



3 February 2011

- (1) **MEMBERS OF THE AVON FIRE AUTHORITY**
Councillors Abraham, Alexander, Barrett (C), Barrett (N), Brown, Clark, Cole, Comer, Cook, Cranney, Curran, Dando, Davies, Drew, Gregor, Hugill, McGall, Patel, Pickup, Porter, Roberts, Walker, Willis, Wollacott and Wood
- (2) **APPROPRIATE OFFICERS**
- (3) **PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Fire Authority being held at **2.00pm on Friday 11 February 2011**. The meeting will be held in the reception meeting room, Avon Fire and Rescue Service HQ, Temple Back, Bristol.

The Agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Gee
Clerk to the Fire Authority

PROVIDING AVON FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE



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Working in partnership with the Gambia Fire & Rescue Service (GF&RS)

Notes:

Inspection of Papers: Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or a list of the background papers relating to any item on this Agenda should contact Helen Howells, who is available by telephoning 0117 926 2061 ext. 283 or by visiting Avon Fire & Rescue Headquarters, Temple Back, Bristol (during normal office hours).

Attendance Register: Members should sign the Register which will be circulated at the meeting.

The appended supporting documents are identified by agenda item number.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure:

- The fire alarm or notification of any other threat is a continuous siren.
- In such cases Members must leave the building by the nearest exit.
- In the event of explosion or smoke where controlled evacuation is not possible, Members must follow fire exit signs.
- All corridors are lit with emergency lighting.
- The assembly point is the Station Drill Yard at the rear of the Brigade Headquarters complex.

Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests

Any Member in attendance who has a personal interest in any matter to be considered at this meeting must disclose the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent. A member having a prejudicial interest must withdraw from the meeting room whilst the matter is considered.

A G E N D A

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** (Members are reminded there is no power to appoint substitutes on the Avon Fire Authority)
- 2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES** – The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedures as set out in Note 4 appearing on page 2 of this release.
- 3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**
The Chair will draw attention to the requirements of the Code of Conduct as set out in note 5 appearing on page 2 of this release.
- 4 MINUTES OF AVON FIRE AUTHORITY HELD ON 5 JANUARY 2011**
- 5 PUBLIC ACCESS** (Time Limit – 30 minutes)
Under Standing Order 21 and providing 2 clear working days notice has been given to the Clerk, any resident of Bristol, South Gloucestershire, Bath and North East Somerset or North Somerset Council may address the Avon Fire Authority (for no more than 5 minutes) to present a petition, make a statement, or as leader of a deputation.
- 6 PRECIS OF MINUTES OF SOUTH WEST FIRE CONTROL LIMITED**
- 7 MEETING OF AVON FIRE AUTHORITY MARCH 2011**
- 8 REVENUE BUDGET 2011/12 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**
- 9 PERFORMANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
- 10 RISK PLANNING UPDATE**
- 11 COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE**
- 12 EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK & INTERVENTIONS**
- 13 SICKNESS ABSENCE UPDATE**
- 14 FIRES & OTHER INCIDENTS – NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2010**

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY**5 JANUARY 2011**

PRESENT: Councillors Abraham, Alexander, Barrett (C), Barrett (N), Clark, Comer, Cook, Cranney, Curran, Dando, Davies, Gregor, Hugill, Patel, Pickup, Porter, Roberts, Walker, Wollacott

85 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Brown, Cole, Drew, McGall, Willis and Wood.

86 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES – The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedures as set out in the Agenda.

87 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – The Chair drew attention to the requirements of the Code of Conduct as set out in the Agenda.

88 MINUTES OF AVON FIRE AUTHORITY HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2010

RESOLVED that the minutes be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

89 2011/12 BUDGET STRATEGY AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN FOR 2011/15

The Treasurer gave a detailed overview of the 2011/12 Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2011/2015, including the key points of the recommendations.

The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive provided an overview of the recent meeting with the Minister by himself, the Chair and the Treasurer. Members noted that final decisions from the Minister would be made by 17 January.

Members considered the four options as set out in the report and favoured Option A for council tax to remain at its current level in order to receive the additional section 31 grant.

Members discussed the setting up of a budget working group for Members to assist officers in the changes ahead.

Members thanked the Treasurer for his work in preparing the paper.

RESOLVED that:

- i) The approach and the current assumptions being used to develop the 2011/12 budget as detailed in the report be released for consultation. The budget options contained in table 4 be noted and Option A be approved for pursuing. The financial issues in paragraph 23 be noted;
- ii) The need to agree a budget after giving further consideration to the issues raised in this report; identification of saving options; responses to consultation; result of representations and any further information that is forthcoming, be presented to members in a report on 11 February 2011.
- iii) The formation of a Budget Working Group be set up to assist the Chair, Group Leaders and Chief. The Group to consist of two Members from each party and will meet on an ad-hoc basis as items arise for an agenda.
- iv) The level of working balance at £1.5m (Approx 3% of the proposed 2011/12 budget), be maintained. The development of an Austerity Reserve estimated to be £2.1m to facilitate changes necessary to balance forthcoming budgets, be agreed. The projected level of reserves contained within Appendix A be noted;
- v) The current position in terms of the development for the MTFP as set out in table 10; the high level of additional required savings contained within it and the identified financial risks contained within table 7, be noted.
- vi) That the meeting on Tuesday 21 December by Councillor Terry Walker, CFO/CE Kevin Pearson and the Treasurer James Dack with the Fire Minister, Bob Neill MP, be noted and that final decisions on the grant settlement are expected to be made on 17 January 2011.

90 REGIONAL FIRE CONTROL PROJECT

Members considered an update on the Regional Fire Control Project and the statement released by the Minister.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Meeting closed at 15.02

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Chair

SOUTH WEST FIRE CONTROL LIMITED**PRECIS OF THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS****HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2011****AT SOUTH WEST FIRE CONTROL,****BLACKBROOK BUSINESS PARK, TAUNTON, TA1 2PX**

Present : Mr P J Abraham (Chairman) – appointed by Avon Fire Authority
Mrs R Knox (Alternate to Mr R Gregory)
Mr M Martin – appointed by Cornwall Council
Mr S Parsons - appointed by Gloucestershire County Council
Mr J Woodman - appointed by Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority
Mr D Wren – appointed by Wiltshire & Swindon Fire Authority

Also present as observers : Mr C Barrett (Alternate to Mr P J Abraham) - left part way through the discussion referred to under minute no. 4.
Mr H Marshall (Alternate to Mr D Wren)

Apologies : Mr R Allen (Alternate to Mr S Parsons)
Mr A Eastman (Alternate to Mr J Woodman)
Mr R Gregory – appointed by Dorset Fire Authority

Regional Project Director's Update

The Regional Project Director (RPD) presented a report updating the Board on events since the last meeting, notably the Minister's announcement in late December of the immediate cancellation of the FiReControl project. The official reason for the project's collapse was the failure of Cassidian (formerly EADS) to guarantee delivery of the technical solution within the agreed timescales and costs. However, in the RPD's view, the way the project had been procured and managed by CLG had exacerbated matters.

The RPD referred to the consultation document on the future of fire controls which had been issued by CLG shortly before the Board's meeting. Whilst the document lacked firm options, it was clear that CLG would prefer RCC buildings to be used by fire and rescue services (FRSs). To this end, CLG were prepared to offer significant financial incentives to FRSs, as evidenced by the terms of an agreement which CLG had reached with the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority for that Authority's use of the London RCC.

It was ironic that RCC companies were being required to run down their activities with a view to closure at the same time as FRSs were being encouraged to consider collaboration on fire controls. In the RPD's view, it was worth exploring whether there was any possibility of two or more of the South West FRSs wishing to pursue a collaborative use for the RCC using the Company governance structure and the expertise of the current senior staff.

The RPD informed the Board of a forthcoming meeting with Chief Fire Officers (CFOs) and a subsequent meeting of the SW Fire Forum (comprising chairmen, portfolio holders and CFOs) at both of which he would be making a presentation. CLG would be represented at the Forum. In the RPD's view, there was a deal to be done with CLG which would produce significant financial savings for those FRSs wishing to participate in a collaborative use of the RCC. What he could not predict was whether there was the political will on the part of FRSs and FRAs for such a deal.

Noting that the Company had sufficient funds to continue until June without the risk of becoming insolvent, the RPD suggested that whilst it was obviously necessary to commence the winding down of the Company, the Board might defer a formal decision on closure until its next meeting (4 March) by which time there could be an indication of how FRSs in the SW wished to proceed in the light of the CLG consultation document. He said that he had received a verbal assurance from CLG of an additional £20,000 of funding to the Company to enable the senior staff to be employed until late June or early July. In the unlikely event that this extra money failed to materialise from CLG, he would ensure an equivalent sum was made available from residual regional funds for the project.

Action Plan for Winding-Down

The Board considered a paper by the Chief Executive and Regional Project Director to which were appended:

- An action plan to wind down the Company.
- An action plan for Board issues.
- Advice from the Company's solicitors on directors' liabilities and responsibilities in the event of insolvency.
- An aide memoire prepared by the Company's solicitors of "dos and don'ts" regarding insolvency.

After discussion and on taking into account the RPD's report referred to in the previous item of business and the Company's financial position referred to in the next, it was agreed to commence the winding down of the Company's activities, but to defer consideration of a formal decision on closure of the Company to the next meeting of the Board (due to be held on 4 March 2011). Meanwhile, action plans for an orderly and timely winding down of the Company's activities were agreed, and Company officers authorised to take the necessary actions. In the light of likely closure of the Company, the Company Secretary was asked to suggest to FRAs, as the members of the Company, that future AGMs be dispensed with.

Financial Position and Forecast

The Chief Executive presented a paper setting out the financial position of the Company at 31 December 2010 and providing a financial forecast through to the likely time of the closure of the Company. Directors noted the assurance in the paper that the Company had sufficient funds or means of funding to meet all of its liabilities and thus to avoid insolvency. Directors asked to be provided with a monthly financial statement and forecast.

