

# THE PLAN

Making West Midlands Safer 2010-2013



The information contained in this document can also be provided in other formats including Braille, audiotape and large print. Please call **0121 380 6679**.

To book a Free Home Safety Check in your home, by your local firefighters Freephone **0800 389 5525** or register via **www.wmfs.net**

Further information about the work of the West Midlands Fire Service may be found by visiting our website: **www.wmfs.net**

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# INTRODUCTION

## Joint foreword from the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman of the Authority

This three year plan sets out our strategic direction for 2010-2013. It builds on the successes identified by the recent Comprehensive Area Assessment results where the organisation was identified as 'performing well'. This good result is a tribute to our personnel who are all dedicated to providing high quality services to the community.

In recent times there has been significant change within the Fire and Rescue Service, in the way it is organised, the nature of the emergencies attended, and the variety of services that we provide. The public quite rightly continue to have high expectations of us.

Our traditional role of mainly dealing with fires and road traffic collisions has expanded beyond all recognition as we embrace many different areas of work on behalf of and in conjunction with the community. Climatic changes and the need to respond to major emergencies have led to our staff providing services at local, regional, national and international levels. We will continue to build on the excellent work carried out with partners by targeting those most at risk and focusing a significant proportion of our resources on prevention activity – our best chance to save a life is to stop a fire starting.

We aim to improve the quality of life outcomes for our communities through our work within Local Strategic Partnerships and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. As a part of this work we aim to support the delivery of: healthy living, independent living and assistance for those with mental health difficulties.

The challenging economic position requires us to develop and improve the high quality and effective services that we provide, and deal with changes to funding levels. We are committed to maintaining the excellent reputation we have with our communities and aim to build on the high quality foundations that we have in place. The creativity, innovation and enthusiasm of our staff will play an important role in shaping the Service of the future.

Through the priorities and objectives set out in this document, we will contribute to economic prosperity, protection of the environment and make the West Midlands safer for everyone who lives, works, visits and travels within the area.

# 01



**Vijith Randeniya OBE**

Chief Fire Officer  
West Midlands Fire  
Service



**Councillor Tony Ward**

Chairman  
West Midlands Fire &  
Rescue Authority

## OUR SERVICE AREA

The West Midlands Fire Service provides a fire and rescue service to a population of over 2.5 million people and covers an area approaching 92,000 hectares (350 sq. miles). The map opposite shows the location of our community fire stations and fire safety centres, which are aligned to the seven city and metropolitan areas that form the West Midlands so that we can deliver our services based upon risk and local community needs.

With our partner agencies we support the Local Area Agreements (LAAs). The map on the right provides an overview of the priorities within each Local Authority Area.

