Member Development Strategy

2023 - 2027



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Section 1: Our Legal Responsibilities

The following legislation provides the main legal basis and outlines the statutory responsibilities and powers of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

- The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- The Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Policing and Crime Act 2017

In 2018, the Government launched a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets out the Fire Authority's main responsibilities and these are shown below:

- Contribute to safer communities by developing a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) to identify, assess and mitigate all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks faced by the communities of Royal Berkshire.
- Work in partnership with the people of Royal Berkshire and a wide range of partners locally and nationally to deliver a capable, resilient service.
- Be accountable to you for our actions and decision making.
- Have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard you expect for an important public safety service.
- Provide assurance to you and to Government on financial, governance and operational matters and on national resilience capability.

Section 2: Strategic Policy Statement

This four year strategy aims to ensure all Members have access to a high standard of support and information to facilitate their role on Royal Berkshire Fire Authority. This Strategy aims to support Member development across three categories:

1. Need to know information about Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
2. Visits to local fire stations including Wholetime and On-Call
3. Other information that Members would like to know

Section 3: Context and RBFA Strategic Commitments

This Strategy is underpinned by the Corporate Plan and CRMP 2023-2027, and must be considered in the context of the Strategic Commitments with outcomes aligned to delivery of the Corporate Plan and CRMP

2023-2027. In overall terms, this Strategy is designed to enable Members to fulfil our mission in **Serving the People of Royal Berkshire**.

Outcomes will be aligned to at least one of the following Strategic Commitments:

Prevention
We will reduce the risk to our communities through our partnership duties and prevention activities, ensuring that our services are accessible to all.

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.

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.

Resilience
We will ensure our resilience and work with our partners to promote and build resilience in the communities we serve.

Sustainability
We will ensure that we provide a financially sustainable and environmentally friendly service to our communities.

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.

Full details of the policy agenda is available in Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's Corporate Plan and Community Risk Management Plan 2023-2027.

Section 4: Strategy

Through the Member Development Strategy, we will aim to:

- Equip Members with the skills and knowledge necessary to fulfil their roles and ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities listed in Section 1 of this strategy, and Section 11 of Member's Handbook Role Description document;
- To ensure Member development is fully embedded in the culture of RBFA and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) and its importance is recognised by all;
- Equip Members to balance the conflicting and competing priorities of their roles and constructively work with officers in Serving the People of Royal Berkshire.

The principles that will underpin all Member development activity are:

- To maintain a clear commitment to Member development and support;
- To ensure a strategic approach is taken to Member development;
- To support Members in their roles on RBFA.
- To ensure Member development is effective in building knowledge of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Our Member development objectives are:

To ensure we meet our aims and principles, this Strategy sets out a number of objectives that we will be working towards as part of our Member development activity:

Maintain a clear commitment to Member development and support	• Seek commitment and approval of the Member Development Strategy by Fire Authority; • Ensure the planning and delivery of Member development is the responsibility of Head of Corporate Services; • Ensure equality of opportunity and access for all; • Provide specialist training for the Democratic Support team and the wider organisation through the core skills programme.	Year 1 Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
Ensure a strategic approach is taken to Member development	• Develop an induction programme for all new Members covering core skills, governance matters and learning specific to RBFRS and the Fire and Rescue Service generally; • Annually refresh the Member Development Programme based on Member need • Assign a lead Member (Member Champion for Member Development) and lead officer (Head of Corporate Services) responsible for Member Development providing regular strategic oversight; and • Work in collaboration with Local Authorities and partners in Berkshire to identify opportunities to deliver Member development programmes that are compliementary and cohesive.	Ongoing Annual Annual Annual Ongoing
Ensure Member development is effective in building knowledge	• Outcomes and benefits of Member development activities are clearly communicated and understood by those participating; • Evaluate the outcomes and benefits of Member development activities through participant feedback; • Develop Member understanding of local and national issues that impact on the Fire and Rescue Service; • Lead Member and Member Champions in place for key themes with briefing and support in these roles as appropriate;	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

	• Use a range of tools in the delivery of Member development to ensure suitabilty for a range of learning styles; • Provide opportunities to meet with agencies and the community; • Monitor and record attendance at Member development activities; • Annually report on the progress of the Member development programme to the Audit and Governance Committee.	Ongoing Annual Annual
Support Members in their roles on RBFA	• Schedule a programme of Member development activities and publicise at the earliest opportunity; • Ensure the Member development programme is delivered at times appropriate for Members; • Offer Member development opportunities at a range of locations across Berkshire; • Ensure our systems and ways of working best support Members in their roles; and • Champion the role of RBFA in terms of local democracy and contribution to Serving the People of Royal Berkshire.	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

Section 5: Delivering the Strategy

A Working Group chaired by the Member Champion for Member Development, will develop an action plan for delivery of a Member development programme under the three headings outlined at the start of the Strategy.

To support the delivery of the Member Development Strategy, a number of different opportunities can be used including (but not limited to):

New Member Induction Programme	Bespoke inhouse briefing sessions	Annual Workshop	Buddy System
Joint training opportunities with Local Authorities	Visit your local station	External learning opportunities e.g. conferences (based on business case where funding required)	Member Handbook
Attendance at RBFRS Events	Communication Channels e.g. Press Releases and Social Media	Opportunities to meet with partners such as SCAS and TVP	Dedicated Member support provided by Corporate Services
Support through systems such as Modern Gov	Briefing notes	Peer coaching and mentoring	E-learning

Measuring our Delivery

To ensure continuous improvement, a number of measures will be used to monitor the success of the Member Development Strategy including:

- Annual Member Development Satisfaction Survey
- Feedback and Evaluation Forms
- Attendance numbers at Member development sessions /events
- No. of joint training opportunities with partners/Local Authorities
- Participation in external learning opportunities e.g. Local Government Association (LGA)

As part of the Annual Report on Member Development, performance against these measures will be reported to the Audit and Governance Committee at the end of each Municipal Year.

Approval

The draft Member Development Strategy will be considered for approval by Fire Authority in April 2023. The Member Development Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis by Audit and Governance Committee.

Version	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Review Date
V1	Member Development Champion	Head of Corporate Services	March 2024

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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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