People Implications and Actions

The Board considered a paper by the HR Advisor informing directors of the actions taken or needing to be taken to terminate the employment or secondment of staff as a consequence of the cancellation of the FiReControl project. The Board:

- placed on record its thanks to staff for their hard work and commitment to the Company and to the former FiReControl project,
- noted the arrangements which had been put in place to assist employees facing redundancy, and
- delegated to the Remuneration Committee the power to hear and determine any appeals against dismissal.

Employment Termination Issues – Senior Executives

On considering a paper by the HR Advisor, the Board made a number of decisions on issues regarding the termination of the employment of the Senior Executives of the Company consequent upon the cancellation of the FiReControl project and the decisions of the Board regarding the Company's future.

Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Friday 4 March 2011, starting at 10.30 a.m.

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Clerk to the Authority
SUBJECT:	Meeting of the Avon Fire Authority March 2011

SUMMARY

Approval to amend the date for the meeting of the Authority in March 2011

RECOMMENDATION

To approve that the meeting of the Authority due to take place on Friday 25 March 2011 at 1400 hours be changed to Friday 1 April 2011 at 1400 hours.

CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

At the meeting of the Authority on 18 December 2009, the Authority approved the Authority meeting dates for the year July 2010 to May 2011.

In response to a request from the Chair of the Authority, the meeting scheduled for 25 March 2011 be put back 1 April 2011.

IMPLICATIONS

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

None

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Authority is required to publish the dates for the meeting

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

None

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None

List of background documents:
Avon Fire Authority Report and minutes of the meeting dated 18 December 2009
Report Contact: Geraldine Gee, Clerk to the Fire Authority (Extension 283#)

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Treasurer to the Fire Authority Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Revenue Budget 2011/12 and Medium Term Financial Plan

SUMMARY

To outline the latest budget position following consultation and confirmation of final grant settlement figures from central government to enable Members to agree a budget and council tax precept for 2011/2012 and to note the medium term forecast.

The government has also confirmed a capital grant of £1.49m for 2011/12 which is £210k lower than previously estimated. The draft capital programme, which is attached as appendix 'D', has been amended to reflect this and has been prepared in line with the existing approved prudential code indicators. A report to review the Authority's prudential code indicators and treasury management strategy for 2011-2014 will be presented to the next meeting.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Members are asked:

- 1) To consider the information contained in this report, including the capping information the grant settlement, the consultation responses, and to agree a Revenue Budget and Band "D" precept level.
- 2) To make the statutory determinations, which on the basis of this report, are set out in Appendix A, a summary of which are:

i)

	£'000
Gross Expenditure	47,771
Less Use of Provisions and Reserves	-800
Less Income	<u>-2,241</u>
Net Revenue Budget	44,730
Less Government Support	-22,541
Less Share of collection Fund Net Surpluses	<u>29</u>
Amount met by Council Tax	22,218

- ii) That the Fire Authority's basic amount of Council Tax (i.e. precept per Band D property) for 2011/12 is £60.38, the same rate as 2010/11.

- iii) That precepts be issued totaling £22.218m on the unitary authorities in the Avon Fire Authority area in proportion to the tax base determined by them and detailed in the table below:

<u>Unitary Authority</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>	<u>Precept £</u>
Bath & North East Somerset	64,422.90	3,889,854.70
Bristol	134,386.00	8,114,226.68
North Somerset	78,392.37	4,733,331.30
South Gloucestershire	90,769.00	5,480,632.22
Total	367,970.27	22,218,044.90

The precept for 2011/12 for properties in each tax band is:

Band A	£ 40.25
Band B	£ 46.96
Band C	£ 53.67
Band D	£ 60.38
Band E	£ 73.80
Band F	£ 87.22
Band G	£100.63
Band H	£120.76

- 3) To instruct the Clerk to forward precept details to the Unitary Authorities as the billing authorities.

CONTENTS

The report focuses on information which will enable Members to determine the budget and Band D precept level for 2011/12

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Fire Authority on 5 January 2011, Members considered a draft budget and medium term financial plan in relation to both Capital and Revenue Budgets.
- 1.2 Members also agreed to release the report for consultation purposes.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 As agreed, the report was made available to:
- The four unitary authorities
 - Local MPs
 - Business West
 - The Authority's website
 - The Authority's staff intranet and
 - at Community Safety Centres
 - with other strategic partners
- 2.2 At this stage there have been a number of responses from staff members primarily identifying efficiency savings which are being taken into consideration as part of the budget process.

3. DRAFT BUDGET FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that the draft revenue budget for 2011/12 was accompanied by paragraphs setting out the main features of that budget and these were agreed. The budget paper identified 4 budget options and the Authority resolved to select option A, freezing the council tax at £60.38.

This option included the utilisation of additional Section 31 grant of £555k.

- 3.2 It is now possible to update this position following notification by the four unitary authorities of their collection fund positions and council tax bases, together with notification from DCLG of the final grant settlement figures.
- 3.3 The four unitary authorities have now advised this Authority of the surplus/deficits on their collection funds and the effect on the Fire Authority. This is set out below:

	Surplus / (Deficit) (£)
Bristol	(99,698)
South Gloucestershire	13,942
North Somerset	27,500
Bath & North East Somerset	29,000
	<u>(29,256)</u>

This produces a "one-off" cost to the Authority for this year and is marginally less than previously forecast in January.

3.4 The tax bases have also been notified as set out below:

	(£)
Bristol	134,386.00
South Gloucestershire	90,769.00
North Somerset	78,392.37
Bath & North East Somerset	64,422.90
	<u>367,970.27</u>

This is marginally more than the figure assumed in the report of 5th January 2010.

3.5 The minor changes to the collection fund surpluses and council tax bases have resulted in a slight reduction in the identified savings target of £19k.

3.6 The provisional settlement announced in December identified a grant reduction of £2.338m for 2011/12. The consultation period ended on the 17th January and Members will recall that representations were made to the Minister.

The final grant settlement was announced on 31 January 2011 and there were no changes to the provisional settlement.

3.7 The previously identified issues produce a recommended budget scenario as set out below:

	£,000
Net Revenue Budget	46,085
<u>Less</u> Use of Reserves	(800)
<u>Less</u> Government Support	(22,541)
<u>Less</u> S31 Grant	(555)
<u>ADD</u> Collection Fund deficit	29
Amount to be met from Council Tax	<u>22,218</u>
Advised Tax Base	367,970.27

This is equivalent to a precept of £60.38 for a Band D Council Tax property.

Appendix C contains a subjective analysis of the 2011/12 budget.

4. THE GOVERNMENT'S GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT AND CAPPING

By selecting option A the Authority has agreed to a zero increase in council tax for 2011/12. This position is achievable through the receipt of an additional S31 grant of £555k. Assurances have been received from the CLG that the grant will be paid for the period of the 4 year Comprehensive Spending Review. At this stage is it not certain how and if the S31 grant will continue after the 4 year period.

By maintaining the existing council tax level it is reasonable to assume that the Authority will not run the risk of being subject to any capping measures.

5. AUSTERITY MEASURES

- 5.1 The draft budget strategy paper under Option A identified a savings requirement of £1.8m to be made in 2011/12 after allowing for estimated use of reserves of £800k.
- 5.2 Appendix F within the paper identified a number of measures that were to be investigated to ensure that savings of £1.8m could be identified and delivered throughout 2011/12. These options have been developed and reviewed and a number are already being implemented.
- 5.3 Further preparation and discussions with budget holders and managers has progressed well. Numerous efficiency items have been identified and will be developed over the coming months.
- 5.4 A Summary of proposed cashable efficiencies for 2011/12 is attached at Appendix B. There is a significant level of risk in achieving the necessary savings and regular monitoring will need to be undertaken.
- 5.5 Any excess efficiencies will be added to reserves and / or be used to assist in the delivery of more efficient working.
- 5.6 A Member's Budget Working Group has been established to review identified savings, policy changes and to monitor implementation and achievement of identified savings throughout the year.
- 5.7 A Change and Transformation Unit has been established to lead and implement the necessary changes over the CSR period.

6. EQUALITIES ISSUES

- 6.1 Under equality legislation, the Authority has a legal duty to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality. The duties do not prevent difficult decisions being made, but from a financial perspective it stresses the need to ensure that financial decisions are made in a fair, transparent and accountable way, considering the needs and rights of different members of the community and staff.
- 6.2 This is achieved through robustly assessing the impact that changes to policies, procedures and practices could have on different equality groups. The assessment should be proportionate to the decision being made and it's relevance to the Authority's functions and its impact.
- 6.3 The Transformation unit in conjunction with the appropriate managers and the Equalities Unit will ensure that where necessary suitable impact assessments are undertaken at the appropriate times and that mitigations are identified and implemented where needed.

7. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

7.1 A draft medium term financial plan was presented to the Authority at the last meeting.

7.2 This is currently being revised and an updated plan will be provided to the Authority at a later stage.

8. OTHER LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Members of the Fire Authority have a statutory duty to secure the services of a suitably equipped and properly trained fire and rescue service which meets efficiently all normal requirements of the area.

8.2 There is also a range of related duties, including a duty to secure efficient arrangements for giving advice on fire prevention, restricting the spread of fires, means of escape; and ensuring adequate supplies of water for firefighting.

8.3 Apart from their duties specifically related to fires, Members have important responsibilities as employers, particularly under the Health and Safety at Work Act and need to bear in mind the ability of the Health and Safety Executive to ensure compliance through the issue of compliance notices.

8.4 Failure to make adequate provision for health and safety through proper training, maintenance of premises, maintenance of vehicles, provision of suitable protective clothing and equipment etc may also have legal and financial implications through increased levels of claims and, ultimately, insurance premiums.

8.5 Members need also to consider the robustness of the estimates included in the budget and the adequacy of the reserves for which the budget provides.

8.6 Members need to consider Equalities Legislation as laid out in section 6.

8.7 The final decision on the level of the Authority's budget, and responsibility for its adequacy, rests on the Members of the Fire Authority. In arriving at their decision, Members should have regard to all relevant factors, including the views of consultee's, the interests of Council taxpayers and the possibility of capping, but Members' first obligation is to meet the statutory duties referred to above.