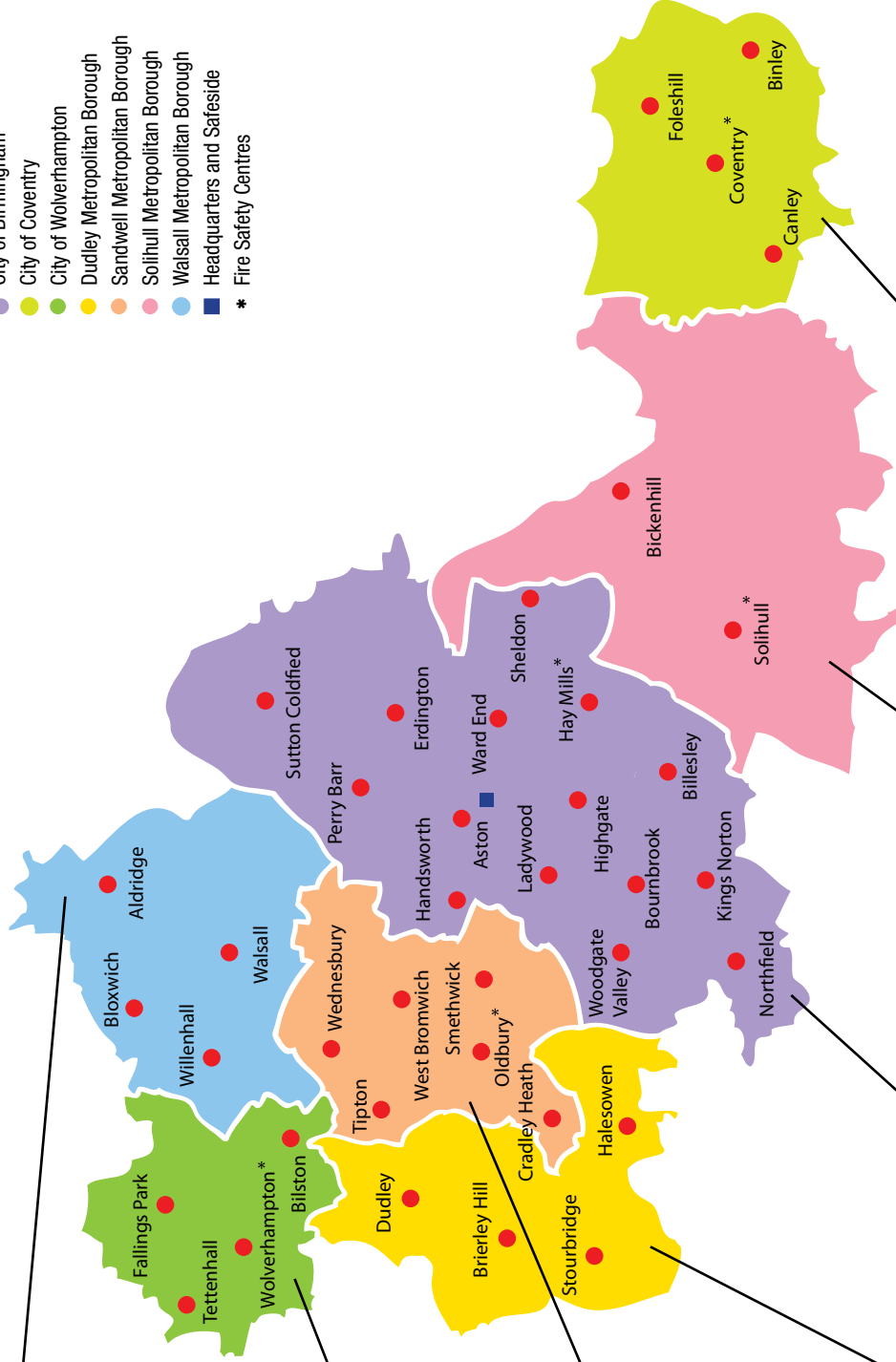
*We will be  
recognised as  
the World's best  
Fire Service.*



# THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE – THEIR PRIORITIES

# 03

- City of Birmingham
- City of Coventry
- City of Wolverhampton
- Dudley Metropolitan Borough
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough
- Solihull Metropolitan Borough
- Walsall Metropolitan Borough
- Headquarters and Safeside
- \* Fire Safety Centres



## Walsall

- Safety, health and well-being
- Jobs and prosperity
- Education and learning
- Improving the environment

## Wolverhampton

- More job opportunities
- Liking where we live
- Feel safer and more involved
- Live longer and healthier lives
- Have the skills and knowledge we need

## Sandwell

- Homes
- Health, independence and crime
- Children and young people
- Safer communities
- Educational attainment
- Employment

## Dudley

- Jobs and prosperity
- Health and wellbeing
- Heritage, culture and leisure
- Environment and housing
- Individual and community learning
- Community safety

## Birmingham

- Local economy
- Safety, health and quality of life
- Public involvement

## Solihull

- Property
- Health
- Road safety
- Arson and antisocial behaviour
- Car industry

## Coventry

- Economy
- Health
- Community Safety
- Children and young people
- Property

## ABOUT US

We all work with the vision of 'Making West Midlands Safer', by providing a quality service to reduce risk by preventing, protecting and responding. Our framework guidance on how to achieve this comes from Communities and Local Government and is contained in the National Framework Document.

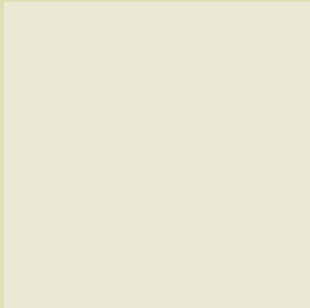
The West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority is made up of Members of the seven Councils in the West Midlands and they set the direction for the Service in the best interests of the people that we serve.

