introduced, adding an additional barrier to prevent the skin absorption of the gases produced by incidents. Since the introduction of the exposure log webform, the Contaminants Working Group has continued to encourage staff at Stations to log their exposures, thereby allowing the Service to keep track of potential contaminants risks.

Particulate blocking flash hoods were also introduced to the Service. These hoods block over 96 percent of harmful particulates, helping to shield our firefighters from contaminants. All stations were also supplied with two additional loan stock helmets per appliance, which are used when staff's personal issue helmets become contaminated or damaged, requiring cleaning or repair. The

introduction of these additional helmets reduces the time appliances need to be taken off the run, whilst allowing staff to thoroughly clean their PPE.

During the year, new Decon bags were delivered to all appliances. They are designed to provide staff with a single point to store and access personal decontamination equipment to be used at incidents, where personal equipment have been contaminated by the products of combustion.

“We have seen the additional firefighter posts are already making a positive difference, ensuring our fire engines are available more often.”

- Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

CRMP Priority 6 Update

The past year saw the successful introduction of Priority Six ('P6'), one of the six objectives set out in the Fire Authority's current Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP).

The primary intention of P6 has been to improve the availability of our fire engines through better use of the on-call duty system, reducing our overreliance

on overtime and investing in more firefighter posts.

In September 2024, Priority Six was formally implemented, with a new Operational Resource Management Policy (ORMP). This meant a commitment to maintaining 19 frontline fire engines and a baseline provision of 14 frontline fire engines using wholetime and on-call staff as effectively as possible.

The reduction in overtime payments is being reinvested by the Fire Authority to support ten additional wholetime firefighting posts that are already in service. The change also recognised the value and importance of our on-call firefighters.

At that time, it was agreed that the implementation would be subject to a three-month evaluation to assess if the objectives had been met and judge its impact on our response model.

The evaluation reported back in February 2025 and found that Priority Six was implemented 16 times, when an on-call unit provided the 14th fire engine of our minimum provision.

Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, said: “This approach has already helped to reduce our overreliance on voluntary overtime and enabled investment into more frontline roles.

“We have seen the additional firefighter posts are already making a positive difference, ensuring our fire engines are available more often to serve the people of Berkshire.

“Closer management of crewing locally has also seen an improvement in our availability.”

» Risk Management

Christmas Fire Safety Campaign

Staff, Volunteers, Cadets and partners all weighed in to support our Christmas Fire Safety Campaign.

Starting on Monday, 2 December, staff, volunteers and cadets were joined by some of our partners from across the Thames Valley to deliver 12 messages as part of the #RBFRS12Days campaign.

Every other day, one short video covering a topic of safety messaging was posted on Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube, leading up to Christmas Eve.

Each video covered a different message relevant to either Christmas fire safety or general winter weather advice, ranging from business fire safety advice and e-bikes to chimneys and decorations.

An emphasis was also placed on flooding and water safety following the heavy floods experienced across the county following Storm Henk around this time last year.

This year, the campaign was supported by several of our partners including Thames Valley Police, South Central Ambulance Service, the Environment Agency and several charities in Berkshire.

The campaign was also very kindly supported by people from a variety of teams and departments across the Service.

After reviewing the analytics, we found that the videos had a combined total of 35,394 views across all our platforms.

Schools Programme

Year 5 pupils from across Berkshire have been benefitting from freshly designed Fire Safety Workbooks, helping to support engagement and education.

In December, new StayWise Fire Safety Workbooks were delivered to Year 5 pupils across the county. The StayWise Fire Safety Workbooks are a learning tool for young people to learn about the Service.

The workbooks contain important information about the Service and practical steps that children can take to keep themselves safe. The learning in the workbooks is reinforced through quizzes, word searches, codebreakers and drawing exercises.

Every station has received a number of the new workbooks depending on how many students that are expected to receive a visit in the local community.

These numbers have been worked out from data provided by each local authority. All other supporting documents, including the session plan and PowerPoint were also uploaded ahead of sessions taking place in schools.

The new workbooks were quickly put into action after being distributed to stations. In December, Blue Watch from Slough Fire Station visited Godolphin Primary School in Slough and handed the workbook out to around 100 Year 5 children.

The feedback received so far from children has been very positive. Thank you to everyone who is working to deliver this information to children across the County.



» Risk Management

Fire Cadets Programme

Fire Cadets is a youth initiative programme operated by firefighters, staff and volunteers with support from the Service's Safety Education Team, and takes place at four fire stations across the County – Crowthorne, Maidenhead, Newbury, and Whitley Wood.

The scheme is open to young people aged between 13 and 17 years old and allows the Cadets to experience what it is like to be firefighter in today's fire and rescue service.

In July 2024, the Fire Cadets from all four Cadet showed off their new skills at a Graduation Ceremony held at Maidenhead Fire Station.

During the Graduation Ceremony, each unit showcased the skills they had learnt, by performing graduation drills, which involved scenarios such as vehicle and domestic 'fires'.

Feedback from the graduating cohort of 2023-24 was very positive, with the Cadets commenting that they really enjoyed the challenging but fun nature of the programme.

The following Cohort of 35 Fire Cadets joined us in October for the 2024-25 year.

During this time, the Cadet Units got involved in lots of Service activities. They helped fundraising efforts by joining firefighters at charity car washes, and supported prevention work by designing vibrant fire safety posters as part of their Cadet Award.

The Cadets also attended a school careers fair with Crowthorne Fire Station to promote the Fire Cadets programme and other opportunities within the Service.

Meanwhile, the unit from Whitley Wood Fire Station took part in some collaborative work with the Police Cadets. During the visit, they demonstrated some of the operational skills that they have developed since joining the Fire Cadets programme.