9. SECTION 25 REPORT

9.1 In accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Treasurer is required to report to the Authority on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations required in connection with the precept and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The Authority is required to have regard to this report when making decisions about these calculations.

- 9.2 There is no doubt that we are entering a very difficult and uncertain period with a significant cash reduction in grant funding of 9.4% or £2.338m in 2011/12. The impact of this reduction has been softened by the utilisation of £800k of reserves, however this budget remains a demanding one, and efficiencies of £1.8m need to be delivered.
- 9.3 Good progress has already been achieved. A number of options have been developed and costed and are contained within Appendix B. Work is ongoing by the Change and Transformation Team to ensure that these options are properly evaluated and implemented.
- 9.4 Structural changes have also been implemented in the form of the Member led Budget Working Group and Transformation Unit to ensure progress is satisfactory and on track.
- 9.5 There is however a high level of inherent risk in meeting this budget. The challenge is not just a financial one. There needs to be clear ownership and responsibility for ensuring each efficiency strand is delivered on time and to budget. The roles of the members Working Group and Change and Transformation Unit are key in ensuring identified efficiencies are delivered. The finance team will need to ensure that there is accurate and timely financial monitoring.
- 9.6 The working balance currently stands at the agreed level of £1.5m. The Authority also holds other reserves, in particular the planned Austerity Reserve and the reserve for pensions. It is essential that these are used wisely as the Authority strives to reduce its base budget over the medium term.
- 9.7 The January budget report also identified the most significant financial risks and possible measures for mitigation of these. A sensitivity analysis including an impact assessment was also provided.
- 9.8 It is my view that, taking all of these items into account, the budget, and overall position is sustainable and that managers are committed to taking the necessary action to deliver the budget.

IMPLICATIONS

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The budget for 2011/12 is the first part of a 4 year plan to deliver a sustainable budget within the confines of the restrictions placed upon us by central government in terms of reducing levels of grant and non domestic rates redistributed by the coalition government. As such the financial implications are significant as laid out in this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Authority is required by statute to set a legal budget.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The Authority has a duty to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality as summarised in paragraph 6. It will be very difficult to improve or change the diversity of the workforce for as long as a vacancy freeze is maintained.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

The budget set out is tight. Corporate Risk 21 identifies a range of financial scenarios that could lead to the worsening of the financial situation. The most significant of these have been identified and costed and contained within the January Report. Whilst savings options have been identified it is imperative that they are thoroughly researched and implemented to avoid an overspend situation and increased use of reserves.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The budget contains resources to support ongoing environmental and sustainability work. It recognises that investment in this area can produce substantial savings.

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None directly, although repair and maintenance budgets will be carefully prioritised.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A: Statutory Calculations
- Appendix B: Efficiencies Profile
- Appendix C 2011/12 Budget Analysis
- Appendix D Capital Programme

List of background documents: Held within the Finance Director's department
Report Contact(s): James Dack, Director of Finance and Asset Management and Treasurer to the Fire Authority (Extension 235#)

Avon Fire Authority - Budget 2011/12**Statutory Calculations**

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Fire Authority for the year 2011/12 in accordance with section 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

43(2) (a) to (d)	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Fire Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 43 (2)(a) to (d)	£47,771,106
43(3) (a) to (b)	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Fire Authority estimates for the items set out in Section 43 (3)(a) to (b)	£3,041,490
43(4)	Being the amount by which the aggregate at subsection (2) above exceeds the aggregate at subsection (3) above, calculated by the Fire Authority, in accordance with Section 43(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year	£44,729,616

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Fire Authority for the year 2011/12 in accordance with section 44 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as its basic amount of Council Tax

44	Budget Requirement (Section 43)		£44,729,616
	<u>less</u>		
	Aggregate of the sums which the Fire Authority estimates will be payable to it for the year in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant	£22,540,827	
	Aggregate of sums to be paid to the Fire Authority by billing Authorities in accordance with regulations under section 99(3) of the	<u>-£29,256</u>	£22,511,571
	Taxbase		367,970.27
	Basic Amount of Council Tax		£60.38

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Fire Authority for the year 2011/12 in accordance with section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as the amounts of Council Tax for the different valuation bands

Council Tax for the different valuation bands:

Band A	£40.25
Band B	£46.96
Band C	£53.67
Band D	£60.38
Band E	£73.80
Band F	£87.22
Band G	£100.63
Band H	£120.76

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Fire Authority for the year 2011/12 in accordance with section 48 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as the amounts payable by each billing authority

<u>Unitary Authority</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>	<u>Precept £</u>
Bath & North East Somerset	64,422.90	3,889,854.70
Bristol	134,386.00	8,114,226.68
North Somerset	78,392.37	4,733,331.30
South Gloucestershire	90,769.00	5,480,632.22
Total	367,970.27	22,218,044.90

2011/12 Cashable Efficiencies

	£'000	Risk
Non Employee Costs, including review of contracts	300	M
Flexible Staffing and Management Restructure		
Part time working	900	L
Other including sabatticals, vacancy freeze	300	M
Terms and conditions	250	M
Support Staff		
Ongoing vacancy management	140	L
Non renewal of temporary contracts	160	L
Other including part time working	100	H
Total Identified Efficiencies	2,150	

Note: The Identified cashable savings of £2.150m exceed the saving target of £1.810m required. However there is an element of timing and risk in achieving this level of savings. Any surplus savings will be used to offset the use of reserves.

Budget Analysis 2011/12

Area	Standstill Budget 2011/12 £'000	Savings £'000	Budget 2011/12 £'000	Variation %
Employees	37,886	-1,545	36,341	95.9%
Premises	2,205	-40	2,165	98.2%
Transport	1,799	-70	1,729	96.1%
Supplies and Services	4,454	-115	4,339	97.4%
Other Costs	3,237	-40	3,197	98.8%
Total Expenditure	49,581	-1,810	47,771	96.3%
Income	-2,241	0	-2,241	100.0%
Net Expenditure	47,340	-1,810	45,530	96.2%
Transfer from Reserves	-800	0	-800	100.0%
Transfer to Reserves	0	0	0	#DIV/0!
Net Expenditure	46,540	-1,810	44,730	96.1%

Appendix D**Estimated Capital Programme 2011 to 2015**

Investment Area	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000
Premises	620	500	500	500
Operational Equipment	80	125	90	90
PPE	0	1,300	0	0
Fleet	1,690	1,090	1,600	1,600
IT	100	100	200	200
Slippage from 2010/11	1,246	0	0	0
Total	3,736	3,115	2,390	2,390
Funded by				
Supported borrowing	0	0	0	0
Reserves	0	400	0	0
Grant	1,490	1,490	1,490	1,490
Revenue Contribution to capital	300	625	300	300
Prudential Code	1,946	600	600	600
Total	3,736	3,115	2,390	2,390

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Performance and Risk Management Update

SUMMARY

The intention of this report is to provide Elected Members with a regular update on the work being undertaken to manage the Services:

- Performance,
- Corporate risks,
- Community risks.

Members are involved in the 'Performance and Risk Management Forum' and are actively encouraged to scrutinise performance and engage with Officers. The intended outcome from this report is to ensure continuous improvement and risk mitigation is evidenced in all areas of Service activity.

It is envisaged that the Fire Authority will receive a regular summary of activities in these important areas and in the case of Integrated Risk Management Planning will receive more detailed reports as and when required.

Elected members who are not members of the Forum are invited to submit questions or challenges directly to the Forum.

RECOMMENDATION

- That Members note the contents of this report.

CONTENTS

This report primarily focuses on:

- The activity of the Performance and Risk Management Forum.
- The Performance Scorecard (attached as an Appendix)

BACKGROUND**The work of the Performance Management and Risk Management Forum**

The Performance and Risk management Forum met on 18 January and focused primarily on the Performance Scorecard. The Forum also received a presentation from the Unitary Manager from Bristol. He updated the Forum on the specific operational and

community risks. Bristol differs from the other unitaries because of the risks within Avonmouth and a larger problem with automatic fire alarms.

The Forum also received an update on the Asset Management Strategy.

Summary of the Performance Scorecard November 2010 (Attached)

Fires

The target for accidental dwelling fires continues to be met, with 14% less having been recorded. Deliberate vehicle fires continue with a consistent reduction (29% less than last year). Progress against target for deliberate secondary fires has improved and is almost on target. We are also now only just off target for non-domestic property fires.

Alarms

The main area for concern is attendance at Automatic Fire Alarms (AFA's), which remains a focus for attention by Officers. Attendance at AFA's remains off target being 1% up on last year.

The number of calls that are False Alarm Malicious (FAM) are down 17% on last year. Four FAM's were call challenged in November keeping this at 13% not attended this year.

Deaths, injuries and escapes

No fire deaths were recorded in November, but unfortunately there was a fatality in December.

We have recorded 36 injuries in primary fires so far this year, a reduction of 33% on last year.

Response

All indicators are on target apart from the special pre determined attendance (PDA), category 1 (high population density). This is off target, but actually equates to only seven of the 80 incidents.

Community Fire Safety

The completion of Home Fire Safety Visit remains good, we have exceeded target by 510 visits or 5%. Progress continues to be made with defining the factors that make up risk for the new Community Fire Safety target of 65% of completed visits to be to priority groups.

Resources and Value for Money

The performance of the IT helpdesk and payment of invoices both remain on track.

People

The target for both operational and all staff sickness is being met. The completion of return to work interviews was good in November with 32 out of 33 interviews being completed on target.

Corporate Risk Management

It is recognised that the changes in the recent financial environment will result in changes within the organisation and many impact on performance and corporate or community risks. This will be closely monitored by the Service Management Team (SMT) and reported regularly to the Performance and Risk Management forum.

Integrated Risk Management Plan

The draft Integrated Risk Management Plan is now nearing completion and has been updated to clearly and concisely outline the following:

1. the context of our operating environment including our key drivers, who we need to work with our partners and the political & financial climate,
2. the detail of the risk that we face in our community and the tools we use to identify those most at risk. It also shows the profile for each of our Unitary Areas,
3. the means by which we will reduce the identified and prioritise risk within our communities, particularly those identified as being the most vulnerable,
4. an improvement action plan to implement the risk control measures.

