



THE FIRE BRIGADE SOCIETY'S OPERATIONAL PLAN 2018-19

INTRODUCTION The Units Operational Plans 2018-19 (Inaugural) were presented to the Executive Supervisory Board for formal approval in accordance with Constitution Clause 9, Responsibilities of Member, [3] and Clause 23, Finance, [4]. Future Operational Plans will be presented to members for a formal vote prior to the Annual General Meeting.

The collective Operational Plans for 2018-19 was considered viable with regards to available finance and was unanimously agreed at the Executive Supervisory Board on 24th February 2018.

TREASURER

This Operational Plan has been drafted in conjunction with the Financial Working Party and reflects 'partial year figures, predictions and forecast'. The figures included do not constitute formal accounts.

Predicted Out-Turn (Finances 1/4/2017 31/12/17 [9 months])

INCOME	9 MONTHS £	YEAR TO 31/3/17 £
MEMBERSHIP	11,615.90	16,145
SALES UNIT NET	NIL	2,400
DONATIONS	542.00	400
TOTAL	12,157.90	18,945
EXPENDITURE		
FIRE COVER PRODUCTION	7,400	10,185
FIRE COVER DISTRIBUTION	2,451.97	3,182.96
BANK CHARGES	197.30	230.29
INSURANCE (FULL YEAR)	61.88	274.20
WEB SITE COSTS (YEAR)	98.23	163.26
COMPUTER SECURITY	48.89	NIL
MEMBERSHIP F/HERITAGE	25.00	25.00
OFFICERS EXPENSES	80.70	431.24
PRINTING / STATIONERY	85.21	331.78
POSTAGE	50.27	109.25
SUB TOTAL	10,499.45	14,932.98
SURPLUS	1,658.45	4,012.02
PLUS SOCIETY EVENTS		117.30
2017 OVERSEAS (GERMANY)	49.81	
2017 NATIONAL VISIT (SUFFOLK)	268.00	
2017 AGM	216.00	
TOTAL SURPLUS	2,192.26	4,129.32

The above reflects 75% of 2017-18 membership subscriptions, Fire Cover production cost and distribution cost.

Forecast Budget

INCOME	2018-19	2019-20
MEMBERSHIP	15,487	14,750
SALES UNIT	NOT DETERMINED	NOT DETERMINED
DONATION	NOT DETERMINED	NOT DETERMINED
TOTAL	15,487	14,750
EXPENDITURE		
FIRE COVER PRODUCTION	9,875	10,075
FIRE COVER DISTRIBUTION	3,300	3,500
BANK CHARGES	250	275
INSURANCE	62	80
WEB SITE COSTS	98	150
COMPUTER SECURITY	49	100
MEMBERSHIP F/HERITAGE	25	25
OFFICERS EXPENSES	150	150
PRINTING / STATIONERY	100	300
POSTAGE	60	100
TOTAL	13,969	14,755
SURPLUS	1,518	NIL

The budget forecast assumes a net loss pa of 25 members, Fire Cover production costs increased by 2%, Fire Cover distribution increased by 6%, but excludes any surplus on events, income from the Sales Unit or donations.

The maximum that will be reimbursed for travel expenses in 2018-19 will be based on 45p per mile.

It is not proposed to increase membership fees until the benefits of the new management structure and finance initiatives have bedded in.

Thanks are expressed to all the Officers for their assistance in keeping operating costs as low as practical.

Brian Jackson, Treasurer & the Financial Working Party.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Review of the Operational Plan 2017-18: In line with the ET Operational Plan 2017-18 Fire Covers (FC) 216, 217, 218 were 52 page editions plus cover and as a result of anonymous donations, totaling £250, Fire Cover 219 was 60 pages plus cover. The production run for these Fire Covers was 700 off. All Fire Covers, except 218, were made available to the Distribution Managers by the planned production date. Fire Cover 218 was regrettably delayed due to two major features intended for publication being the subject of 'external clearance'. As clearance was not received, the Editors were reluctantly forced into a 'rebuild' of this edition. We put on record thanks to MP Printers for their co-operation and support in the resolution of this matter. The Editorial Team's 2017-18 budget was met in full.

All aspects of the production of Fire Cover (FC) is now carried out electronically.