Our strategic leaders form a Corporate Board to ensure we work towards achieving our key priorities:-

- Communities and Partnerships
- Response
- People
- Value for Money

and so achieving our goals of:-

- **Preventing fires and other emergencies by community involvement and education**
- **Protecting property and people by providing advice and enforcing appropriate legislation**
- **Providing an effective Emergency Response Service when needed**



## OUR INTENTIONS

We will continue to work in a way that brings our Core Values to life and ensure that they are the foundation of everything we do. Our Plan will be delivered by us all and we will all know what is expected of us from our Individual Performance Development Reviews.

We are entrusted by our community to use public funding as effectively and efficiently as possible and we will provide a Value For Money service.

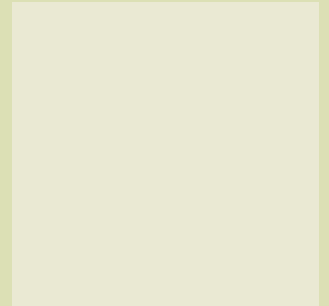
To do this we will develop our people. We are already good at what we do, but we aspire to be great at what we do.

Whether we are working with partners, educating our community, enforcing the law or responding to incidents, we will all contribute to our state of readiness. We will ensure that as an emergency service we are all prepared to be able to respond to a range of incidents.

Our communities have needs that are far wider than rescue from fire or road traffic collisions. We will work in our communities to achieve positive outcomes against the wide range of objectives including:

- **Safety in the Home**
- **Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour**
- **Vulnerable People**
- **Road Safety**
- **Health and Well-being**
- **The Environment**

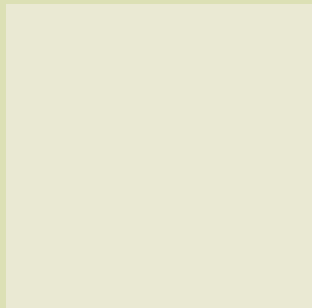
For a complete list of objectives please turn to page 7.



## OUR OUTCOMES

Through our work we will make a significant contribution towards the following outcomes:

- Reduce the number and severity of fires, injuries and deaths
- Reduce the severity of road traffic collisions, injuries and deaths
- Ensure that at all times we are well-prepared in order to respond to all incidents including major threats and emergencies
- Work with partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of our local communities
- Protect business from risk of fire in order to support the economy
- Protect and sustain our heritage in the built environment
- Reduce the number of malicious calls and false alarms
- Deliver Value for Money and improve our services by making best use of all of our resources
- Deliver services in a responsible and sustainable way to reduce the impact of our work on the environment
- Ensure high levels of public satisfaction and confidence in our services so that people feel safer



# STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

## How We Will Target Our Resources To Deliver Our Outcomes

In order to deliver our outcomes we have developed a number of Strategic Objectives for each of our four priority areas of Communities and Partnerships, People, Value for Money and Response. Each of the Strategic Objectives describes in very broad terms where we will target our resources and effort in making West Midlands Safer. By working in partnership with others we will work towards achieving our objectives. How we intend to do this is detailed in our supporting policies and action plans. Further information can be found by visiting our website at [www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)

### Communities and Partnerships

We recognise that there are communities and individuals who are more at risk from fire and other issues related to safety in the home.

Working with our partners we will tackle a range of issues including the healthier living agenda, anti-social behaviour and supporting independent living. We feel that this multi-agency approach will produce the best results for members of the communities we serve.

#### Vulnerable People

**We will:** identify and engage with:

- Partners, carers and other stakeholders who have a shared responsibility for the safety of our vulnerable people.
- Individuals at greater risk and who are less capable of managing their own safety.

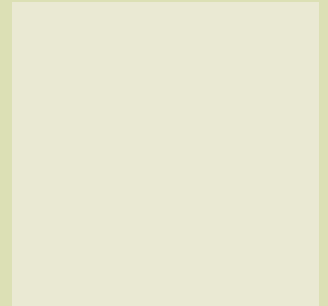
**We will:**

- Provide appropriate and effective interventions to deliver improved safety to those identified as vulnerable.