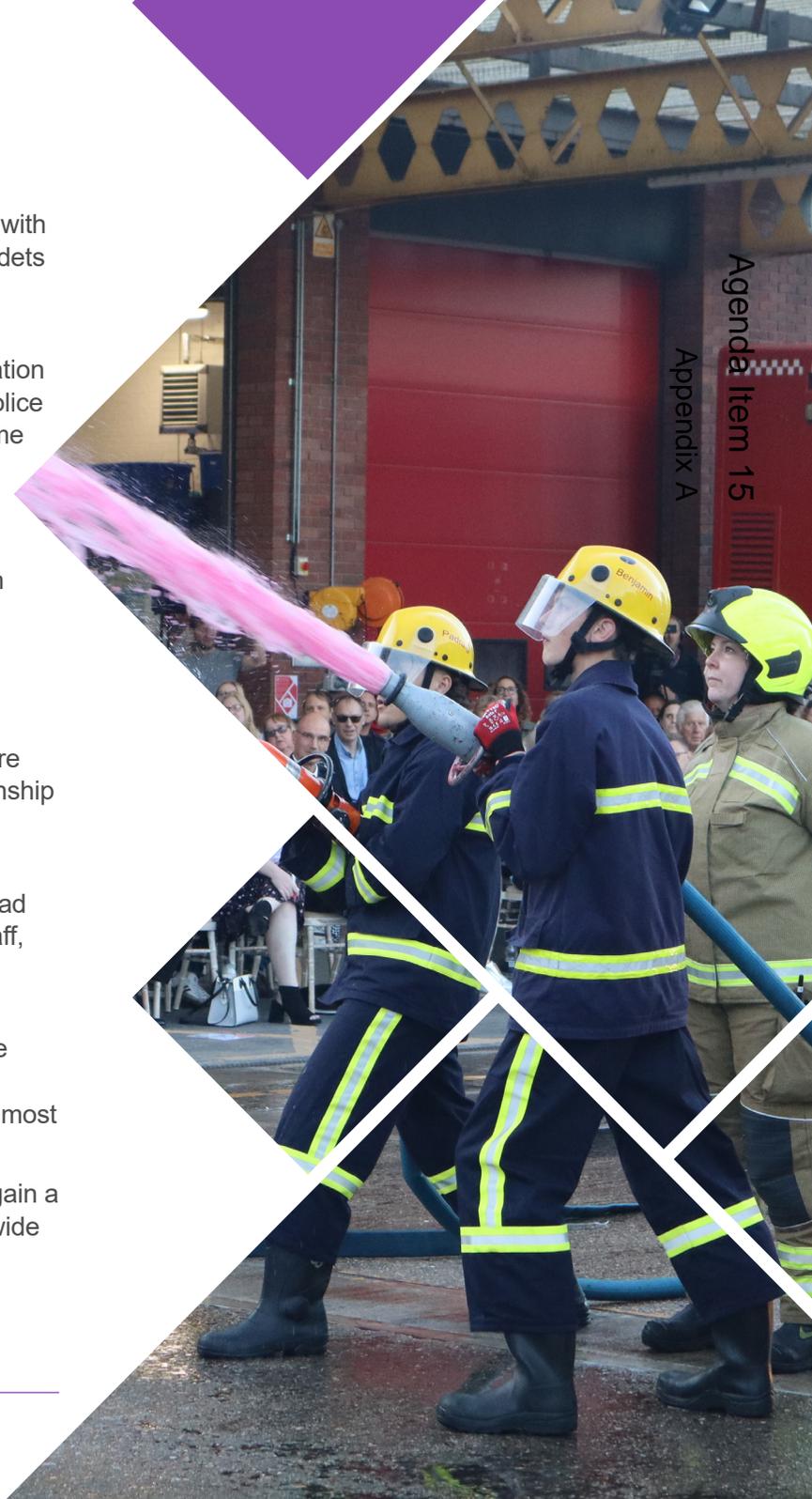
Some of the Cadets at Maidenhead Fire Station even filmed a video for our Christmas Fire Safety social media campaign, highlighting key safety messages for using Christmas trees and decorations.

In January 2025, the Cadets took part in The Fire Fighters Charity's "Bag It and Bank It" championship by collecting clothing and textiles from their communities to raise money for the Charity.

The following month, three of our Fire Cadets had the opportunity to interview four members of staff, including Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer.

During this panel, the Cadets asked questions about what skills are needed to work for the Fire and Rescue Service, what keeps them positive, what they would change about the Service, the most memorable moment in their career, and more.

This unique opportunity allowed the Cadets to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the wide variety of roles within the Service.



» Risk Management

Biker Down

On Monday, 24 June 2024, staff from across the Thames Valley worked together to promote a new series of Biker Down sessions at the Cassington Bike Night in Oxfordshire.

Thames Valley Biker Down is a course run by all three Thames Valley fire and rescue services to provide bikers with the knowledge they need to stay safe on the road. The course is split into three parts:

- What to do if you see or come across an accident.
- How to treat any injured riders or people.
- How to avoid being part of an accident (the science of being seen).

In the summer of 2024, over 70 riders and their passengers (pillions) from around the area attended sessions at Wokingham and Theale fire stations. Later in August, we hosted a joint course with the Metropolitan Police. This course was attended by more than 20 riders from across Southern England and Wales.

In October, the Service ran a course for members of Berkshire Lowland Search and Rescue. Speaking on the course, Steve Lee, Community Safety Advisor, said: "Although they aren't all motorcycle riders, the feedback we received from them was very positive.

"They said that they enjoyed the course, learnt new skills and feel more prepared should they come across a 'biker down' out and about."

Automatic Fire Alarm Changes

In September 2024, RBFRS changed the way it responds to Automatic Fire Alarms in certain types of buildings.

Following a public consultation, RBFRS has stopped automatically sending a fire engine when there is an automatic fire alarm notification in buildings such as shops, offices, leisure centres, sports grounds, libraries and health centres. A full list of all buildings affected is on our website. The Service continues to attend automatic fire alarm notifications at schools, at higher risk buildings and where anyone sleeps, such as hotels, hospitals, care homes, houses, and flats.

In all cases, an emergency response is still being sent to 999 calls and confirmed fires.

The Service looked to change its AFA policy as 99 percent of the automatic fire alarm calls received are false alarms. Attending these incidents takes time and resource that otherwise disrupts the delivery of essential services and training.

Members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority decided to make the change following a public consultation, which attracted a total of 389 responses during the consultation period.

Councillor Jeff Brooks, Chair of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority said: "I would like to thank all those who responded during the consultation period. The comments provided were very helpful in assisting the Fire Authority Members to reach a decision on the best way forward. The Authority very much took in to account the views of residents and other respondents in coming to its decision."

