



# Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service



**Precept – Budget Information 2014/15**

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

In 2014/15, the Fire and Rescue Authority aims to continue to provide an excellent response service to fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies, whilst also striving to reduce the number and severity of such incidents.

We have prepared a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), which shows how the Fire and Rescue Authority will achieve this, by understanding community risks, highlighting how we respond to the full range of emergencies we are called to, and how our prevention and protection activities are targeted to reduce the risks facing our communities.

Last year, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service attended around 5,250 emergency incidents including: 1,834 house fires; 360 road traffic collisions; 155 flooding incidents; and 1,174 special incidents which includes animal rescues, aircraft, and railway incidents.

Our fire fighters rescued **60 people from fires** and extricated **98 from road traffic collisions**, a further **68 were extricated** or released from other special service incidents.

Our wide range of prevention activities includes: providing free home fire safety checks and smoke detectors; road safety and home safety education campaigns; and working closely with children and adults of all ages, abilities and cultures.

Operational crews and specialist fire safety inspecting officers provide guidance to owners and occupiers of commercial and

public buildings, to help them fulfil their legal fire safety responsibilities.

In common with all public services, the current economic downturn will require us to make some difficult decisions to achieve significant savings over this and future years. We are confident that our careful planning will help us meet those challenges, whilst maintaining high quality services.

For 2014/15, the Fire and Rescue Authority has increased its Band D Council Tax requirement by about 3 pence per week.

In conjunction with our programme of efficiency savings, this small increase will help ensure we can continue to meet the needs of our communities whilst delivering the necessary reductions in overall costs. This means your Fire and Rescue Service is provided for a Council Tax amount of just 24 pence per day for a Band D household, which we believe continues to represent excellent value for money.



**Councillor or David McVicar  
Chairman, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue  
Authority**

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

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## 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 on-going 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 2% (equivalent to an increase of just 3 pence per week for a Band D household).

This has been achieved despite the impact of a 7.2% reduction in Government grant (compared to 2013/14) totalling £0.942M, and the effect of inflation which has increased our costs this year by £0.438M.

## 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 totals £2.044M and these are being funded from Government grants and contributions from the revenue budget.

Projects for this year include:

- Investment in our vehicle fleet, to maintain effective, economic and efficient appliances;
- Investment in IT;
- Investment in the modernisation of our buildings;
- Investing in community and education initiatives such as defibrillators, the Home Safety Centre at Luton and a community information system.

## 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 2010, the Government announced reductions in central grant funding for fire and rescue authorities over the four years 2011/12 to 2014/15 that equate to a 25% reduction, nationally, on 2010/11 levels. In order to meet the local impact of this whilst continuing to improve services and minimise Council Tax rises, the Fire and Rescue Authority has developed a comprehensive efficiency savings plan.

Total achieved and planned savings and efficiencies between 2010/11 and 2015/16 total **£4.3M**, with further savings and efficiencies of **£1.9M** by 2017/18.

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 temporary appointments through improved vacancy management;
- Savings in property leasing costs through the creation of additional office capacity at other sites;
- Savings in recruitment costs through streamlining of selection processes;

- Savings in fire safety advertising and promotion costs through improved targeting of campaigns at higher risk groups.
- Savings in the Service Vehicle Replacement Programme through improved asset management and maintenance.

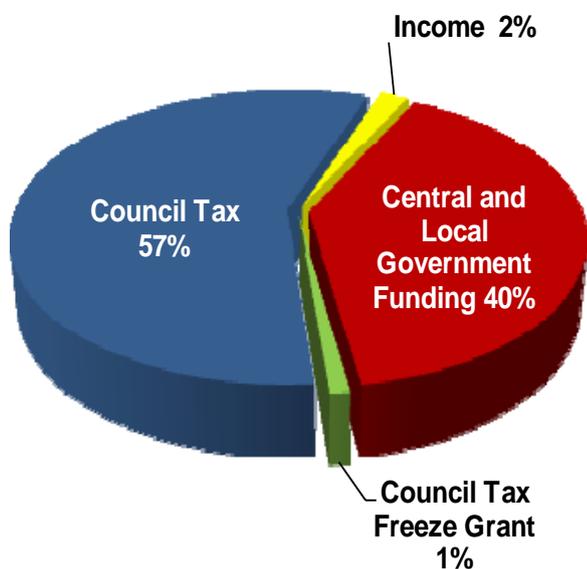
## Audit Judgement on Value for Money

In the 2013 Annual Audit Letter from the Audit Commission, 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

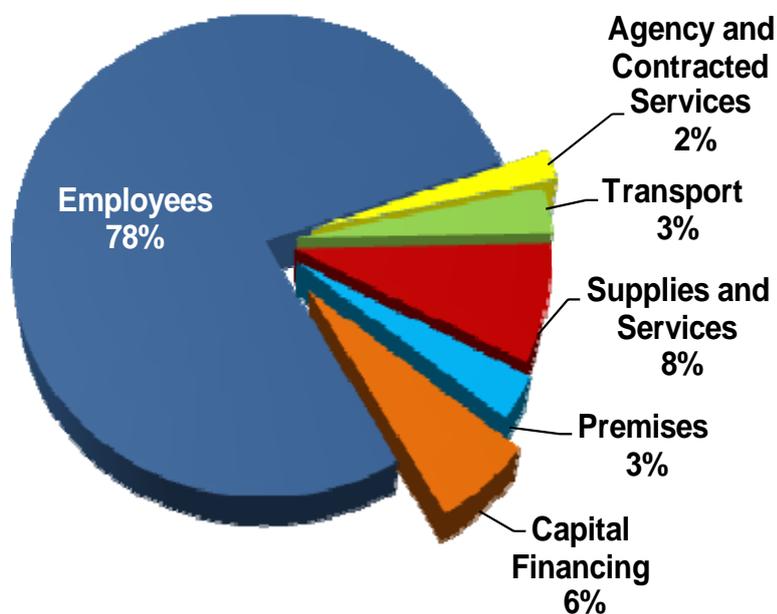
Where the money comes from:



	2014/15 (£m)	2013/14 (£m)
<b>Gross Budget</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>29.6</b>
Income	-0.6	-0.6
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>29.0</b>
Central and Local Government Funding	11.7	12.6
Council Tax Freeze Grant	0.4	0.4
Council Tax	16.5	16.0
	<b>28.6</b>	<b>29.0</b>

What the money is spent on:

	2014/15 (£m)	2013/14 (£m)
Employees	22.5	22.5
Premises	1.0	0.9
Transport	0.7	0.8
Supplies and Services	2.1	2.1
Agency and Contracted Services	0.5	0.5
Capital Financing	1.8	1.8
	<b>28.6</b>	<b>28.6</b>
<b>Reserves Funding</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Budget Requirement</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>29.0</b>



**The Band D Council Tax for 2014/15 will be £87.48.**

The Fire and Rescue Authority has agreed a budget requirement of £28.6M for 2014/15 and a capital programme of £2.044M



# Bedfordshire

## Fire and Rescue Service

If you would like a printed copy of this leaflet  
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