#### Safety in the Home

**We will:**

- Improve safety in the home by targeting our most vulnerable individuals.
- Develop the use of our Home Safety Check to reduce the effects of preventable fires in the home and issues identified in the Local Area Agreements.



## Road Safety

### We will:

- Promote and work with responsible partners and other stakeholder groups to improve road safety through structured and targeted action to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured.

## Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour

### We will:

- Improve the quality of life within local communities by preventing and reducing the effects of arson and anti-social behaviour.

## Health and Well-being

### We will:

- Work with partners to improve the health and well-being of our communities and reduce the impact of potentially damaging lifestyles and behaviours.

## Heritage

### We will:

- Protect our heritage in the built and natural environment by engaging with those local partners responsible for the management of culturally significant land, buildings and collections.

## Environment

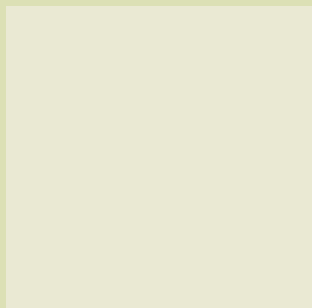
### We will:

- Protect the natural environment by preventing fires and other emergency situations and by minimising the damage to the environment at fires or other emergencies.
- Make best use of all natural resources in order to reduce our carbon emissions and our carbon footprint to address the challenges that climate change brings.

## Advise and Enforce

### We will:

- Continue to advise and enforce on fire safety issues across the West Midlands in line with current legislation.
- Consult and liaise with partners including the Health and Safety Executive, Building Control Bodies and Licensing Task Forces to achieve safer premises within the West Midlands.
- Continue to improve the accuracy of information provided to emergency crews.



## People

We are an organisation that embraces diversity through our staff, the way we engage with the public, and how we build and deliver our services. By understanding and acknowledging individual difference we can create environments that include everybody.

Our people trust and respect each other and those we serve.

### **Innovative, Creative and Accountable Leadership**

#### **We will:**

- Develop and grow leadership at all levels and support the organisation in attracting and retaining people with effective leadership skills.
- Support all employees in identifying, acquiring and maintaining knowledge and skills required to deliver organisational objectives.

### **Recognised, valued and engaged staff who are safe and healthy at work**

#### **We will:**

- Ensure that reward and recognition packages are in place to attract and retain a highly skilled, high performing and flexible workforce.
- Provide facilities to support our employees to achieve and maintain excellent health and safety at work.
- Provide employment conditions that fully consider both the needs of the diverse workforce and of the Service.

### **Organisational Development**

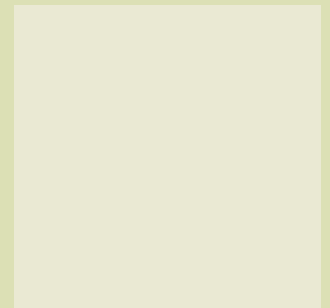
#### **We will:**

- Develop effective working relationships and partnerships to support our people with the sharing of ideas, best practice and learning across professional and organisational boundaries.
- Actively seek innovative, creative and value for money solutions for maximising capacity and for developing the capability of our workforce.

### **Our People and the services we provide reflect the needs of our Community**

#### **We will:**

- Ensure that effective strategies are in place to support the Service in developing a diverse workforce which is reflective of the communities that it serves and that fairness and equality is embedded in all that we do.



### Communities & Partnerships

- Vulnerable People
- Safety in the Home
- Road Safety
- Arson and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Health and Wellbeing
- Heritage
- The Environment
- Advise and Enforce

### People

- Innovative, Creative and Accountable Leadership
- Recognised, valued and engaged staff who are safe and healthy at work
- Organisational Development
- Our People and the services we provide reflect the needs of our Community

CORE VALUES

IMPROVEMENT

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

## COMMUNITIES & PARTNERSHIPS

## PEOPLE

Ensure high levels of public satisfaction and confidence in our services so that people feel safer

Deliver services in a responsible and sustainable way to reduce the impact of our work on the environment

Reduce the number of malicious calls and false alarms

Protect and sustain our heritage in the built environment

Deliver Value for Money and improve our services by making best use of all of our resources