"The Authority very much took in to account the views of residents and other respondents in coming to its decision."

**Councillor Jeff Brooks,
Chair of RBFA**

Appendix A
Agenda Item 15

» Risk Management

Property Manager Fined for Safety Breach

On Wednesday, 19 June 2024, Mr Waheed Afzal pleaded guilty to six charges under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 at Reading Magistrates' Court. The guilty plea followed an investigation conducted by the Service in early 2023.

The investigation found that there were several serious fire safety deficiencies at a property managed by Mr Afzal above a restaurant on High Street, Slough. The breaches included a lack of a linked fire detection system between the commercial and residential units at the property, insufficient emergency lighting, inadequate fire doors and non-fire resisting glazing that would have compromised the means of escape in an emergency.

Mr Afzal was fined of £16,000 following the conviction which, in addition to the victim surcharge and the Fire Authority's prosecution fees, brought the total cost paid by the defendant to £22,646.82.

Michal Kosierb, Fire Safety Enforcement Lead at RBFRS, said: "This case shows that businesses must take their commitments to fire safety seriously and that we will take action where necessary in the interest of public safety.

"As a Service, our purpose is to help keep businesses, people and communities safe. We will continue to work with business owners to help them protect themselves and their livelihoods. However, cases like this demonstrate that, if people's safety is at stake, we will take decisive action to ensure businesses comply with the law."

New Fire Safety Inspectors

In February, the Service welcomed three new Fire Safety Advisers into our Protection Teams, bringing the total number of Advisers in training across Berkshire to 11.

The three recruits became County's newest Fire Safety Advisers, taking the first step towards becoming Inspectors through an extensive training programme within the Service.

All three bring with them experience that will carry into their new roles whilst completing their training.

The road to becoming a fully trained Fire Safety Advisers generally takes between two and three years, during which the recruits will work as part of our Protection Teams whilst completing their Level 3 and Level 4 diplomas in Fire Safety.

This is the fourth cohort of trainees to join our Protection Teams since 2020 as the Service looks to expand its Protection capabilities in light of the changing risk profile of Berkshire.

"If people's safety is at stake, we will take decisive action to ensure businesses comply with the law."

Michal Kosierb, Fire Safety Enforcement Lead

» Sustainability

Sustainability Strategy

During the last year, RBFRS has launched its first ever Sustainability Strategy, aimed at improving the Service's efficiency while mitigating the impact it has on the planet.

The heatwave in the summer of 2022, which saw record breaking temperatures in England, and the flooding earlier this year are just two recent examples of climate related incidents that have increased demand on the Service's resources.

Speaking on the new strategy, Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer, said: "As a Service, we recognise the climate emergency, and the socioeconomic issues that it is causing both globally and locally.

"Sustainability cannot be defined as a single goal or objective. It feeds into everything we do as a Service and necessitated us taking a cross-functional approach that will be enabled by this ambitious strategy.

To this end, the strategy has been created to guide the Service as we look to reduce the impact we have on the environment while fostering social inclusion and economic development within the communities we serve."

The Sustainability Strategy aligns to the Service's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for 2023-2027, which outlines a need to develop our response to the impact of climate change.

Although the effect of human activities on climate will continue to be felt well beyond the life of the CRMP, it is important that mechanisms are put in place to adapt the services we deliver.

The new strategy was developed with Mortice Consulting, a firm that specialise in providing specialist sustainable solutions for cultural, heritage and public sector organisations.

Working with Mortice, the Strategy captured work that has already happened within the Service, using these milestones to shape tangible and measurable targets for the future.

Ben Melham, Director at Mortice Consulting, Said: "We are proud to have partnered with Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service in developing their sustainability strategy. This strategy reflects a thoughtful approach to integrating sustainability across the service, while building on the progress RBFRS has already made in enhancing its environmental and social responsibility.

"We are confident that this strategy is an important step toward embedding sustainable practices that will benefit both RBFRS and the communities it serves for years to come."

The new Strategy is mapped against the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs and aligned with our service commitments. As a partner and signatory of the Net Zero Government Initiative, the United Kingdom has pledged to bring their government emissions, including fire and rescue activities, to net zero by 2050.

The SDGs will help guide the Service, alongside other government institutions, in meeting this ambitious goal. RBFRS aims to add sustainability into the conversation through its work, with a view to positively impacting both its staff and the communities that it serves.

"As a Service, we recognise the climate emergency, and the socioeconomic issues that it is causing both globally and locally."

Wayne Bowcock, Chief Fire Officer

Appendix A
Agenda Item 15

» Sustainability

Redevelopment of our Learning and Development Centre

May of 2024 saw the Service receive permission to redevelop our Learning and Development Centre at Whitley Wood.

The approved plans, designed in consultancy with Ridge and Partners, called for the demolition of our old Training Centre buildings to make way for a two-storey, modular structure.

After the initial groundworks were completed by Newglen, the Service held a short groundbreaking ceremony on Friday, 26 July 2024. Attended by the local Member of Parliament, Yang Yuan, and councillors from Reading Borough Council's Whitley Ward, the ceremony marked the beginning of major works at the site.

Reading-based demolition company J Mould began clearing the site in August whilst our construction partner, Premier Modular Limited (PML), manufactured the modules that would become the new building in Drifffield, Yorkshire. In November, the modules were transported from the East Riding of Yorkshire to Whitley Wood where, in just four days, they were assembled on-site.

Starting on Monday, 18 November, the modules were then installed throughout the week, with the last component being lifted into place by the afternoon of Thursday, 21 November.

Speaking on the assembly of the building, Paul Brooks, Head of Assets at RBFRS, said: "We were very pleased to have the new structure installed without having to stop the delivery of training for our

firefighters or disrupting operational fire cover from the adjacent fire station."

He continued: "Once fully completed and commissioned, this new Training Centre will ensure that we have access to modern, first-class and sustainable facilities to train and develop our firefighters, enabling them to continue to provide the high level of public service that residents of Berkshire enjoy."

To mark the completion of the installation of the modules, the Service hosted another short ceremony at the site on Friday, 22 November. The ceremony was attended by Yuan Yang MP and members of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority whose investment made the project possible. The guests were given an update on the project and were shown around the site by representatives from the Service, Ridge and PML.