The first draft document is shortly to be circulated to the Service Management Board for initial comments, following this, the document will be circulated to members of the PRMF for comment.

Members should also note that additional work will also be required regarding the improvement action plan, to ensure that matters within it are aligned to the work that the Service Transformation Team are researching and planning, which will in due course be submitted to the Members Budget Working Group that has recently been established.

Work is ongoing to determine the most appropriate and effective ways for consultation and engagement on our proposals with our key stakeholders, including our communities.

IMPLICATIONS

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

It is recognised that effective Performance and Risk Management are key to achieving all the objectives and targets of the organisation. In particular:

- Avon Fire and Rescue Service - Corporate Plan, 2008 – 2011
- Avon Fire and Rescue Service – IRMP, 2008 - 2011
- The Fire Service National Framework, 2008 – 2011

- Avon Fire and Rescue Services Corporate Risk Register
- AF&RS Health and Safety Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is acknowledged that proficient, robust and effective performance and risk management will result in economic efficiencies and evidence that the Service is providing its communities with good value for money services.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Mitigation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other employment and equalities related legislation.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Equality impact assessments are carried out in all aspects of the Service. These are monitored and reviewed as part of the performance management framework. We have a number of Local Performance Indicators that we monitor to measure our progress in equality and diversity:

- E&D1, progress in the Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework,
- E&D2, the duty to promote equality
- 16a i&ii, The percentage of staff with a disability
- HR2 recruitment of BME staff
- HR3 recruitment of female operational staff

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Providing evidence of outcomes in this area is a key control measure in reducing the Corporate Risks for the Authority.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

It should be noted that the Performance and Risk Management Forum has agreed to monitor progress against targets and objectives in this area.

CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

Targets and objectives are set to contribute to making improvement in this area. Progress and improvement is monitored closely at the Performance and Risk Management Forum.

- National Indicators - 206i, Number of deliberate primary fires (Arson), 206ii, Number of deliberate primary vehicle fires, 206iii, deliberate secondary fires,

206iv, deliberate secondary vehicle Fires, 146i and 146ii, calls to malicious fire alarms

- Local Performance Indicators - Total number of malicious fire alarms, number of education visits undertaken, Number of on and off station community events attended to deliver fire safety messages, number of groups visiting community safety centers.

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Whilst progress in this area is monitored by Members of the Health and Safety Forum, Performance and Risk Management contribute to progress and 'risk mitigation' in this priority area

List of background documents:
Corporate Plan (2008-2011), AF&RS Health and Safety Strategy, IRMP 2008 -2011
Report Contact(s): Lorraine Houghton, Director of Service Improvement, Ext 231.

Scorecard 2010-11: YTD November 2010

Measure	Annual Target 2010/11	YTD 2009/10	YTD Target	Amber Target	YTD Actual	Progress	% change compared to last year	Benchmarking Data (April - Sept 2010)			
								Average	Avon Actual		
Fires											
LPI142iii* No. of calls to accidental fires in dwellings attended	-5%	640	437	427	438	377	↑	-14%	5.8	6.3	
LPI206i* No. of deliberate primary fires (excluding deliberate primary fires in vehicles)	-15%	317	294	211	230	238	↔	-19%	1.7	1.7	
LPI206 Veh* No. of deliberate fires in vehicles	-15%	613	469	409	411	333	↔	-29%	1.8	2.3	
LPI206iii* No. of deliberate secondary fires (excl. deliberate secondary fires in vehicles)	-5%	1452	1386	1178	1282	1212	↑	-13%	13.6	9.7	
LPI207* No. of fires in non-domestic premises	-5%	290	201	193	198	198	↑	-1%	4.3	4.9	
LPI NFF % of accidental fires in dwellings where no firefighting action	Monitor only - last year 38%					35.9%	↑	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Alarms											
LPI FAMs* Total No. of malicious false alarms	-5%	324	258	216	228	215	↓	-17%	0.33	0.15	
LPI FAMs % % of calls to malicious false alarms not attended	tbc					tbc	13%	↔	n/a	66%	n/a
LPI 149i* No. alarms caused by automatic fire detection attended (Non Domestic Properties)	-20%	1937	1658	1291	1453	1672	↑	1%	35.8	39.8	
LPI 209iii* % of fires attended in dwellings where no smoke alarm was fitted	31.3%					35%	35.3%	↑	n/a	32.8%	37.5%
Deaths, Injuries & Escapes											
NI 49ii* No. of deaths arising from primary fires	9	4			6	n/a	n/a	0.26	0.5		
NI 49iii* No. of injuries arising from primary fires	67	54	45	45	36	↑	-33%	3.57	2.4		
LPI 143i No. of deaths in accidental dwelling fires	Monitor only - last year 6, YTD 2					4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
LPI 143ii No. of injuries in accidental dwelling fires	Monitor only - last year 47, YTD 34					21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Monitor % of people in ADFs escaping unharmed without FRA assistance at the fire	Monitor only - last year 93.7%					90.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in RTCs	LAP target - monitor only ***					not available	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
NI 48 Children killed or seriously injured in RTCs	LAP target - monitor only ***					not available	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Response											
LPI R1 FDR1 (excl. vehicles) Risk Category 1: - 2 appliances** + 9 FF's within 8 mins.	85%		80%		88% (387/441)	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a		
LPI R2 FDR1 (excl. vehicles) Risk Category 2: - 2 appliances** + 9 FF's within 10 mins.	90%		85%		98% (50/51)	↔					
LPI R3 FDR1 (excl. vehicles) Risk Category 3: - 2 appliances** + 9 FF's within 20 mins.	95%		90%		98% 87/89)	↔					
LPI R4 FDR1 Special PDA (excl. vehicles) Risk Cat. 1: - 3 apps.** + 13 FF's within 13 mins.	95%		90%		91% (73/80)	↑					
LPI R5 FDR1 Special PDA (excl. vehicles) Risk Cat. 2: - 3 apps.** + 13 FF's within 15 mins.	95%		90%		100% (2/2)	↔					
LPI R6 FDR1 Special PDA (excl. vehicles) Risk Cat. 3: - 3 apps.** + 13 FF's within 20 mins.	95%		90%		100% (16/16)	↔					
LPI R7 FDR1 Vehicle & FDR3: - 1 app. or officer within 15 mins.	90%		85%		97% (1968/2024)	↔					
LPI R8 Special Service Calls: - 1 app. or officer within 15 mins.	95%		90%		97% (1668/1722)	↔					
LPI R9 Calls for assistance to Service Control answered within seven seconds	94%		89%		98%	↔					

Measure	Annual Target 2010/11	YTD 2009/10	YTD Target	Amber Target	YTD Actual	Progress	% change compared to last year	Benchmarking Data (April - Sept 2010)			
								Average	Avon Actual		
Community Fire Safety Activity											
Monitor No. of school visits conducted by station personnel			Monitor Only		363			n/a	n/a		
Monitor No. of off-station community events attended to deliver fire safety message			Monitor Only		599		n/a			n/a	n/a
Monitor No. of on-station community events			Monitor Only		404						
Monitor No. of groups visiting Community Safety Centres			Monitor Only		2762					Total HFSVs	
LPI CFS1 No. of HFSVs completed by Operational crews	14128		9472	8525	9349	↑				n/a	n/a
LPI CFS1 No. of HFSVs completed by Fitters	2300		1534	1381	2167	↑				% dwellings visited	
LPI CFS1 No. of HFSVs completed by Other Agencies	238		159	143	246	n/a				n/a	n/a
Resources and Value for Money											
LPI 8 % of undisputed invoices which were paid in 30 days		95.0%		93.0%	96.8%	↔	n/a	not available			
LPI IT1 % on in-scope calls to IT helpdesk resolved within 1 day		95.0%		93.0%	96.0%	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Resources and Value for Money - quarterly											
LPI ET1 % of waste recycled	60%		60%	55%	55%	↔		n/a	n/a		
LPI ET2 Energy consumption in kWh (electricity, gas and heating oil)	-5%	7,180,135	2,617,108	2,486,253	2,538,595	2432855	↔			n/a	n/a
NI185/LPI ET3 Carbon emissions	-10%	3569	1540	1463	1509	1375	↓				
LPI ET4 Water consumption (metered supply only)	-5%	13954	7907	7512	7670	7614	↑				
Health and Safety - quarterly											
LPI HS1 Work related injuries	-5%	106	64	53	60	43	↑	n/a	n/a		
LPI HS2 Work related illness	-5%	12	0	6	7	2	↔			n/a	n/a
LPI HS3 Manual handling injuries	-7.5%	32	14	16	18	12	↔				
LPI HS4 Work related driving incidents	-5%	65	72	33	38	76	↔				
People - Reported Monthly											
LPI 12i Working days/shifts lost to sickness whole-time uniformed staff	7.50		4.99	5.24	4.07	↓	n/a	2.88	3.01		
LPI 12ii Working days/shifts lost to sickness all staff	7.50		4.89	5.13	4.80	↑		3.23	3.62		
LPI HR4 % of RTW interviews completed within 15 days		90%		80%	94%	↔			n/a		
People - Reported Quarterly											
LPI 16ai No. of whole-time and retained duty system employees with a disability		9 or more people			10	↔	n/a	n/a	n/a		
LPI 16aia No. of control and non-uniformed employees with a disability		4 or more people			7	↑					
LPI HR1 Progression & retention of staff - to achieve parity (ethnicity and gender) by 2013		tbc			Not available	n/a					
LPI HR2 Recruitment of BME staff - to reflect local working population by 2013		8%			9.1%	↓					
LPI HR3 Recruitment of Female operational staff - 15% of recruits to be female		15.5%			16.7%	↑					
People - Equality and diversity											
LPI E&D1 Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework		Achieving			Achieving	↑	n/a	n/a			
LPI E&D2 The duty to promote equality		Monitor			Annual	n/a	n/a				

* indicative only as 2 IRS record incomplete

** includes both pumping and aerial appliances

*** compares an average for last three years against an average for preceding three years. Data reported by each UA has been amalgamated

Annual Target 09/10 = target set this year in % and/or number YTD Target = target figure for this year up to end of reporting month

Benchmarking data compares AF&RS's performance against 20 other FRs with whom we share data

YTD Actual = actual progress to end of reporting month, formatted green if meeting YTD target, red if not

Progress Column (Compared to Last Month): Green Arrow = Getting Better, Red Arrow = Getting Worse, Yellow Arrow = No Change

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Risk planning (including civil contingencies) update

SUMMARY

A paper to update Members on current developments and initiatives taking place in relation to risk planning and civil contingencies.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Members:

- a) note the content of this report
- b) receive further progress reports on the issues identified in due course; and
- c) endorse and support the work being developed in the risk planning arena within Avon Fire & Rescue Service.