PREVENT

Make  
West M  
Safe

RESP

VALUES

OMES

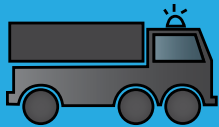
Reduce the number and severity of fires, injuries and deaths

RITIES



RESPONSE

Reduce the severity of road traffic collisions, injuries and deaths



DIVERSITY

Ensure that at all times we are well-prepared in order to respond to all incidents including major threats and emergencies

CORE VALUES

VALUE FOR MONEY



Work with partners to improve the safety, health and well-being of our local communities

Protect business from risk of fire in order to support the economy

PEOPLE

E VALUES

## Response

- Deal Effectively with Incidents

## Value for Money

- Delivering a Value for Money Service
- Asset Management

## Value for Money

We are committed to providing a high quality, value for money service. We have a sustained track record of delivering service improvements. We recognise the need to place a greater emphasis on Value for Money if we are to respond to external influences and the economic downturn.

### Delivering a Value for Money Service

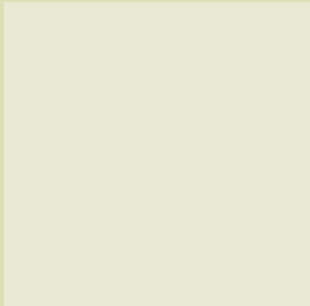
#### We will:

- Improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of all our activities, making best use of all of our resources to ensure that our communities receive a Value for Money service.
- Pursue greater economies of scale and synergy in all of our activities, by eliminating waste, unnecessary bureaucracy and making best use of technology and all our resources.

### Asset Management

#### We will:

- Ensure that all of our assets are appropriately community focused, energy efficient and fit for purpose and are professional workplaces of which we can be proud.



## Response

By making sure we have the right people in the right place at the right time, with the right skills and equipment, we can make a real impact on saving lives and protecting our local community in an emergency.

### Deal Effectively with Incidents

#### We will:

- Plan in conjunction with partner agencies and organisations for emergency situations including both generic incident types and special risk sites and scenarios.
- Deal safely and effectively with incidents and respond to emergencies with clearly defined target attendance times, by providing appropriately trained crews and the correct equipment, procedures, information and vehicles.
- Use our learning from the incidents which we and others attend. Utilise our data, information and intelligence to ensure that we continuously improve our prevention, protection and response activities in order to develop the Service.

*“Make a real impact on saving lives and protecting our local community in an emergency”*



## OUR PREFERRED VISION – HOW DO WE SEE THE ORGANISATION IN THREE YEARS TIME?

### Our Communities

We are a high performing, ethical organisation with effective leadership at all levels, providing quality, value for money services to our communities. As a Fire and Rescue Service our responsibilities include providing education, community safety, enforcement and emergency response services. We minimise the impact of fires, emergencies and our organisation on the environment. We work effectively with partners, and engage with our communities.

### Our People

We are an employer of choice where all people are valued. We succeed as individuals and together as a team we maximise our impact as a public service. We recognise and reward the achievement of our staff. We deliver our services by having a professional highly skilled workforce who are innovative, motivated, flexible, qualified and fulfilled. Our standards and performance are achieved by our collective and individual commitment to continuous improvement, personal development, responsibility and accountability.

### Our Reputation

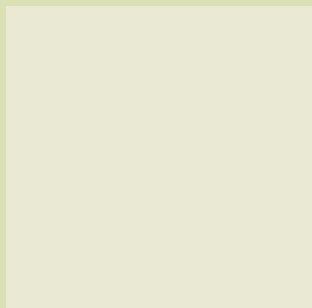
The West Midlands Fire Service is judged by others to be a successful organisation. Our external assessments tell us we are good at what we do. We want to be recognised for being great.

### Our Aspiration

By providing better public services and ensuring that the West Midlands is safer – we will be recognised as the world's best fire service.

## THE DETAIL

Further information about the work of West Midlands Fire Service may be found by visiting our website: [www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)



## PERFORMANCE

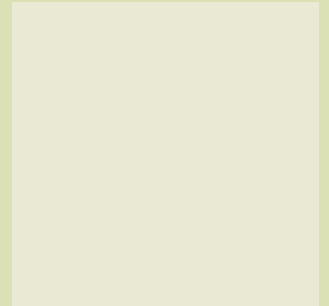
### How Do We Know We Are Delivering Our Outcomes?