Martin Irvine, Senior Business Development Manager at PML, said: "We are proud to be delivering the new Training Centre for RBFRS and their community, who are truly embracing sustainable modular construction and trusting our expertise in the industry. It was great to see the local Member of Parliament, councillors and stakeholders come together to celebrate this key milestone in the project at Whitley Wood; it shows a great level of commitment to the community by all parties."

With the structure now in place, work is underway to finalise the new building before April 2025 when the Service's Learning and Development Team will move in. An official opening ceremony for the new building is being planned for summer 2025.



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Appendix A

» Sustainability

Refurbishment of Slough Fire Station

Following a refurbishment programme spanning several months, major upgrades at Slough Fire Station have now been completed.

The project, which followed similar refurbishment projects at Bracknell and Maidenhead Fire Station, has modernised one of the Service's busiest stations.

Speaking on the improvements, Mark Arkwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer at RBFRS, said: "The works at Slough are part of a broader programme of improvements designed to make our estate more in keeping with the requirements of a modern, high-performing fire and rescue service."

"Each refurbishment project has had a focus on key themes. These include mitigating the risks to our staff from contaminants that they might encounter at emergency incidents, improving our facilities to support the needs of a more diverse workforce, and creating spaces that are more sustainable; both financially and environmentally."

As part of the Slough project, improvements have been made to the Station's amenities, including renovated work and rest spaces, improved washroom, showering and wider contaminants management facilities.

Throughout the entire refurbishment project, firefighters have continued to operate from Slough and will now continue to do so from their newly upgraded fire station.

New Lighting Across the Estate

In the Autumn of 2024 new LED lighting was installed at several sites across our estate to help make them more energy efficient.

Bracknell, Wokingham, Lambourn and Caversham Road fire stations all received upgrades to their lighting alongside Newsham Court – our headquarters building.

The new lighting will save the Service an average of £27,807 and 26.1 tonnes of CO2 every year.

Following a survey of all the lighting fixtures across our estate that were not LED, electricians from Laser gradually replaced the older lighting fixtures over several weeks.

Based on usage and cost projections, the new lighting will save the Service an average of £27,807 per year, with the overall return on our initial investment being approximately six years.

The new lighting should also enable us to make CO2 savings in the region of 26.1 tonnes of carbon.

These changes have been made in line with the Service's Strategic Asset Investment Framework (SAIF) where we have committed to spend £225,000 on upgrading all the lighting across our estate.



» Corporate Measures

Service Provision

Service Provision monitors the service we provide to the public. Performance is monitored in relation to attendance at incidents, types of incidents, Prevention activities and fire safety in commercial buildings.

Measure	2024/2025 Target	2024/2025 Actual
Number of fire deaths	0	
Number of non-fatal fire casualties	31 max	49
Number of deliberate primary fires	125 max	81
Number of deliberate secondary fires	223 max	178
Prevention		
Increase the number of Referrals for Safe and Well Visits received from our partners	10%	17.4%
Percentage of Safe and Well referrals, where there has been a threat or incidence of arson, completed within 48 hours	100%	100%
Percentage of Very High Safe and Well Referrals completed within target time	40%	26.0%
Percentage of High Risk Safe and Well Referrals completed within target time	57%	45.8%
Protection		
Proportion of Fire Safety Audits conducted against premises identified as High or Very High Risk in our Risk Based Inspection Programme	monitor	11.4%
Percentage of Fire Safety Audits with a 'Broadly Compliant' result	69% max	76.9%
Percentage success when cases go to court	80%	100%
Percentage of statutory fire consultations completed within the required timeframes	95%	97.1%

Appendix A

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» Corporate Measures

Measure	2024/2025 Target	2024/2025 Actual
Response		
Percentage of occasions where the first fire engine arrives at an emergency incident within 10 minutes from time the emergency call was answered	75%	72.0%
Percentage of wholetime frontline pumping appliance availability	97.4%	96.9%
Percentage of hours where there is adequate crewing on on-call frontline pumping appliances (based on 24/7 crewing)	50%	32.7%
Resilience		
Percentage of visits to Very High, High and Medium Operational Risk sites completed in timescale	100%	63%
Number of Service Delivery Hub exercises completed	12	11
Efficiency		
Percentage of Automatic Fire Alarm calls where RBFRS did not attend	30% (min)	41.0%
Customer Experience		
Percentage of domestic respondents satisfied with the overall service	100%	100%
Percentage of commercial respondents satisfied with the overall service	95%	100%
Percentage of respondents satisfied with the services with regards to Fire Safety Audits	90%	100%
Percentage of domestic respondents satisfied with the service regards their Safe and Well Visit	100%	98.7%
Number of complaints received	Monitor	2
Number of compliments received	Monitor	3

» Corporate Measures

Corporate Health

The Corporate Health quadrant monitors the wellbeing of the organisation. Performance is monitored in relation to staffing levels, health and safety and finances within RBFRS, to ensure the organisation is being run safely, efficiently and is cost effective.

Measure	2024/2025 Target	2024/2025 Actual
Human Resources and Learning & Development		
Percentage of working time lost to sickness across all staff groups	5%	6.5%
Percentage of eligible staff with Personal Development Reviews	100%	81%
Number of formal grievances	Monitor	22
Health and Safety		
Number of *RIDDOR accidents and diseases	4 (Max)	3
Finance and Procurement		
Percentage of spend subject to competition	85%	91.4%
Compliant spend as a percentage of overall spend	100%	100%
Freedom of Information		
Number of Information Commissioner assessments finding that the Service has breached Information Rights Legislation (Free-dom of Information Act, Environmental Regulations or Data Pro-tection Legislation)	0	0

*RIDDOR is the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. Under RIDDOR we have a duty to report certain events, those events being accidents that led to a person being unfit for their normal work for more than 7 days, or 'specified injuries' which are more serious types of injuries. These include injuries such as broken bones, crush injuries and amputations.