CONTENTS**BACKGROUND**

Members will be aware that the Fire Authority has specific responsibilities for resilience under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and also as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. This report provides an update on the work of the Risk Planning Unit to ensure that the statutory expectations placed on the Authority are met and delivered, and focuses on the following areas:

- a) the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2008/11;
- b) FiRe Alert! notices and standard operating procedures;
- c) Bristol Airport CAA-licensing exercise – 29 Nov 10; and
- d) multi-agency partnerships and training.

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK 2008/11

Members will be aware that under the *Fire and Rescue National Framework 2008/11* the Fire Authority has specific responsibilities for developing resilience under the statutory framework for civil contingencies and as part of the department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG) Fire and Resilience programme.

The work of the Risk Planning Unit has general regard to the requirements of paras. 1.20/1.21 (which relate to the fire and rescue service's statutory resilience duties) and Chapter 2 ('Resilience') of the *Fire and Rescue National Framework 2008/11*.

FIRE ALERT! NOTICES AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Further to Section 4 of the *Risk Planning Update* tabled at the Authority's meeting held on 30 Mar 07, a list of the latest SOPs and FiRe Alert! Notices issued in the current reporting period is included at Annex 1.

A list of the Service Delivery memos and risk cards issued since the last meeting of the Authority is also included in Annex 1.

BRISTOL AIRPORT CAA-LICENSING EXERCISE – 29 NOV 10

Members will be aware that passenger airports are subject to licensing by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)¹ and that successful demonstrations of the multi-agency emergency arrangements form part of the criteria for continued licensing of such aerodromes.

Following a period of intense planning and preparation, the bi-annual licensing exercise – Ex. RAINFOREST-3 – was held at Bristol Airport on the evening of Monday, 29 Nov 10. This exercise coincided with the bitterly cold period of weather experienced by the whole of the country in late November and the whole of December, but the exercise was still a valuable opportunity to test a number of aspects of our integration with multi-agency response partners. As well as contributing to the overall multi-agency objectives of the exercise, Avon Fire & Rescue Service fully participated with a sub-set of our own objectives as follows:

- to validate the revised version of SOP B5: Bristol Airport (V5.0 – Nov 10);
- to exercise joint inner cordon working with the airport Rescue and Firefighting Service (RFFS) and ambulance Hazardous Area Response Team (HART);
- to exercise the use of Airwave interoperability talkgroups; and
- to exercise water relay operations using the high volume pump (HVP) from the southside emergency water supply (EWS) to supplement the airport major crash tenders on the incident ground.

¹ Civil Aviation Authority (2001) Chapter 8 – Rescue and Firefighting Service (RFFS). In *CAP168 Licensing of Aerodromes*. pp 8/1 – 8/64. London: CAA. ISBN 0-86039-808-0.

The exercise was well supported by Avon & Somerset Constabulary, Avon Fire & Rescue Service, Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust, North Somerset Council, the airport's commercial partners and the airport's internal departments and whilst some elements of the exercise had to be curtailed due to health and safety issues caused by the extreme cold (eg the wet HVP pumping drill from the EWS), a number of significant learning points were identified as issues to be taken forward.

Of particular note is the integration of the airport RFFS and the local authority fire and rescue service in an integrated incident command system (ICS). Both fire and rescue services operate within the structures laid down in the Fire and Rescue Manual for incident command², with the airport RFFS having additional guidance in its application to aerodrome operations in the form of CAA RFFS Information Paper IP-1 – *Incident Command (Issue 1, October 2008)*.³ The exercise provided the ideal opportunity to test out the interaction of the two fire and rescue services, and lessons learned on the night have been developed into significantly improved procedures which are now detailed within a revised version of SOP B5: Bristol Airport (and, where appropriate, the generic issues have also been included in SOP B6: Bristol Filton Airport).

The exercise was the subject of a multi-agency structured debrief facilitated by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) held at the airport on 14 Dec 10 and a full report is currently being drafted to be published before the end of the current financial year.

MULTI-AGENCY PARTNERSHIPS AND TRAINING

Multi-agency liaison continues to be maintained with a wide range of public, industrial, commercial and voluntary organisations in reviewing our response to various risks across the Authority's area. Since the last meeting of the Authority these meetings have included:

- a) a meeting with the resilience team in the Government Office for the South West (GOSW) regarding the National Risk Assessment and National Resilience Planning Assumptions (06 Jan 11);
- b) a regular quarterly meeting with the Head of Operations at Avon & Somerset Constabulary for the purposes of information and intelligence exchange (07 Jan 11);
- c) the first planning meeting for a national high volume pumping resilience exercise – Ex. AVONMOUTH – and associated off-site COMAH⁴ exercise at the Esso Holesmouth terminal (07 Jan 11);
- d) a routine quarterly Inter-Agency Liaison Officer (ILO) update meeting (11 Jan 11);

² HM Government (2008) *Fire and Rescue Manual – Volume 2 Fire Service Operations – Incident Command* (3rd Edition). Pp 1-148. Norwich: TSO. ISBN 978-0-11-341321-8.

³ available at <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1823&pagetype=90> [accessed 14 Dec 10]

⁴ Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 (as amended).

- e) a further meeting to discuss interoperability and the development of standard operating procedures with Great Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust's new Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) (12 Jan 11);
- f) a continuing professional development (CPD) input –‘a talk on the Ufton Nervet rail incident’ – arranged by the Wiltshire Group of the Mid-Western Branch of the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) (13 Jan 11);
- g) a regional consultation roadshow on the Civil Contingencies Act Enhancement Programme (CCAEP) hosted by the Cabinet Office and held in Exeter (17 Jan 11);
- h) a hospital fire and evacuation table-top exercise organised by NHS Bristol and NHS South Gloucestershire (26 Jan 11);
- i) a security controllers’ seminar hosted by Avon & Somerset Constabulary (09 Feb 11);
- j) a meeting of the Avon & Somerset Local Resilience Forum Risk Assessment Sub-Group (09 Feb 11); and
- k) planning meetings for the live exercise to test the Bristol site-specific CBRN⁵ plan – Ex. ARGON SHIELD – scheduled to take place on 02 Oct 11 (11 Feb 11).

IMPLICATIONS

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

Resilience is a key policy priority under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, the *Fire and Rescue Service National Framework 2008/11* and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (and associated Regulations, statutory and non-statutory guidance).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Authority has specific responsibilities for resilience under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and also as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk planning contributes towards contingency plans.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

⁵ chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Risk planning meets the Authority's obligation as an employer.

List of background documents:
None.
Report Contact(s): Name, Position, Extension no. Dave Salmon, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Risk Reduction (Ext 283#) Marc Anderson, Area Manager – Risk Reduction (Ext. 386#) Peter Davis, Head of Risk Planning (Ext. 378#)

ANNEX 1

(a) Standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued under the Quality System (between 09 Nov 10 and 10 Jan 11)

Ref.	Date	Title
F10a	15 Dec 10	Mobilisation of National Resilience resources (V2.1 – Dec 10)
D32	10 Jan 11	Military aid to the civil authorities (V4.0 – Jan 11)

(b) FiRe Alerts! issued under the Quality System (between 09 Nov 10 and 10 Jan 11)

Ref.	Date	Title
31/2010	16 Nov 10	Fire at Broughton House, Somerset Street, Redcliffe, Bristol – Asbestos procedures
32/2010	19 Nov 10	Bailey Stowaway 3.7 ladder – Velcro retaining strap
33/2010	06 Dec 10	High rise fire, 15 November 2010 – Broughton House, Somerset Street, Redcliffe, Bristol
34/2010	15 Dec 10	Internal response to terrorist threat levels
35/2010	16 Dec 10	Day of action against Vodafone and Arcadia Group shops

(c) Service Delivery memos issued under the Quality System 09 Nov 10 and 10 Jan 11)

Ref.	Date	Title
30/2010	03 Nov 10	Avon Fire & Rescue Service (AF&RS) Headquarters fire alarm / evacuation procedures
31/2010	29 Nov 10	Effective utilisation of operational staff above minimum crewing levels
32/2010	08 Dec 10	New risk card issue and associated indices
33/2010	10 Dec 10	ToughBook data entry on multi-pump stations
34/2010	16 Dec 10	Withdrawal of Appliance and Equipment manuals

(d) Risk cards issued under the Quality System 09 Nov 10 and 11 Jan 11)

Ref.	Date	Title
RC 4.12	09 Dec 10	Asbestos

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Community Safety update

SUMMARY

A paper to update Members on current developments and initiatives taking place in relation to Community Safety.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Members:

- a) note the content of this report
- b) receive further progress reports on the issues identified in due course; and
- c) endorse and support the work being developed in the Community Safety Unit within Avon Fire & Rescue Service.

CONTENTS

Community safety interventions and initiatives

Children and young people

Research has shown that children have the greatest capacity for absorption of knowledge and information between the ages of 0-8 yrs. After this age, the learning rate begins to slow. In order to reach their full potential for learning it is important that the introduction of awareness begins at a very early age.

Whilst work is being completed on Key stage 3 interventions it is the Youth Engagement Team is now focusing on two areas that have yet to be addressed.