It is crucial that as an organisation that is working to deliver the best possible service to the public, we can establish where we are now and ensure systems are in place to show that we are continuously improving.

A range of performance targets is in place in the organisation across operational and support services. These allow us to measure performance and demonstrate improvement in the services being delivered.

Our 15 Strategic Objectives include performance targets. This allows us to report on the continuing progress made against them, which in turn means that we can show whether we are having a positive impact against our stated outcomes.

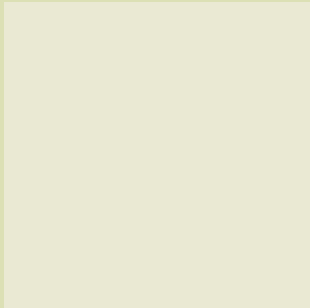
Further information about the performance of the West Midlands Fire Service may be found by visiting our website – **[www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net)**



## WE HAVE GREAT PEOPLE DOING GREAT WORK – ACHIEVING GREAT THINGS

Every day our people in the West Midlands Fire Service undertake a wide range of activities in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the communities we serve. Listed below are just a small number of those activities; further information on any of these and more can be found by visiting our website [www.wmfs.net](http://www.wmfs.net).

- Undertaking free Home Safety Checks (HSC) in order to provide advice and guidance to occupants about how to reduce the risk of a fire occurring in the home, and what actions to take to get out safely should a fire occur.
- Undertaking inspections of non domestic premises on a risk based approach, to ensure standards of fire safety are being maintained and all relevant legislation is being complied with.
- Handling emergency 999 calls from members of the public and quickly identifying the nearest resources available to deal with the incident, whilst working in close collaboration with other agencies such as the police, ambulance service and Environment Agency.
- Responding to a wide range of emergency incidents, such as fires, road traffic collisions, floods etc. and using the most appropriate resources available to us to deal with the situation effectively.
- Educating children on a wide range of community safety issues using our 'state of the art' Safeside Interactive Safety Centre in Vauxhall Road, Birmingham and the Red Hot Education Station experience at Handsworth Community Fire Station.
- Working with partner agencies to educate members of the community on the hazards associated with a wide range of topics such as fire, road safety and dangerous driving, as well as the benefits associated with healthy lifestyles.



# ADDRESSING COMMUNITY RISK

The Fire and Rescue National Framework sets out the Government's priorities and objectives for the Fire and Rescue Service. It outlines that each Fire and Rescue Authority must produce a publicly available plan covering at least a three-year time span.

Our Service is shaped by our risk analysis and by our understanding of the West Midlands and its diverse communities. In this way we are able to plan and allocate resources to ensure we are managing risk as effectively as possible. We identify and target those members of the community who are at highest risk. Our partners are likely to be working with the same at-risk groups but targeting different issues.

As we are now seeing significant reductions in the number of fires in the home and other emergency incidents, we have been able to increase the time our staff spend on prevention activity, whilst still operating 48 fire appliances for 24 hours per day and a further 13 for the busiest 12 hour period, as well as two dedicated vehicles for responding to minor fires. Our resources are strategically placed to meet demand across the area and through the day, so that we can achieve our response standards:

- **Prevention** – we work with local people to educate them about the dangers of fire and other hazards, either directly or through partner agencies to address Local Area Agreement priorities. We identify the most vulnerable households which means we can target the work and ensure we have the greatest impact.
- **Protection** – we carry out audits of premises and examine plans for new buildings to ensure fire safety standards are high. This ensures that people are safe in the workplace and going about their daily activities. It also helps us to understand the risk our firefighters may face if a fire occurs.
- **Emergency Response** – we constantly monitor how we respond to fires and other emergencies. We also consider the scale and nature of events that we may have to respond to in the future. As part of this process we review the number and location of our fire engines and fire stations. We also examine the range of skills our firefighters need to function safely and effectively.