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



RoyalBerksFRS



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Rescue Service



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ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	ANNUAL REPORT ON GOVERNANCE
LEAD OFFICER	ANNIE PRATT, HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR TRICIA BROWN
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To receive the recommendation from Audit and Governance Committee at its meeting on 24 March 2025 to note the Annual Report on Governance detailing Member Attendance and Allowances in 2024/25.

1.2 Appendices A and B (Members Allowances and Attendance) are shown from 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Fire Authority:

2.1 **NOTE** the report; and

2.2 **NOTE** Members' Allowances received from 1 June 2024 – 31 May 2025; and

2.3 **NOTE** the 2024/25 attendance record of Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Members from 1 June 2024 – 31 May 2025.

3. REPORT

3.1 We received a positive annual report from the Pension Board. The volume and complexity of work required to address the age discrimination remedy for wholetime and on-call firefighters (some of which had retired) was discussed and it was good to hear that all Firefighters were now in the same pension scheme.

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- 3.2 RSM (Internal Auditor's) completed the final three audits for 2023/24 - Governance and Risk Management; IT General Controls; and Key Financial Controls. Their annual report found the Service had an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control.
- 3.3 Conor Byrne (Head of Finance and Procurement) informed the Committee about The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). CIPFA published The Financial Management Code (FM Code) in October 2019 and this code provides guidance for good and sustainable financial management in local authorities, giving assurance that authorities are managing resources effectively. The CIPFA Financial Management Code Report 2023/24 covered 17 sections, and it was positive to see the Services green RAG status for 16 sections. The amber section related to the statement of accounts. Due to capacity issues in the audit sector and delays in the audit of the Berkshire Pension Fund, the financial statements since 2021/22 remained unaudited when the report was published, however I am pleased to confirm this issue has now been closed.
- 3.4 As part of the Quarterly Performance update, former Head of Corporate Services Paul Bremble confirmed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Objectives were on track. The number of accidents reportable under RIDDOR continued to fall with zero reportable in Q1, and there was a successful prosecution within the fire protection area – all very positive news.
- 3.5 High risk safe and well referrals were either on or above target this year but remained challenging. It's been identified that Slough is a high-risk area for the county due to low numbers of safe and well referrals, and the east hub teams have been working with partner agencies and communities to try and further reach those most vulnerable to receive this vital service.
- 3.6 It was sad to hear of a recorded fatality in Q2, but the Service have taken positive action on the back of this event, including a hot strike which is a series of safe & well visits around the incident area.
- 3.7 Sickness levels recorded this quarter were higher than the same period last year, mainly attributed to mental health. HR have established several initiatives to support staff including upgrading the employee assistance programme.
- 3.8 EDI objectives continue to progress well, with multiple initiatives making headway including webinars, cultural awareness training and a third successful Summer Internship Scheme. All interns expressed an interest in a career with RBFPS and one intern is now working as an apprentice within the Business Support Team, which is a fantastic result.
- 3.9 The Service continued to make good progress against our six priorities of our CRMP. Work priority areas had progressed well and People Strategy reporting under the People Pillar was positive with most measures being reported as green and on target. Work continues on the audit plan findings -

there were 35 actions in total and 29 were either completed or on target, good progress so far.

- 3.10 We were given an update on the external audit from EY in relation to the Authority's Value for Money arrangements for 2021/22 and 2022/23. It was positive to hear that EY did not identify any risks of significant weaknesses nor any actual significant weaknesses in Value for Money arrangements.
- 3.11 In the second half of 2024 we welcomed our new External Auditors, Grant Thornton. In presenting their audit of the 2023/24 accounts they were pleased to confirm no areas of weakness had been found and no statutory or key recommendations needed to be raised, meaning this was a positive report.
- 3.12 After being given a presentation of the Equal Pay Audit and Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap report the Service is satisfied that staff are paid equally for equal work and have access to the same opportunities. Although cultural barriers still exist, it was positive to hear RBFRS are taking steps to identify trends and address this. The in-depth data content within the reports has provided assurance that RBFRS is a responsible employer, and good practices are in place.
- 3.13 We welcomed seven new members onto the Fire Authority and four of those new members were appointed onto the Audit & Governance Committee. Many thanks to all Members for the contribution they have made to the Committee.
- 3.14 In late 2024, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) concluded the recent Inspection into RBFRS. The Inspection which spanned several weeks, known as 'Round 3', and focussed on three principal questions on effectiveness, efficiency and people. Over the course of the inspection several members of RBFRS staff spoke to the Inspectors through desktop assessments, interviews, focus groups and visits. We anticipate the outcome of the inspection will be published during spring 2025, and we will share a further update closer to the time.

Governance

- 3.15 No formal complaints have been received against Members this year. It is reassuring that the Authority have potentially six Independent Person (s) on standby, should we need them to investigate complaints against Members, alongside our Monitoring Officer, Graham Britten.

Member Allowances

- 3.16 Members Allowances were increased following National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services pay agreement for Green Book staff. Members Allowances are indexed to Green Book pay conditions. Allowances were increased to 2.5% and this percentage was backdated to 1 April 2024.

Member Attendance

- 3.17 The attendance record of Members in 2024/25, is shown in Appendix B of this report. The Appendix include all meetings up to the 31 May 2025. Member attendance to Fire Authority, Audit and Governance and Management Committee meetings have been good with no meeting being inquorate. The last meeting for Thames Valley Fire Control Services scheduled for 17 March 2025 was cancelled due to it being inquorate. Representation needs to be from each of the three partners. Committee meeting absences have often been due to Unitary Authority meeting clashes, and apologies, when received, have generally been in good time.
- 3.18 Meeting clashes with Unitary Authority committees are unavoidable, however the Democratic Support Team liaise annually with their counterparts in each of the six Councils to ensure Fire Authority meetings do not clash with respective full Council meetings.
- 3.19 Appendix B details Committee meeting attendance only (meetings which have been held in public) and does not include Member attendance at Member briefings and events held during the year. These include Working Groups, Fire Liaison Group meetings, briefings, Armed Forces meetings, Thames Valley Collaboration Steering Group meetings, Member Development courses and other planned events at station locations.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Sustainability: We are committed to ensuring that we provide a financially sustainable Service and take meaningful action to help address the climate emergency.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Member Allowances and expenses (Appendix A) outline the cost to the Fire Authority.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications in this report.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no risk implications in this report.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None.