FC Production Expenses During 2017-18, the Editorial Team purchased a new stand alone 250Gb hard drive at a total cost of £26.99 including postage and this has been recorded in The Society's Asset Register. This was necessary as the existing stand alone hard drive, a gifted second hand drive, was giving rise to concern. All FC material is held on this drive, with a back-up on another source. Full details of the total FC Production Expenses follow.

Fire Cover Production Costs: For publications printed in 2017-18 it was expected that an increase of 2% - 3% would apply. However, through working practices and the 'good offices' of our printer this year's increase in production cost will be well below inflation at 1.5%.

The Managing Editor has negotiated with MP Printers a framework agreement providing flexibility in both run quantity and FC size. This is a significant agreement which addresses the production of FC against current decline in income and membership numbers.

The production costs for of Fire Covers 220 – 223 (700 off run):

FC SIZE	2017-18 COST	2018-19 RATES
52 PAGE FIRE COVER PLUS COVER	£2,475	£2,512

Add-Ons

4 EXTRA COLOUR PAGES	£205	£208
4 EXTRA B & W PAGES / INSERT	£142	£144
CONVERTING 4 EXISTING B&W PAGES TO COLOUR	£63	£64

Due to the uncertainty relating to economic implications post March 2019, at this present time no reliable prediction on the percentage increase in the production costs of FC, for the year 2019-20, can be given.

Fire Cover Production Run: We seek to establish that the recently adopted 700 off run of FC will meet current and predicted demand. It should be noted that this run quantity is below the industry norm, for a magazine of this type, which is a minimum run of 1,000 off.

We propose all Fire Covers in the financial year 2018-19 continue to be 52 page FC plus cover. Any increase in finances available for Fire Cover can be addressed by applying the 'add-on' rates above.

Titling: The Team will continue the use of "MFX" metalized cover titling / badging. With an 'industry standard approach,' 'full image' and other layout approaches, as used in the past, will be adopted for front covers in 2018-19.

Publication Programme:

EDITION	COPY DATE	SUGGESTED PERIOD FOR REPORTS, etc.	PUBLICATION
220	1 st February 2018	November, December 2017 & January 2018	May - June 2018
221	1 st May 2018	February, March & April 2018	August 2018
222	1st August 2018	May, June & July 2018	November 2018
223	1st November 2018	August, September & October 2018	February 2019

Publication Content: The ET will review the layout and style of FC, as well as content, on a continuing basis, but any decisions on these aspects are the ET's and will be deemed final.

As a result of the restructuring of The Society, from Fire Cover 220 the layout will be updated to reflect the new management and geographical and regional structure. With the drive to get members to deal direct with the unit that can deal with their needs, the new fbs emails addresses and contact points will be introduced in this edition. A spin off of this is that these details will act as the Society's Directory.

Material Submitted: No changes to the arrangements published in FC are proposed.

Special Publications: No Special Publication is offered for authority due to finance constraints.

Added Value: Clive Shearman, Heritage Officer, has produced for sale The Society Photograph DVD for 2016-2017 and this will be with the Sales Unit for membership sales. Discussions on a future DVD covering the Society years 2018-19 and 2019-20 will need to be examined by the Executive Supervisory Board at a future date.

A repeat of the offer of binders for FC is proposed during this Society year.

Editing: The ET will continue to encourage a brief and succinct approach in geographical and regional reports (self-editing / précising of content) to negate the need for editing out of material which the writer has spent time composing, but we continue to reserve the right to edit further, including when demands on space in a particular issue exceed that available.

We have been continuing to ask authors of geographical and regional reports to only submit incidents of more than five pumps, or incidents that are very unusual or have "special interest".

Strict adherence to copy dates must apply to meet time-scale to allow MP Printers to achieve timely delivery of FC.

Space allocation within FC for geographical and regional reports will be introduced during the scope of this Operational Plan.

Inserts: The move to distribution of the AGM Agenda, Annual Reports / Operational Plans and AGM Minutes by other more cost efficient means other than within, or with, FC, should be further encouraged. It should be noted that facilitating and timely presentation to members of these items rests with the Executive Supervisory Board.

Liaison With Printers: Director, Phil Pease, is the Account Manager for the FBS. All liaison on printing for the FBS is handled by Phil and an excellent and productive working relationship with the Managing Editor exists.