# 17

*Our service is shaped by our risk analysis and by our understanding of the West Midlands and its diverse communities.*



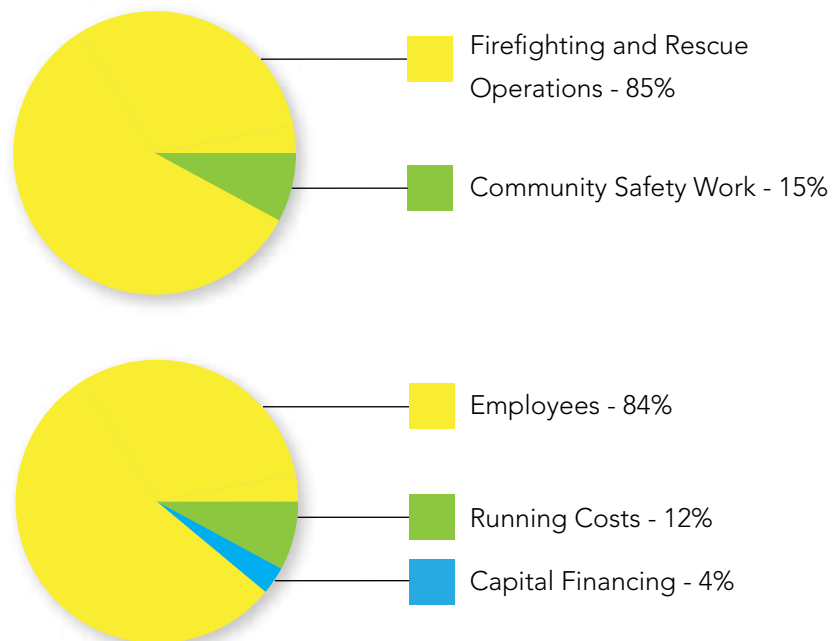
## FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2010/2011

### How much will the Service cost in 2010/2011?

The total net budget requirement for the Fire Service in 2010/2011 is £119m. This mainly relates to firefighting and rescue operations and community fire safety work.

The majority of expenditure relating to the net budget requirement of £119m are mainly employee costs, a further analysis is shown below.

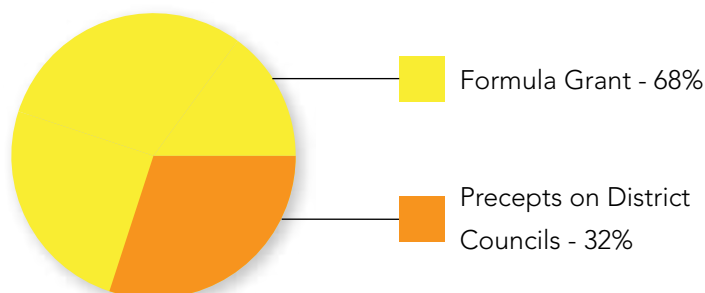
### Expenditure



### How will the Service be funded in 2010/2011?

The resources to fund the net budget requirement of £119m comes in the form of a formula grant from the Government (£81m) and Precepts on District Councils (£38m).

### Financing



### Balances and Reserves

The Fire Authority must consider the level of general balances it wishes to maintain before it can decide the level of Council Tax to charge in any year.

In order to set a balanced budget in 2010/2011 the Authority assumed no movement in general balances. The actual level of general balances at 31st March 2009 was £4.451m. The Authority holds general balances as funding to meet any unforeseen events which it may need to respond to. Interest is earned on any unused balances.

In addition, as part of the closedown of accounts process, consideration needs to be given to the level of earmarked reserves required. These are amounts set aside to meet specific anticipated future demands. The level of earmarked reserves at 31st March 2009 was £15.768m. Interest is earned on any balances until expenditure is committed against the demands identified.

### Capital Expenditure and Funding

In 2010/2011, the Authority plans to spend £6.718 million on capital projects.