10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

10.1 None for the purpose of this report.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

11.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Chief Fire Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 Audit and Governance Committee Agenda Pack and Minutes in 2024/25.

13. APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A – Members’ Allowances.

13.2 Appendix B – Members’ Attendance.

14. CONTACT DETAILS

14.1 Michaela Smith, Democratic Support Assistant, 07799 287706.

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Royal Berkshire Fire Authority - Member Allowances and Travel Expenses 2024/25

Member Payments - 1 June 2024 - 31 May 2025

<u>SURNAME</u>	<u>FORENAME</u>	<u>2024/25 Basic Member Allowance</u>	<u>2024/25 Special Responsibility Allowance</u>	<u>2024/25 Travel Expenses</u>	<u>Total Paid to 31/05/2025</u>
Bello	Greg	£2,883.25		£109.90	£2,993.15
Benneyworth	Dennis	£2,883.25			£2,883.25
Blundell	George	£2,172.91		£41.44	£2,214.35
Brooks	Jeff	£2,883.25	£13,453.12	£1,581.92	£17,918.29
Brown	Tricia	£2,883.25	£4,428.39		£7,311.64
Drummond	Billy	£2,883.25		£41.44	£2,924.69
Frewer	Peter	£2,883.25	£2,954.45		£5,837.70
Gahir	Harjinder	£2,409.74		£17.76	£2,427.50
Gittings	Paul	£2,883.25	£7,353.74		£10,236.99
Griffith	Wendy	£2,883.25	£4,061.68		£6,944.93
Jeffery	Owen	£2,883.25	£1,503.92		£4,387.17
McElroy	Dave	£2,883.25		£41.44	£2,924.69
McKenzie-Boyle	Tina	£2,883.25	£2,966.28		£5,849.53
Nazir	Mohammed	£2,409.74		£17.76	£2,427.50
Rana	Neel	£473.66			£473.66
Reynolds	Joshua	£710.49	£1,065.75		£1,776.24
Satti	Zafar	£2,883.25		£145.60	£3,028.85
Shepherd-DuBey	Rachelle	£2,883.25	£4,428.76		£7,312.01
Smith	Wayne	£2,883.25			£2,883.25
Taylor	Helen	£2,883.25			£2,883.25
Timlin	Lou	£2,883.25			£2,883.25
Werner	Simon	£2,883.25	£4,428.76		£7,312.01
					105,833.90

No more than 10 Special responsibility allowances were paid.

Councillors highlighted in red started or left the Fire Authority mid-year

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Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Greg Bello	10	7	70%	3	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Apologies
Councillor Dennis Benneyworth	10	9	90%	1	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor George Blundell	8	5	63%	3	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Apologies Apologies Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Jeff Brooks	11	11	100%	0	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected

Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Tricia Brown	10	10	100%	0	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Billy Drummond	10	9	90%	1	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Peter Frewer	13	12	92%	1	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30 08/07/24 14:00 12/12/24 14:00	Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Harjinder Gahir	7	6	86%	1	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected

Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Paul Gittings	11	11	100%	0	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Wendy Griffith	11	7	64%	4	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 22/07/24 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Apologies Apologies Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Owen Jeffery	10	10	100%	0	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Dave McElroy	11	8	73%	3	Audit and Governance Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies

Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Tina McKenzie-Boyle	11	7	64%	4	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Apologies Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Apologies Present, as expected Apologies
Councillor Mohammed Nazir	7	7	100%	0	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected, virtual Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Neel Rana	3	2	67%	1	Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30	Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected
Councillor Joshua Reynolds	3	1	33%	2	Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30	Apologies Present, as expected Apologies
Councillor Zafar Satti	10	5	50%	5	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 22/07/24 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Apologies Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Apologies Apologies Present, as expected

Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey	11	11	100%	0	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Wayne Smith	11	7	64%	4	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Apologies Apologies Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies
Councillor Helen Taylor	11	9	82%	2	Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Management Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	22/07/24 18:30 08/10/24 18:30 04/12/24 18:30 10/02/25 18:30 07/04/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected
Councillor Lou Timlin	10	7	70%	3	Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Audit and Governance Committee Royal Berkshire Fire Authority Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	16/07/24 18:30 27/11/24 17:00 30/01/25 18:30 24/03/25 18:30 24/06/24 19:00 09/07/24 18:30 12/09/24 17:30 13/11/24 18:30 19/02/25 18:30 17/04/25 18:30	Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Present, as expected Apologies Present, as expected

Username	Total Expected	Present	% Present	Apologies	Party	Meeting Date	Attendance
Councillor Simon Werner	13	9	69%	2	Management Committee	22/07/24 18:30	Apologies
					Management Committee	08/10/24 18:30	Present, as expected
					Management Committee	04/12/24 18:30	Apologies
					Management Committee	10/02/25 18:30	Present, as expected
					Management Committee	07/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	24/06/24 19:00	Present, as expected
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	09/07/24 18:30	Present, as expected
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	12/09/24 17:30	Present, as expected
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	13/11/24 18:30	Absent
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	19/02/25 18:30	Present, as expected
					Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	17/04/25 18:30	Present, as expected
					Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee	08/07/24 14:00	Absent
					Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee	12/12/24 14:00	Present, as expected

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Appendix B

ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY REPORT



COMMITTEE	FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	30 JUNE 2025
SUBJECT	TVFCS ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25
LEAD OFFICER	TIM READINGS, AREA MANAGER COLLABORATION AND POLICY
LEAD MEMBER	COUNCILLOR PETER FREWER (2024/25 CHAIR)
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	TO NOTE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 A high-level summary of Thames Valley Fire Control (TVFCS) activity during the year 2024/25.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Fire Authority

2.1 **NOTE** the annual report.

3. REPORT

3.1 An annual report is produced each year by the outgoing Chairman of the TVFCS Joint Committee. In 2024/25 this was Councillor Peter Frewer (RBFA).

3.2 To provide Members with a concise overview of TVFCS performance, people, finance and key developments during 2024/25, and to outline priorities for the year ahead.

3.3 TVFCS remains a flagship collaboration for Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Services. In 2024/25 TVFCS answered calls well within target times and delivered a balanced budget. Continued focus on staff well-being has stabilised retention, and a planned programme of technology renewal keeps the Service resilient and future-ready.

