



# Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service



**Precept – Budget Information 2017/18**

***Foreword by Councillor David McVicar,  
Chair of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority and  
Paul Fuller CBE QFSM, Chief Fire Officer.***

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service is a well governed and well led organisation that delivers first class prevention, protection and response activities through our highly trained and well equipped personnel. We tailored our services to the risks faced by communities at local, regional and national levels and 2017 will see us directly engage with and supporting people in high risk groups to reduce their risks.

Collaboration with other Blue Light services is at the heart of improving our protection of our communities. Two examples of this are our undertaking a “First Responder” role in partnership with East of England Ambulance Service and working with Bedfordshire Police in searching for and locating missing vulnerable people.

We are working with the Police to locate their officers and Police Community Support Officers at Community Fire Stations in Ampthill, Bedford and Leighton Buzzard to improve local response times.

Collaboration between BFRS and the Ambulance service has led to paramedics being base at Luton, Sandy, Shefford and Stopsley Community Fire Stations to enable them to responder quicker to local incidents.

In the coming year we will explore commercial partnerships which could generate resources for investment in our delivery of our Community Risk Management Strategy.

Last year, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service attended almost 6,000 emergency incidents including: 413 dwelling fires; 403 road traffic collisions; 133 flooding incidents; and 1,168 special incidents (which includes animal rescues, aircraft, and railway incidents).

Our fire fighters assisted people from fires on **94** occasions and rescued **15 people**. They also extricated **103 casualties** from road traffic collisions.

Our expanded Safe and Well Visits include checking for trip and slip hazards and other home safety risks as well as providing fire safety advice to our communities’ most vulnerable people.

With the majority of deaths in the county caused by road traffic collisions we are increasing our road safety education campaigns and working

closely with children and adults of all ages, abilities and cultures to improve road risk awareness wherever possible.

In addition, each year our operational crews and specialist fire safety inspection officers provide guidance to owners and occupiers of commercial and public buildings, to help them fulfil their legal fire safety responsibilities.

After receiving almost 1,000 responses to our consultation in January 2017 the Fire and Rescue Authority has increased its Band D Council Tax requirement for 2017/18 by just 3.5 pence per week.

Alongside a programme of efficiency savings, this small increase will enable us to continue to meet the needs of our communities while at the same time delivering the necessary reductions in overall costs and continuing to give you excellent value for money.



**Councillor David McVicar, Chair of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

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**Paul M Fuller CBE QFSM MSc BSc FIFire MinstLM  
Chief Fire Officer, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul M Fuller'.

## Revenue Budget

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Our revenue budget sets out the money necessary for the day to day running of the Service. Through our continuing programme of efficiency savings we have managed to minimise the increase in our revenue budget requirement for this year compared to last year. Our efficiency measures have allowed us to continue with key service improvements whilst restricting the increase in this year's Council Tax to 1.99% (equivalent to an increase of 3.5 pence per week for a Band D household).

This has been achieved despite the impact of a 12.5% reduction in total Government income to the Authority (compared to 2016/17) totalling £1.034m, and the effect of inflation which is forecast to increase our costs this year by £0.332m.

## Capital Budget

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Our capital programme highlights spending on assets such as our fire stations and fire engines. Each year the Authority draws up a rolling four year programme of capital projects. The capital projects for this year total £1.278m and these are being funded by contributions from the revenue budget.

Projects for this year include:

- Investment in our vehicle fleet, to maintain effective, economic and efficient fire engines and appliances;
- Investment in IT;
- Investment in the modernisation of our buildings;
- Investing in vital operational equipment;

## Efficiency Savings

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An efficiency saving occurs when the cost of an activity is reduced but its quality and effectiveness remains the same or improves. The Fire and Rescue Authority continues to focus on finding new ways to deliver the highest quality services at lowest possible cost.

In 2015, the Government announced the revenue support grant funding for the Service over the four years from 2016/17 to 2019/20. This settlement equates to a 55% funding reduction from 2015/16 funding levels.

Total achieved and planned savings and efficiencies between 2010/11 and 2016/17 total £4.8m, with a further savings and efficiencies of £1.4m by 2020/21

Some of the key areas where the Authority is achieving its planned efficiency savings include:

- Savings in managerial and support staff costs through shared service arrangements, organisational restructure and improvements to working systems;
- Savings in firefighter crewing arrangements;
- Savings to the public through collaborative work;
- Savings in the Service Vehicle Replacement Programme through improved asset management and maintenance.

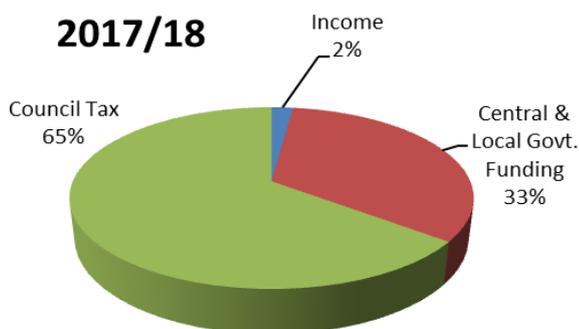
## **Audit Judgement on Value for Money**

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In the 2016 Annual External Audit Letter from Ernst & Young, the Fire and Rescue Authority was awarded an 'unqualified conclusion', meaning that we were judged to have satisfactory arrangements in place in all areas.

# Financial Charts

## Where the money comes from 2017/18



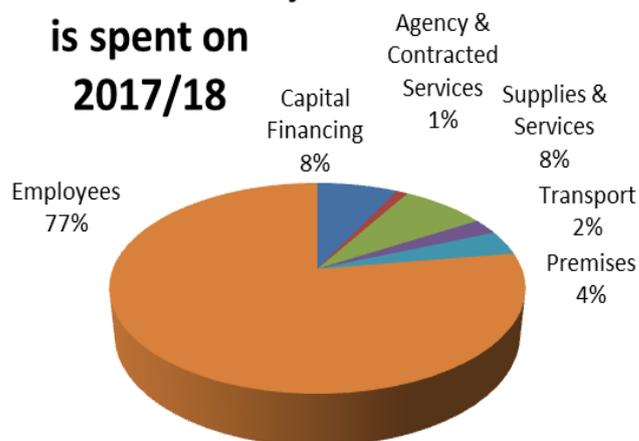
Where does the money comes from:

	2017/18	2016/17
	(£m)	(£m)
<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>29.5</b>
Income	-0.6	-0.6
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>28.9</b>
Central and Local Government Funding	9.8	10.7
Council Tax	18.9	18.2
	<b>28.7</b>	<b>28.9</b>

What the money is spent on:

	2017/18	2016/17
	(£m)	(£m)
Employees	22.7	22.4
Premises	1.1	1.0
Transport	0.7	0.7
Supplies and Services	2.3	2.4
Agency and Contracted Services	0.3	0.4
Capital Financing	2.2	2.2
	<b>29.3</b>	<b>29.1</b>
<b>Reserves Funding</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.02</b>
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>28.9</b>

## What the money is spent on 2017/18



**The Band D Council Tax for 2017/18 will be £92.81**

The Fire and Rescue Authority has agreed a budget requirement of £28.716 million for 2017/18



# Bedfordshire

## Fire and Rescue Service

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