A planned capital expenditure analysis is shown below:

	£m
<b>Land &amp; Buildings</b>	3.686
<b>Vehicles</b>	3.032

A forecast of resources to fund the capital programme in 2010/2011 is shown below: –

	£m
<b>Supported Capital Expenditure</b>	4.559
<b>Capital Receipts</b>	2.382
<b>Capital Grants</b>	1.599
<b>Revenue Funding</b>	3.560

In the same way that borrowing was used to help purchase assets during 2008/09, borrowing in earlier years meant that as at the 31st March 2009, the Authority had total loans of £49.157m (the interest and principal on any loans needs to be met from future revenue budgets). The value of fixed assets held by the Authority as at 31st March 2009 which the loans had helped fund was £106m, of which approximately 92% related to land and buildings and 8% related to vehicles and equipment.

### Medium Term Financial Plan

The cost of delivering the service was considered as part of the Authority's 2010/11 budget setting process. However due to restrictions in public sector expenditure it is anticipated that there is likely to be a reduction in Government grant which will have an impact on service objectives from 2011/12 onwards.

*In all that we do we are working towards “Making West Midlands Safer”.*

## CONTACTS

If you would like to obtain further information about any aspect of this Plan, please contact us, using one of the methods shown below:

Strategic Planning Improvement and Risk Team  
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters  
99 Vauxhall Road  
Birmingham  
B7 4HW

Tel: **0121 380 6679**

E-mail: **SPIRiT@wmfs.net**

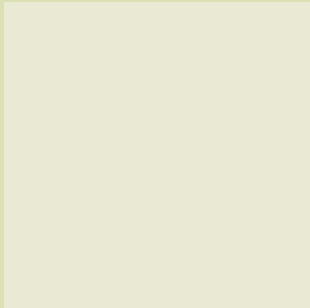
If you have access to the Internet, **www.wmfs.net** provides everything you need to know about the services we provide, our performance, fire safety advice and recruitment.

For further information about your Fire Service, you can contact our customer care service by:

Public Relations Team  
West Midlands Fire Service Headquarters  
99 Vauxhall Road  
Birmingham  
B7 4HW

Tel: Customer Care Hotline – **0121 380 7404**  
(24 Hour answerphone)

E-mail: **contact@wmfs.net**



## OTHER FORMATS

The information contained in this document can also be provided in other languages as well as other formats including braille, audiotape and large print.

Please call **0121 380 6679** (24 hour answerphone).

# 21

Arabic	هذه المعلومات متوفرة بلغات وأشكال أخرى. ارجوك اتصل 0121 380 6679
Bengali	এই তথ্যটুকু অন্যান্য ভাষায় ও বোঝার উপযুক্ত অন্যান্য নমুনা (ফর্ম্যাটে) দেয়া যাবে। অনুগ্রহ করে 0121 380 6679 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।
Chinese	我們可用其它語言和其它版式提供這份資料，請致電 0121 380 6679。
Czech	Tyto informace mohou být k dispozici v jiných jazycích a formátech. Zatelefonujte prosím na 0121 380 6679
Farsi	این اطلاعات به صورتها و زبانهای دیگر موجود است. لطفاً با شماره زیر تماس بگیرید: 0121 380 6679
French	Ces informations peuvent être mises à votre disposition dans d'autres langues et sous d'autres formats. Veuillez appeler le n° 0121 380 6679
Gujarati	આ માહિતી અન્ય ભાષાઓમાં અને આકારોમાં પૂરી પાડવામાં આવી શકે છે. કૃપા કરી 0121 380 6679 પર ફોન કરો.
Kurdish	ئە م زانیاریانە بە زمان و شێوازی تریش دە سته بە ر دە بێت. تکیایە بە یوه ندی بکە بە 0121 380 6679
Polish	Niniejszą ulotkę informacyjną otrzymać można również w innych językach i formatach. Bliższe informacje tel. 0121 380 6679
Punjabi	ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਢੰਗਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: 0121 380 6679
Russian	Эта информация может быть воспроизведена на других языках и в других формах. Позвоните по телефону: 0121 380 6679
Somali	Akhbaartan waxaa lagu heli karaa iyagoo u qoran siyaalo kale iyo afafka kale. Fadlan wac 0121 380 6679
Urdu	یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں اور دوسرے انداز میں بھی دستیاب کی جاسکتی ہے۔ براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر فون کیجئے 0121 380 6679
Vietnamese	Tin tức này có thể được cung cấp trong ngôn ngữ và hình thức khác. Làm ơn điện thoại số 0121 380 6679