3.4 Since go live in April 2015, TVFCS has provided a single, resilient control room and mobilising function for the three Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Services (FRS). Governance is exercised through:

3.5 **TVFCS Joint Committee** – two elected Members from each Authority; and

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- 3.6 **Joint Co-ordination Group (JCG)** – Senior Responsible Officers (SROs) from each Service who support the Control Manager and report to the Committee
- 3.7 The single-employer, single mobilising system model continues to generate savings. It will result in collective savings of over £1 million a year over a 15-year period up to 2030. The increased resilience, efficiency and improved performance provides a strong platform for continuous improvement.

PERFORMANCE

- 3.8 TVFCS is measured against a set of targets agreed by Joint Coordinating Group and endorsed by the Joint Committee. These are reviewed as part of the scrutiny of performance reporting. Last year, a new set of measures and approach to reporting was developed by the Joint Coordinating Group in response to feedback from Committee members. These highlight key performance metrics, staff attendance and activities where TVFCS provide added value to the communities of the Thames Valley.
- 3.9 TVFCS has performed well against the existing measure for how quickly calls are answered during the year, with the target exceeded on most occasions.
- 3.10 The measures used to monitor the speed with which TVFCS mobilise fire appliances in response to calls have been regularly reviewed by the TVFCS Management team and Joint Coordinating group. Measures are broken down by incident type to allow managers a more detailed understanding of TVFCS performance. TVFCS perform strongly in their response to fires in buildings, with mobilisation times for this key incident type being consistently faster than the target. TVFCS staff find it more challenging to achieve the target in relation to calls to outdoor fires, fires in vehicles and road traffic collisions where it can be more difficult to obtain an accurate location. Many calls of this nature are passed to TVFCS by other agencies, and TVFCS managers are engaging with managers in both Thames Valley Police and South-Central Ambulance to determine how we can improve the sharing of this information between Control rooms and improve the service being provided.

STAFFING

- 3.11 TVFCS, in common with almost all Fire Control rooms nationally, experienced issues with staff retention and turnover after the lifting of national measures to manage the COVID19 pandemic. TVFCS managers and colleagues from the RBFCS HR function have changed the way recruitment activity is structured, and have undertaken significant work on Control staff health, wellbeing and engagement. This focus appears to be delivering improved outcomes, with no staff choosing to leave TVFCS since February 2024.
- 3.12 The marked decrease in staff turnover has allowed managers to focus on staff development, rather than recruitment and initial training. TVFCS now has a pool of staff suitable and ready to move into Supervisory and Middle Manager roles should vacancies as required.
- 3.13 Staff sickness levels within TVFCS have been stable during 2024/25, with particularly good performance being achieved in relation to short term sickness absence. TVFCS

Supervisory and Middle managers have received targeted input from the RBFRS HR team to ensure a consistent approach to the management of sickness absence.

NOTABLE ACTIVITY

- 3.14 In December 2024, TVFCS completed a hardware refresh of the DS3000 Integrated Communications Control System (ICCS), used by TVFCS staff to handle all telephone and radio traffic in and out of TVFCS. This is a challenging activity, as it involves the migration of the service from the old hardware onto the new, whilst maintaining business as usual levels of service. Close co-operation between TVFCS, the Thames Valley Fire & Rescue Services and the system supplier meant that the works were completed with minimal disruption to operational activity. This means that all TVFCS systems are now running on hardware and software which meets national security requirements and will be able to provide a resilient Control room service until the contract for TVFCS systems ends in April 2028.
- 3.15 The temporary Watch Manager, appointed on a 2-year contract in September 2023, continues to have a significant impact on TVFCS projects and development. The additional capacity that the role provides to effect organisational change has allowed TVFCS to make excellent progress in the adoption of National Operation Guidance (NOG) for Fire Controls, with a high-quality suite of training materials now available to TVFCS staff, allowing them to align to accepted industry best practice. This has also led to the introduction of a revised 'Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills' system for TVFCS staff based on NOG, to will help to ensure that staff at all stages of their career are able to deliver the service to the highest standards.
- 3.16 TVFCS have continued to be able to support the three Fire & Rescue Services with effective delivery of their response function. In September 2024, TVFCS, in collaboration with the three Fire and Rescue Services, introduced a revised electronic arrangement for the management of multiple calls to persons trapped by fire in high rise buildings. This arrangement allows the services to comply with a key recommendation of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, and is being regularly tested, exercised and reviewed to ensure the best possible outcomes for members of the public.
- 3.17 April 23rd 2025 was the 10th anniversary of TVFCS being a 'live' operational Control room. A number of events took place throughout April to mark this significant milestone. A formal event was held at RBFRS Headquarters on 23rd April, attended by councillors, former Control staff, members of the original project team and the High Sherrif of the Royal County of Berkshire. TVFCS staff attended events hosted in each county to develop working relationships with operational colleagues and allow TVFCS staff to expand their knowledge of operational equipment and procedures, specialist capabilities and Incident command arrangements. The celebrations culminated in TVFCS staff completing a walk across all 3 counties over two days, raising the profile of the Control room and engaging with staff from the Thames Valley Fire & Rescue Services. This event was very successful and raised over £3,500 for the Firefighter's Charity.

LOOKING FORWARD

- 3.18 TVFCS expect to 'go live' on the national Multi Agency Incident Transfer (MAIT) system during Q1 2025/26. Adoption of this initiative will enable TVFCS to exchange

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incident details with other Fire Control rooms across England electronically without the need for a telephone or radio call, which will improve efficiency and reduce the possibility of errors in the exchange of information.