Early Years

The Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) has funded the development of a creative box of interactive tools aimed at children between the ages of 2 – 5 and called "Elfs". This was developed by Cornwall Fire Service with the support of regional children and the young people's CFOA working group. The package is aimed to develop children's awareness, through play, of the fire service along with some basic safety messages.

Avon Fire & Rescue Service is looking to purchase the product and implement the delivery of this in nursery schools in the Avon area.

Key Stage 1

The Youth Engagement Team are currently creating a Key Stage 1 education tool that will be delivered to children aged 6/7. It is hoped that the full implementation of this programme will take place in schools starting in September 2011.

Safeguarding

Investigations are underway for the procurement of an e-learning package to ensure that all personnel in Avon Fire & Rescue Service has a basic awareness of Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

Road Safety

Avon Fire and Rescue Service (AFRS) were invited to participate and contribute to Avon and Somerset Police's drink drive campaign 'Operation Tonic', leading up to and during the Christmas period.

In South Gloucestershire, the Police led the campaign and identified specific areas in South Gloucestershire where the campaign would be concentrated. Drink Driving, Speeding, Non-Seatbelt use, and Mobile Phone use, were the main traffic offences Police would stop drivers for.

Any driver caught not wearing a seatbelt, speeding, using a mobile phone, were invited to participate in short presentation taken from the fire services 'RoadSkills' education programme on the Command Unit. All drivers who volunteered to have the presentation did not then have to:

- a) produce their documents to a Police station, or
- b) pay the mandatory fine, or be awarded points on their driving licence

The 'RoadSkills' presentations chosen highlighted to the driver(s) the main causations of a road traffic collision which are recognised as contributing to people being seriously injured or killed on roads in South Gloucestershire attended by the emergency services.

In B&NES the campaign was a multi-agency event with the Police, Ambulance Service, Casualty Union and B&NES Community Safety Team. A road traffic collision simulation involving two cars took place in Bath City centre. It was treated as a real event with the emergency services arriving on blue lights with sirens. This in turn led to a large crowd gathering to watch. Leaflets were given to people in the crowd warning of the dangers of drink driving. A commentary was delivered to the crowd of the events leading up to the incident and then detailing the roles of each emergency service.

Safety in the Home – Escape Challenge

On Monday 20 December fire crews together with community safety team filled an empty property in Bristol with synthetic smoke and challenged a number of local journalists to find their way out of the property without any assistance. The second part of the exercise saw a repeat of the scenario, but this time a smoke detector activated long before the house filled with smoke meaning those inside could escape easily. Members from the Evening Post, Jack FM and BBC's Points West all took part in the challenge. The idea was to highlight to members of the community just what they could face if a fire breaks out in their home in the middle of the night. This event was a fantastic success and was broadcasted on the Points West 6 o'clock News and Jack FM radio show, as well as a large spread article in the Evening post.

Partnerships

We have new partnership agreements with the following organisations and with the following aims:

St Monica's Trust.

Aim: To reduce the number of domestic fires and subsequent deaths and injuries, in properties occupied by a person or persons with a physical disability or long term physical health problem.

Bath Islamic Society.

Aim: To reduce risk of fire and fire related deaths and injures to members of the Muslim community in and around the Bath area through a good working relationship, community fire safety interventions and to foster a better understanding of the Islamic faith amongst AFRS staff.

South Gloucestershire Care and Repair

Aim: To increase awareness and uptake of working smoke alarms amongst vulnerable homeowners over 60, and disabled people of any age in South Gloucestershire

North Somerset Carers Fire Safety Partnership

Aim: To reduce risk of fire, fire related deaths and injuries to people who receive caring services in their own home throughout North Somerset.

Bristol Outreach Library Service

Aim: To reduce the number of domestic fires and subsequent deaths and injuries, in properties occupied by elderly and housebound people in the Bristol area.

North Somerset Domestic Violence Fire Safety Partnership

Aim: Working together to provide a cohesive efficient Fire Safety service to reduce risk of injury from fire for victims of domestic abuse in North Somerset.

BACKGROUND

Members will be aware that community safety is a key element of our prevention work as part of the Integrated Risk Management Plan.

IMPLICATIONS

The activities detailed above demonstrate our increasing involvement in partner activities and the AFRS determination to place community safety at the top of our and our Partners' agendas.

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

Reducing community risk and contributing to the wider community well-being agenda.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Crime & Disorder Act 1988 Part I Chapter I (5), (6) outlines the arrangements for Authorities responsible for the formulation and implementation of Crime and Disorder (anti-social behaviour) strategies.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Chapter1, (s108) provides that, as a partner authority, we have due regard to local improvement targets specified in the Local Area Agreements.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Improving outcomes for people who disproportionately experience fire: the elderly, people with limited mobility, people from BME backgrounds, lone parent homes, youth inclusion.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Reducing the likelihood of the Service to be exposed to loss of life in the community or within the workforce. Time and resource directed in a more intelligence-led way will reduce risk in the community and potentially result in efficiency savings.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Fewer incidents have the potential to reduce CO2 emissions due to fewer movements of vehicles and less fire generated emissions.

CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

Supporting the CDR Anti-Social Behaviour agenda and National Indicators where selected by LSP's.

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS (state if none)

Increased levels of Health and Safety for Firefighters due to mitigated community risks. Partnership activities to be risk assessed prior to commencement.

List of background documents:
Report Contact(s): ACFO Dave Salmon, Director of Risk Reduction, Ext 204. T/GM Rich Davis, Acting Head of Community Safety, Ext 379.

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Equality and Diversity Framework and Interventions

SUMMARY

This report highlights the work of the Equality & Diversity Unit within the context of the Equality Act 2010, Communities and Local Government (CLG) Fire and Rescue Service, Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008 – 2018, and the FRS Equality Framework.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- i) To note the ongoing work of the Equality and Diversity Unit particularly in the context of the FRS Equality Framework.
- ii) To oversee compliance with AFRS' Single Equality Scheme.

BACKGROUND

The Fire and Rescue Service Equality Framework (FRS EF) was launched in December 2009. It is a performance framework designed to assess performance in 5 areas:

- Leadership and promoting inclusion
- Accountability
- Effective service delivery and community engagement
- Employment and training
- Evaluating and sharing good practice.

Performance is benchmarked against three distinct levels: developing, achieving and excellent. The FRS EF is intended to be outcome focused rather than process-driven. AFRS is currently at the “achieving” level but work is in place to ensure we can reach “excellent” level by December 2012 status during 2010/11.

The CLG Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008-2018 consolidates the Government commitment to ensuring Fire and Rescue Services make fairness and inclusion fundamental elements of core business. The Strategy requires action in five priority areas linked to the Core Values and to the Fire & Rescue Service Equality Framework. The Coalition Government announced in May 2010 that the CLG will cease to monitor compliance with the Strategy and individual FRS should be accountable for work in this area. Later that month, the Avon Fire Authority affirmed that this work should continue to be a priority.

The Equality Act received Royal Assent in April 2010. It aimed to strengthen existing legal protection, advance equality and harmonise the law. It has

- Introduced a new Equality Duty for the Public Sector, bringing together the three existing Duties (race, gender and disability) and extend them to include gender reassignment, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief;
- From 2011, introduced a new duty to consider socio-economic disadvantage;
- Outlawed discrimination in the provision of goods and services;
- Required public bodies to report on important inequalities such as gender pay, ethnic minority employment and disability employment;
- Widened the scope of positive action;
- Increased the powers of Employment Tribunals.

The Conservative-Liberal Democratic Government has carried out a consultation exercise on the specific duties on public bodies arising from the Equality Duty. Government ministers have stated they intend to table the secondary legislation necessary to enact most of the provisions of the legislation with the exception of those that relate to the socio-economic duty and equal pay.

Work Update:

Single Equality Scheme 2010-13: Progress on completing many of the targets is underway. 6 of the 39 targets are due for completion by January 2011. 2 have been completed. 2 targets relating to the IRMP and community safety strategies have been placed on hold pending a final decision on 2011\12 budgets. Work is ongoing on the remaining two targets relating to developing support mechanisms for women seeking employment as RDS firefighters and developing a policy on transgender equality.

Leadership development for Fire Authority Members: On the 17th December, the team facilitated a third development day relating to how equality and diversity is central to promoting community safety. We received positive feedback from elected members involved in this development. Ten elected members have now

experienced this development. Further development will be arranged after local elections.

Recruitment Targets: Although recruitment has been significantly reduced this financial year, we remain on target for the proportion of recruits who are women and from BME backgrounds.

IMPLICATIONS

Equality and Diversity Strategy:

The Audit Commission will assess Fire & Rescue Authorities' performance in implementing the requirements of the Strategy through the Fire and Rescue Service performance assessment framework. CLG will review progress on equality and diversity by each FRA annually, including against workforce diversity targets. The review will be based on reports submitted by AFRS, as well as the annual assessment report of the Audit Commission. Evidence on progress of FRS' will be published annually by the CLG.

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

Reducing the impact of fire and other risks on all of the communities we serve by effective prevention, protection and emergency response.

Contributing to National Indicator 49 and 141, and progress towards FRS Equality Framework.

Equalities PSA 15 addressing disadvantages that individuals experience because of the gender, race, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No new financial commitments have been made since the previous CFA Report

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Equality Duty created by Equality Act.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

High in keeping with Corporate priorities

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Review of Equality and Diversity structure to ensure work is progressed and sustainable.

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None

List of background documents:
Communities and Local Government Equality and Diversity Strategy 2008 – 2018 Fire & Rescue Service Equality Framework AFRS Single Equality Scheme 2010-2013
Report Contact(s): Dave Salmon, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Risk Reduction (Ext 234#) Tim Roberts, Head of Equality and Diversity (Ext 249#)

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Sickness Absence Update – as at 30 November 2010

SUMMARY

The Service ended the financial year 2009/10 on 7.53 shifts lost (against a target of 8.5). As a percentage, this figure means the Service lost approximately 3.5% of total shifts in 09/10* due to sickness. The Service target for 2010/11 is 7.5 days/shifts lost to sickness. This report updates the Fire Authority with sickness absence data up to 30 November 2010.

