



Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service



Precept - Budget Information
2013/14

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

In 2013/14, 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 5400 emergency incidents including 424 house fires; 337 road traffic collisions; 266 vehicle fires; and 1176 special incidents, including animal rescues, aircraft and railway incidents, and industrial accidents.

Our fire fighters rescued **226 people** from fires and road traffic collisions.

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 assist them to meet their legal fire safety responsibilities.

Since 2008/09 we have successfully reduced fire deaths and injuries by 50%, deliberate fires (Arson) by 24% and since 2009/10 we have reduced accidental fires by 17%.

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 2013/14, the Fire and Rescue Authority has increased its Band D Council Tax requirement by about 3 pence per week for a Band D property. 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 that your Fire and Rescue Service is provided for a Council Tax amount of just 23 pence per day for a Band D household, which we believe continues to represent excellent value for money.



Councillor David McVicar
Chairman, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D McVicar'.



Paul M Fuller QFSM MSc BSc FIFireE MInstLM
Chief Fire Officer, Bedfordshire Fire
and Rescue Service

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

Revenue Budget

Our revenue budget describes the money necessary for the day to day running of the Service. Through our ongoing 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 5.6% reduction in Government grant (compared to 2012/13) totalling £0.614M and the effect of inflation which has increased our costs this year by £0.447M.

Capital Programme

Our capital programme describes spending on fixed 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 £1.723M and these are being funded from Government grants and contributions from the revenue budget. Projects for this year include:

- Renewing a number of fire engines and other emergency vehicles which have reached the end of their useful life;
- Increasing the capacity of office accommodation at our Headquarters site so that we can make savings on premises rental costs elsewhere
- Improving premises security and upgrading toilet/washroom facilities to meet current hygiene standards at fire stations
- Completing the installation of an updated emergency call handling and mobilising system within our Control Centre
- Upgrading facilities for safety-critical training at our Training Centre and on fire stations

Efficiency Savings

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 which 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.

Over the last two years, the Authority has delivered efficiency **savings totalling £1.067M**. For 2013/14, the Authority's budget plan includes the delivery of **further efficiency savings of £1.310M**.

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

- Savings in full time fire fighting staff costs through the introduction of revised shift patterns on whole time fire stations and changes to the crewing system at Toddington Fire Station;
- 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

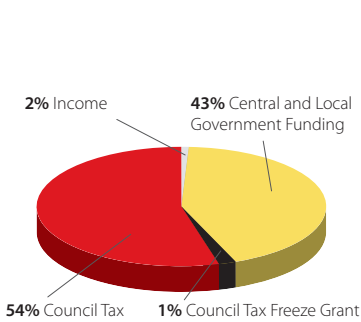
Audit Judgement on Value for Money

In the 2012 Annual Audit Letter from the Audit Commission, the Fire and Rescue Authority was awarded an 'unqualified conclusion' meaning we were judged to have satisfactory arrangements in all areas.



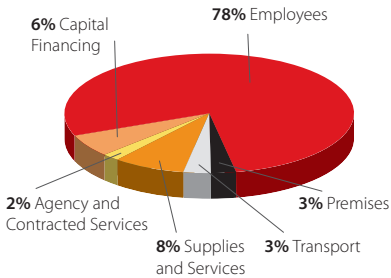
Financial Charts

Where the money comes from:



	2013/14 (£m)	2012/13 (£m)
Gross Budget	29.6	29.6
Income	(0.6)	(0.5)
Budget Requirement	29.0	29.1
Central and Local Government Funding	(12.6)	(11.0)
Council Tax Freeze Grant	(0.4)	(0.4)
Council Tax	(16.0)	(17.7)
	(29.0)	(29.1)

What the money is spent on:



	2013/14 (£m)	2012/13 (£m)
Employees	22.5	22.9
Premises	0.9	1.0
Transport	0.8	0.8
Supplies and Services	2.1	2.5
Agency & Contracted Services	0.5	0.5
Capital Financing	1.8	1.1
	28.6	28.8
Reserves Funding	0.4	0.3
Budget Requirement	29.0	29.1

The Band D Council Tax will be £85.77

The Fire and Rescue Authority has agreed a budget requirement of £29.0M for 2013/14 and a Capital programme of £1.723M



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If you would like a printed copy of this leaflet
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Version – February 2013