- 3.19 Work has commenced on the project to replace the Command-and-Control systems used by TVFCS at the end of the current contract in April 2028. It is expected that a full business case will be available by December 2025, with significant input being gathered from Control staff, Control Managers and Operational users of the system. The temporary Watch Manager role mentioned earlier in this report will be providing dedicated subject matter expertise to the team to ensure that the replacement solution is able to cater to the needs of all stakeholders and enables TVFCS to continue to provide an excellent service in the future.
- 3.20 The Joint Coordination Group will continue to progress work to improve the staffing resilience of TVFCS.
- 3.21 Work associated with the migration to the Emergency Services Network is beginning to increase. This work is coordinated through a regional project structure and the impact on Control room operations will need to be carefully managed by TVFCS managers and will be supported by all three TVFRS.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC COMMITMENTS

- 4.1 Response: We will ensure that our people are trained, and resources are located to provide the most effective response and to have a positive impact on incidents in our communities.
- 4.2 Resilience: We will ensure we are resilient and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.
- 4.3 People: We will support our staff by providing a safe and inclusive environment for them to thrive in, building a diverse organisation that is engaged with, and accessible to, our communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The budget for TVFCS is set at the December meeting of the Joint Committee each year. The budget for TVFCS for 2024/25 was £2,874,023. At year end, the actual expenditure was £2,850,155. This created a variance of -£23,868 (-0.83%). The principal cause of this variance was the pay award agreed by the NJC in 2024 being slightly lower than forecast.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report complies with the requirements of the Legal Agreement Relating to the Steady State of Operation of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Risks relating to future activity are captured in the TVFCS risk register and reviewed regularly by the SROs.

9. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None.

10. CONSISTENCY WITH DUTY TO COLLABORATE

- 10.1 This report relates directly to collaborative activity and supports the s2 duty to collaborate as set out in the Policing and Crime Act 2017.

11. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 11.1 Chief Fire Officer.

- 11.2 Chief Finance Officer.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 None.

13. APPENDICES

- 13.1 None.

14. CONTACT DETAILS

- 14.1 Tim Readings, Area Manager Collaboration and Policy, readingst@rbfrs.co.uk

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ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair	A&GC	10.07.25	Annual	Decision	MO	N/A	Part I
Pensions Board Annual update	A&GC	10.07.25	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D and Pension Board Chair	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
ESMCP verbal update	A&GC	10.07.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HBIS	N/A	Part I
Q4 Performance Report	A&GC	10.07.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair	Management Committee	14.07.25	Annual	Decision	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Outturn	Management Committee	14.07.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Estates Minor Capital Work Projects 2025	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Light Fleet Maintenance Plan 2025	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Fleet Maintenance Joint Working Agreement	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Agree	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
Sustainability Roadmap update	Management Committee	14.07.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HoA	Strategic Assets and Sustainability Lead	Part I
CRMP Priority Programmes	Management Committee	14.07.25	Every meeting	Note	HCS	CRMP Lead	Part I
Q4 Appliance Availability	Management Committee	14.07.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Recruitment and Retention six Month Update	Management Committee	07.10.25	Ad-hoc	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q1	Management Committee	07.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q1	Management Committee	07.10.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
External Audit report	A&GC	20.10.25	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
Internal Audit report	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Governance Statement	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Decision	Programme Office Mgr	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	20.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Q1 Performance Report	A&GC	20.10.25	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Annual Treasury Report and Mid-year report	Fire Authority	25.10.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q2	Management Committee	10.12.25	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I
CRMP Priority Programmes	Management Committee	10.12.25	Every meeting	Note	HCS	CRMP Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q2	Management Committee	10.12.25	quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Annual Governance Statement 23/24	A&GC	26.01.26	Annual	Decision	HF&P / Programme Office Manager	N/A	Part I
Statement of Accounts	A&GC	26.01.26	Annual	Decision	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Statement of Assurance 2024/25	A&GC	26.01.26	Quarterly	Note and Recommend	HCS	N/A	Part I
Gender, Ethnicity and Equality Pay Gap	A&GC	26.01.26	Annual	Note	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	A&GC	26.01.26	Annual	Note and Recommend	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal and External Audit report	A&GC	26.01.26	Quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Constitutional Review	A&GC	26.01.26	every four years	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Q2 Performance Report	A&GC	26.01.26	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Management Committee	10.02.26	Annual	Note and recommend	MO	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 25/26, Medium Term Financial Plan, SAIF and TVFCS Budget	Management Committee	10.02.26	Annual	Note and recommend	HF&P	Finance Lead	Part I
Budget Monitoring Q3	Management Committee	10.02.26	Annual	Note	HF&P	Budget and Income Generation Lead	Part I

ITEM	DECISION BODY	NEXT REPORTING DATE	REPORTING FREQUENCY	RECOMMENDED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LEAD MEMBER	PART I / II
CRMP Priority Programmes	Management Committee	10.02.26	Every meeting	Note	HCS	CRMP Lead	Part I
Appliance Availability Q3	Management Committee	10.02.26	Quarterly	Note	AM (R&R)	N/A	Part I
Scheme of Member Allowances Annual Review	Fire Authority	23.02.26	Annual	Decision	MO	N/A	Part I
Contract Regulations	Fire Authority	23.02.26	Ad-hoc	Decision	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Budget 25/26, Medium Term Financial Plan & Strategic Asset Investment Framework and TVFCS Budget	Fire Authority	23.02.26	Annual	Decision	HF&P	Finance Lead	Part I
Pay Policy Statement	Fire Authority	23.02.26	Annual	Decision	HHR&L&D	N/A	Part I
Internal Audit Report	A&GC	16.03.26	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
External Audit Report	A&GC	16.03.26	quarterly	Note	HF&P	N/A	Part I
Annual Report on Members Development	A&GC	16.03.26	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	N/A	Part I
Annual report on Governance / Members attendance and allowances	A&GC	16.03.26	Annual	Note and Recommend	HCS	A&GC Chairman	Part I
Quarter 3 Performance Report	A&GC	16.03.26	Quarterly	Note	Data, Performance and Risk Manager	N/A	Part I
Members Code of Conduct Consultation	A&GC	16.03.26	every four years	Decision	MO	N/A	Part I
CRMP Priority Programmes	Management Committee	16.04.26	Every meeting	Note	HCS	CRMP Lead	Part I
Corporate Calendar 2025/26	Fire Authority	30.04.26	Annual	Decision	HCS	N/A	Part I
Lead Member and Champion Annual Reports	Fire Authority	30.04.26	Annual	Note	Lead Officers	Lead Members	Part I
Annual Plan	Fire Authority	30.04.26	Annual	Decision	HCS	N/A	Part I

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