Our year to date target (as at November 2010) for working days/shifts lost to sickness all staff is 4.89 and our performance was better with 4.80 shifts lost. As a percentage, this figure means the Service has lost approximately 3.5% of total shifts so far this financial year * due to sickness. The Service has made improvements in its overall sickness levels, and in particular the number of staff on long term sick, however short term sickness remains subject to seasonal spikes.

The Return to Work Interview completion rates remain positive with 94% completed against a target of 90% of all interviews to be completed within 15 days of the return date. In November 32 out of 33 interviews were completed on target.

Sickness*Wholetime uniformed*

The overall trend is a continued reduction in total sickness levels, in particular long term sickness. There has been an increase in shifts lost to long term sickness (duty and non duty) in November, however the shifts lost were attributable to just 13 people (with a spate of musculo-skeletal ailments, operations and domestic stress) and one person with a due to service injury.

Shifts lost to short term sickness fell in November, after the high in October. The majority of shifts lost were attributable to musculo-skeletal ailments, colds, flu, gastro-intestinal sickness and operations.

* This percentage is approximate and calculates the shifts lost through sickness against total shifts in the relevant period. The total shifts figure does not exclude shifts where staff are unavailable due to training, leave etc.

Support

As with wholetime uniformed staff the overall trend is a reduction in sickness levels, in particular long term sickness. The shifts lost to long term sick in November relate to just six staff members (with fractures and operations) who have all now returned to work. Short term sickness also decreased after the October high (the levels of short term sickness in November 10 were almost a third of the November 09 levels) and the majority of shifts lost were due to colds and respiratory infections. However, while there has been more progress on support staff short term sickness, it also remains subject to seasonal peaks.

Sickness management figures

Progress in reducing long term sickness is mainly attributable to HR led improvements to the pay review process (applying pay reductions as per Green and Grey book terms and conditions) and HR work with staff, Occupational Health, managers and treating physicians to facilitate a return to work as soon as possible to full, or risk assessed, modified duties. As a result, as at 17 January 2011, only 8 staff were on long term sick (6 operational) and 15 staff (14 operational) who would otherwise be on long term sick due to their medical or fitness issues, are at work on modified duties. HR also continues to work with these modified duties staff to ensure they continue to progress back to normal duties.

With reference to short term sickness, when the amount of sickness absence in a 12 month period reaches a trigger (called a Bradford score) employees are managed through the attendance management process. This involves a series of review meetings, targets set for a reduction in sickness absence and, if there is a failure to improve, formal warnings. HR analyses the data to identify staff with frequent short sickness absence and works with the staff, managers and Occupational Health to review and improve their attendance and/or issue warnings. As at 17 January 2011, there are 34 members of staff under review for their frequent, short term sickness levels (27 operational). This number is expected to rise to 40 in February. Patterns of concern are sickness before and/or after leave; sickness occurring when time off has been refused and sickness at the same time each year (school holidays) which can be a contributory factor to annual highs in March/April, July/August, October and December.

All this HR led work is aimed at producing savings for the Authority (in sick pay and detached duties cover) and maintaining crewing levels of frontline pumps

Strategy for 2010/11

* This percentage is approximate and calculates the shifts lost through sickness against total shifts in the relevant period. The total shifts figure does not exclude shifts where staff are unavailable due to training, leave etc.

The Service remains focused on sustaining the reduction in long term absence and reducing the level of short term, intermittent absence. Human Resources are analysing short term sickness data (to identify any underlying causes for the spikes which occur in certain months each year) and revising processes and policies to further support managers and Occupational Health to take prompt and appropriate action to prevent short term sickness absence and/or aid recovery and return to work.

The medical intervention fund and counselling support services (managed by Human Resources) also provide support to staff with musculo-skeletal or mental health problems as it is proven that good quality, prompt intervention will support the employee to make a full recovery in a shorter period of time. These provisions, as well as the resources available in terms of HR practitioners will inevitably come under strain in the coming months. However, policies are now in place to assist managers in supporting staff back to work after illness.

Return to Work Interviews (RTWI)

The improvement on RTW interviews has been sustained. The target is for 90% of interviews to be completed within 15 days of the return date. The actual performance is 94%.

We report RTWI performance on Station Wall charts which enables stations to track their performance on a monthly basis and also remind managers when RTWIs are required. These actions are having a positive effect.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the report is noted and that Members continue to receive progress reports until further notice.

BACKGROUND

Following unsatisfactory attendance levels recorded in years 2003/04 and 2004/05, Members agreed to receive updates on the progress made to improve these levels. This report provides the position as at 30 November 2010.

IMPLICATIONS

Achieving maximum staff attendance increases productivity and impacts on all areas of the Authority's role.

CONTRIBUTION TO KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

* This percentage is approximate and calculates the shifts lost through sickness against total shifts in the relevant period. The total shifts figure does not exclude shifts where staff are unavailable due to training, leave etc.

Managing absence remains a key priority in all main policy documents.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Absence has a significant cost to all employers - thus Attendance Management policies are a key part of achieving financial efficiencies.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Employment law is continuously evolving through the decisions of Employment Tribunals and through the publication of key documents such as the Disability Discrimination Act. Such decisions influence changes to our own policies and approaches.

DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

We remain committed to assisting those with disabilities to enjoy a full working life. We also recognise that particular illnesses and medical conditions can adversely affect particular groups.

CORPORATE RISK ASSESSMENT

Attendance Management remains one of the top six corporate risks and, as such, has a full intervention programme in place.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

HEALTH & SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

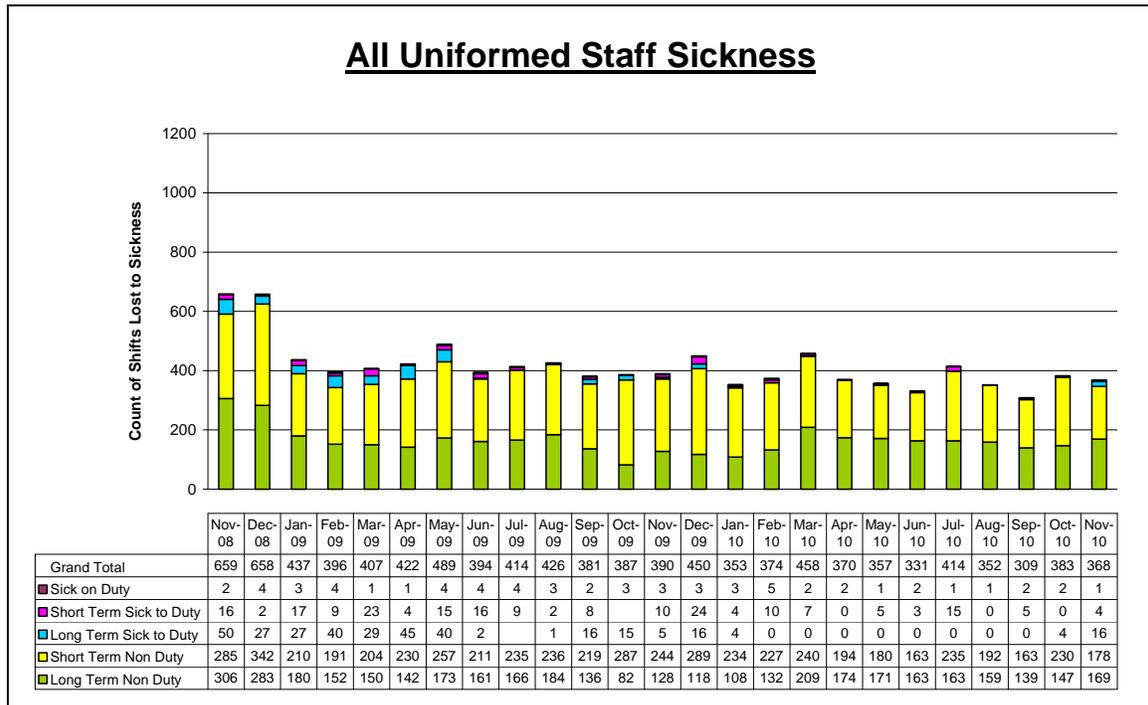
A safe and supportive workplace will assist in maximising attendance and thus is part of the intervention programme mentioned above.

List of background documents:
The attached graphs detail the shifts lost due to sickness absence, for whole-time uniformed and support staff, separated by month and duration of absence up to and including 30 November 2010.
Report Contact(s): Maggie Harte, Director of Human Resources and People Development (ext 234)

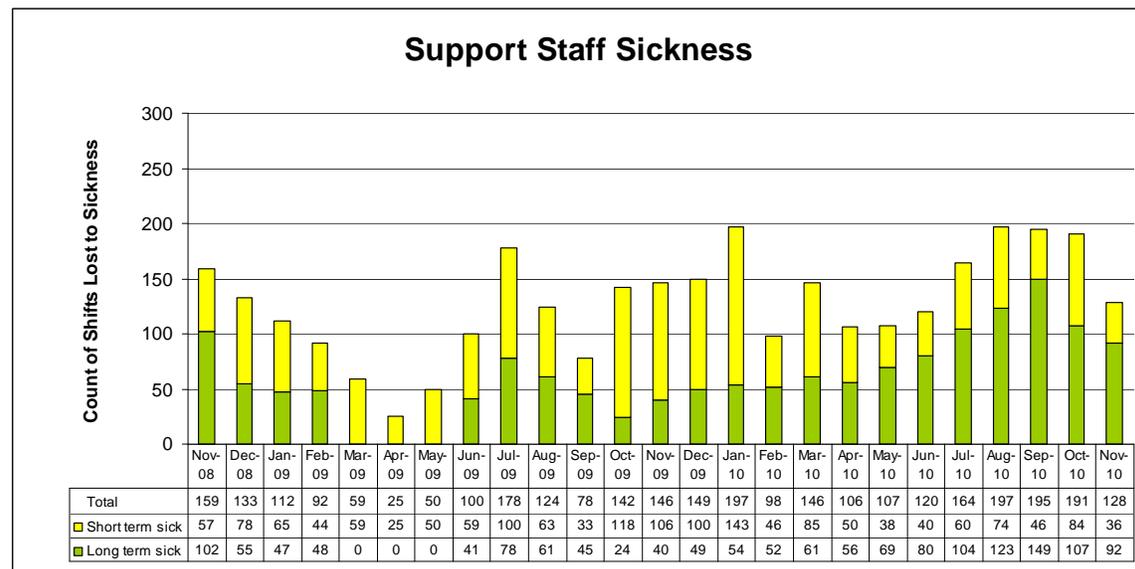
* This percentage is approximate and calculates the shifts lost through sickness against total shifts in the relevant period. The total shifts figure does not exclude shifts where staff are unavailable due to training, leave etc.

