



My reference: PB/SES
Your reference:

When dialling ask for: Mr P Bryant
Direct telephone line: 01635 41135
Email address: paul.bryant5@ntlworld.com

**Royal Berkshire
Fire Authority**
103 Dee Road
Tilehurst
Reading
Berkshire
RG30 4FS

Telephone 0118 945 2888
Fax 0118 959 0510
Web www.rbfrs.co.uk

Chairman
Paul Bryant

To

Group Leaders – Berkshire Unitaries

Copies – Chief Executives, Berkshire Unitaries

4 May 2011

Dear Group Leaders

APPOINTMENTS TO THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

We have been asked to write you on behalf of the Management Committee of the Fire Authority. We are aware that all of our unitary authorities have local elections this year, the effect of which for the Fire Authority is that 17 of our 25 Members are up for election this year. We felt that it would be appropriate to write to you at this time, in advance of those elections, to highlight to you the need for interested, dedicated people to serve as Members of the Fire Authority and to point out the time commitment that is involved.

We are very grateful for the many conscientious and dedicated members that you have appointed to the Authority in previous years, who take an active interest in the workings of the Fire and Rescue Service and contribute positively to the meetings of the Fire Authority and its Committees. We fully appreciate that all elected members are busy people who are fully committed to public service and give generously of their time, often over and above the actual requirements of the role. However, we would like to remind all our Unitary Authorities that being appointed as a Fire Authority Member carries with it important obligations and cannot be seen as a sinecure.

We enclose with this letter a Calendar of Meetings for the forthcoming year for your and appointees information. A member appointed to this Fire Authority is expected to attend all Fire Authority meetings and to serve on at least one committee or working party. In addition we have a number of Champions or Lead Member roles and we enclose a list of all our current appointments together with our Member Champion protocol.

It is important that all members of the Fire Authority attend the meetings regularly for the sake of the continuity of the work. In recent times, the attendance at meetings has not been as good as it could have been and occasionally has led to meetings being inquorate. This detracts from the democratic governance of the Authority and impacts adversely the progress we are aiming to achieve. This, and the failure to give apologies or find substitute members to attend meetings, is a matter that our Standards Committee has adversely commented on several times.



It would be appreciated if members could be appointed for their full term of office on your council as this avoids having to resubmit their declarations of interest. Of course, you may still change your appointments at any time.

We would be very grateful if you would consider our letter and its enclosures when considering your appointments to the Fire Authority this year.

Yours sincerely



Dr Paul Bryant
Chairman of the Fire Authority



Iain Cox
Chief Fire Officer