Graphs

The total shifts lost in November 2010 to uniformed sickness, represents 3% of the total shifts that month *.



The total shifts lost in November 2010 to support staff sickness, represents 3% of the total shifts that month *.



* This percentage is approximate and calculates the shifts lost through sickness against total shifts in the relevant period. The total shifts figure does not exclude shifts where staff are unavailable due to training, leave etc.

AVON FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING:	AVON FIRE AUTHORITY
MEETING DATE:	11 February 2011
REPORT OF:	Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
SUBJECT:	Fires and Other Incidents: November and December 2010

SUMMARY

To report on fires and other significant incidents that occurred during the months of November and December 2010.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

BACKGROUND

Details of fires and other significant incidents are attached as an Appendix.

IMPLICATIONS

Legislation confers powers and obligations. This report is provided for information.

List of background documents: None
Report Contact(s): Kevin Pearson, Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive, Ext 233#

1. Incidents of note in November

Barn fire attracts multiple calls

Wednesday 3 November

17.07 Gorse Lane, Cold Ashton, near Bath

Multiple calls were received by the AF&RS Control Room after a barn caught fire on the edge of Bath.

When firefighters arrived on the scene they found the open-sided barn measuring 60 metres by 30 metres and full of hay well alight.

As the flames and smoke could be seen for miles many motorists travelling on the A46 dialled 999.

Crews remained on the scene overnight and returned again the next morning to reinspect the incident.

Man rescued after four-car RTC

Wednesday 3 November

17.16 Stoke Lane, Stapleton, Bristol

A man in his 30s has been cut from his car after a collision involving four vehicles.

When crews arrived they found a couple in their 30s and two youths already out of their vehicles.

A female, who had been in a third car, was given assistance by firefighters as she was suffering from breathing difficulties. However, she was not taken to hospital.

The man, who was trapped in a Vauxhall Astra, was complaining of neck pains, so firefighters quickly stabilised the vehicle and used hydraulic cutting equipment to remove the back seats of the car.

Working alongside paramedics crews then assisted the man on to a spinal board and he was lifted from the car via the hatchback.

He was taken to hospital but his injuries are not thought to be life-threatening.

Woman cut free from car

Wednesday 3 November

19.55 Burrington Combe, Blagdon

Firefighters have cut a woman free from her car following a road traffic collision involving two vehicles.

On arrival firefighters found two women in their 40s trapped in a Nissan Micra car. One was assisted from the vehicle and appeared to be unharmed.

The second woman was suffering from neck injuries, so firefighters used hydraulic cutting equipment to remove the roof. They then worked alongside paramedics to assist the woman on to a spinal board and she was taken to hospital. Her injuries are not thought to be life-threatening.

Woman rescued from under HGV

Thursday 4 November

10.12 A37 Wells Road at the junction with Broadwalk, Knowle, Bristol

Firefighters have assisted with the rescued of an elderly woman from underneath a heavy goods vehicle.

When crews arrived they quickly jacked up the HGV and inflated air bags to support the vehicle. This allowed paramedics access to the woman in order to treat her. She was taken to hospital by ambulance in a stable but life-threatening condition.

Diwali celebration ends in disaster

Friday 5 November

10.19 Winchester Road, Brislington, Bristol

A flat has been left damaged by fire after a candle left burning to celebrate the Hindu Festival of Lights, Diwali, caught fire.

Firefighters could see smoke coming from the ground floor flat when they arrived on the scene.

Two firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the flat and tackled the fire in the living room.

It appears the fire started accidentally after the woman in her 20s who lives in the flat lit the candle to celebrate Diwali and then left the premises. The candle had been placed on a bookshelf and nearby books caught light.

Fortunately no one was inside at the time of the fire and no one was hurt. The flat was left damaged by fire and smoke.

Cow rescued from swimming pool

Wednesday 10 November

17.07 Stock Lane, Langford

A cow has been rescued by firefighters after taking a night-time dip in a swimming pool.

Crews were called to the garden of a house in the grounds of Bristol University's veterinary school. On arrival they found 13 cows in the garden with one animal in the swimming pool.

It appears the cow had stepped on to the green tarpaulin cover and fallen into the water.

Crews quickly set to work pumping water from the pool. A local farmer then used a tractor to put some straw bails into the pool, which crews then made into a set of steps at the side.

A line was secured around the cow and it was assisted up the steps to safety.

It's thought the cow had been in the water for about two hours and was suffering from mild hypothermia. It was treated at the scene by a vet.

Residents evacuated after flat fire

Monday 15 November

21.49 Broughton House, Somerset Street, Redcliffe, Bristol

Residents from a number of flats had to be evacuated from their homes after fire broke out in a flat on the eighth floor of a 12 storey building.

Fire Control received a number of 999 calls to the fire which badly damaged the flat and caused damage to the flat above and the exterior of the building.

Crews from Temple and Bedminster were the first mobilised to the scene and on arrival they found flames and thick black smoke coming from the windows of the flat.

With smoke logging on a number of floors and calls to Control from occupants concerned about the smoke, the call was made to 'Make Pumps 6' and later to 'Make Pumps 8' as firefighters were sent into the building to conduct a thorough search of a number of floors, ensuring that all occupants could get out to safety.

A total of 10 firefighters wearing breathing apparatus and two jets were used during the course of firefighting operations to ensure the fire was contained to the flat. Police and ambulance crews, as well as staff from Bristol City Council and the Red Cross Victim Support Unit, were also on the scene during the incident.

When fire crews and police were satisfied that the building was safe, the majority of residents were allowed to return to their homes. Fortunately no one was injured as a result of the fire.

Unattended candles spark fire

Saturday 20 November

22.08 Gullimore Gardens, Hartcliffe, Bristol

A couple had a lucky escape after candles left burning unattended in a bedroom fell down behind a bed.

Two firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the house and tackled the fire on the first floor using a high pressure hose reel.

The couple, who were in their 30s, were already out of the house and unhurt, however the man was suffering from smoke inhalation and was given oxygen therapy by ambulance crews. He did not go to hospital.

The fire started accidentally and caused damage to a bed and bedside table.

2. Incidents of note in December

Woman dies in house fire

Sunday 5 December

19.37 Great Hayles Road, Hengrove, Bristol

A woman has sadly died during a fire at her home.

When crews arrived on the scene they found a fire in the living room of the property. The woman was pronounced dead at the scene along with two cats.

Man rescued after 40ft fall

Monday 6 December

07.09 St Mary on the Quay, Colston Street, Bristol

A man in his 20s has been rescued by firefighters after he fell 40ft into a small void behind several buildings.

When crews arrived they found the man with leg and back injuries and unable to get out of the gap, which was about 3ft wide.

The only access available to the void was through the window of an adjoining property. Crews removed the window and working alongside paramedics and a doctor they assisted the man on to a stretcher. He was then lifted through the window and taken to hospital.

Crews tackle restaurant fire

Monday 6 December

18.15 Jamie's Italian, Milsom Place, Bath

Firefighters have been called to tackle a small fire in the kitchen of Jamie's Italian restaurant.

On arrival crews found approximately 150 diners already evacuated from the premises, along with staff.

Four firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the restaurant and tackled the fire in a grill using three Co2 extinguishers. A positive pressure ventilation fan was used to clear the smoke.

The kitchen was only slightly affected by the smoke and after approximately an hour the restaurant reopened.

Fortunately no one was hurt.

Firefighters attend two kitchen fires

Tuesday 14 December

17.11 Maple Close, Cadbury Heath, Bristol and 22.36 Redwick Close Lawrence Weston, Bristol

Firefighters have dealt with two kitchen fires - both started after cooking was left unattended.

Crews from Kingswood and Brislington were first called to Cadbury Heath in response to a chip pan fire. The pan had been left on the hob when the fire broke out. The two occupants of the house were alerted to the fire by a smoke alarm which allowed them to safely leave the house and call 999.

On arrival firefighters used a fire blanket to extinguish the fire which caused damage to the extractor unit and smoke damage to the kitchen.

Later in the evening firefighters from Southmead and Avonmouth were called to a second kitchen fire in Lawrence Weston.

The occupier of that flat had also left a pan of hot oil unattended on a stove which caught fire. Two firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the property and used a CO2 extinguisher.

The male occupant of the flat was treated by paramedics at the scene for the effects of smoke inhalation.

Crews tackle roof fire in empty house

Monday 20 December

20.04 Romney Avenue, Lockleaze, Bristol

Three people were evacuated from their house after the property next door caught fire.

When firefighters arrived on the scene they found a severe blaze on the first floor and in the roof of the property, which had been unoccupied at the time.

Eight firefighters wearing breathing apparatus entered the premises and tackled the fire using three high pressure hose reels and one 45mm jet. The turntable ladder from Temple Fire Station was used to check the roof of the property and crews used a thermal imaging camera to check for hotspots once the fire was out.

An investigation into the cause of the fire found it started deliberately and the incident was then handed over to police.

Man rescued from water by firefighters

Friday 24 December

19.35 Clarence Road, Redcliffe, Bristol

A 38 year old man has been rescued from the water by firefighters.

When crews arrived on the scene they found the man submerged and unable to get out.

Using the level one water rescue equipment, crews were able to throw a line to the man, who was conscious and breathing, and assist him to safety.

He was then taken to hospital by ambulance.