ITEM	2017-18 BUDGET	2017-18 OUTTURN	2018-19 BUDGET
FC Printing	£9,800	£9,900#	£10,048
FC Production Expenses (postage, etc)	£50	£26.99	£30
ET Travel Costs	£150	NIL	£150
TOTAL	£10,000	£9,826.99	£10,228

This figure takes account of the donation of £284 for the production of FC219

Les Edkins, Mike Smith, Ralph Horton, Editors.

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

The pre-labelling and sorting of the envelopes has made the postage of 'Fire Cover', even with inserts, a very slick operation. The magazines are delivered to my former employer's premises, and I use their facilities at cost to print inserts etc. Depending on what time the magazines are delivered, and how much printing of inserts is needed, the magazine can be with the Post Office that evening, or latest the next day. There have been very few missing and or damaged items this year.

The cost of distribution of 'Fire Cover' was £3,182.96 in 2016 / 2017, and is estimated to be £3,200 for 2017 / 2018. This includes the cost of envelopes, labels, ink, etc., as well as the actual postages.

Royal Mail have announced an average increase of 3.6% in second class postage rates, though it does vary slightly depending on size and weight. This would give a projected budget of about £3,325 for 2018 / 2019.

Due to uncertainty over Brexit, and the strength of the pound, I would like to build in a contingency to cover above average inflation for envelopes and labels, the paper for which is all imported. I suggest that £3,400 is allocated to the distribution budget for the 2018 / 2019 financial year.

Richard Williams, Distribution Manager.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

We have ended the year with a total of 565 members. The breakdown is 498 full UK members, (inc. HLMs), 10 Irish Republic, 30 Overseas, and 27 Associate Members. Sadly, this year more of our members died than there were new recruits.

There have been several initiatives to increase membership, All the young firefighters in the LFB were given a copy of 'Fire Cover', and a membership form (about 160 individuals) and the 12 or so apprentice firefighters in Durham and Darlington were given the same, together with an introductory letter. So far there has been no response from either brigade. We also had a special offer for NARF members, but we suspect that their magazine was not published – they were using the system we used to use; free printing because the publisher sold advertising space. A recent newspaper article has reported the imprisonment of such a publisher on fraud charges, though it does not mention NARF specifically. We will keep the offer open for now. Old 'Fire Covers' have gone to both the Sheffield and Rochdale museums with a membership application enclosed as give-aways to their visitors. We have had one new member from Rochdale, but as yet none from Sheffield.

The expenditure for membership services this year will be roughly £160, dependent on the production cost of the renewal notices. Applying a 3.5% inflation uplift will bring the predicted total to just under £170. I will also estimate a travel cost of £50 to attend the equivalent meeting next year. This would bring the total to £220 with no contingency.

As we now have a new Society organisation, which may be of interest to some recently lapsed members, I am intending to e-mail, or write to most of them, and see if I can generate some interest. I will also investigate using a “no-cost” incentive such as discount on missing 'Fire Covers' or the use of redundant Sales Unit items as an enticement. There will be a postage, and printing cost attached to this which I estimate to bring the budget into the region of £300.00.

I would like to try a couple of other initiatives, such as adverts in appropriate magazines, etc., and would like a contingency to enable me to do this. I currently do not have any figures for this, but would suggest that a total budget of £500 would allow pursuit of these objectives.

Richard Williams, Membership Secretary.

EVENTS MAMAGER

Review of Events 2017-18:

National Visit USAF Suffolk and Suffolk FRS over two days, July 2017. Over 40 members attended each day with only one member stating dissatisfaction (over photographic positioning which was in the main driven by host demands). The remainder demonstrated very high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment via written survey results.

AGM and AGM Visit Durham and Darlington over three days, September 2017. Over 30 members attended on each day with no issues whatsoever reported verbally or written, whilst high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment was verbally expressed by the vast majority of attendees.

Area Visits Midlands 3, Southern 2, Scottish 2, Yorkshire 2, Wales 1, Metropolitan 1, Overseas 1, National Visit 1 (2 day), AGM 1 (3 day). A three day visit to the SW was postponed by our potential host.

Area Meetings Midlands 2, South West 1, Scotland 1, The North East and North West continued to have regular monthly meetings throughout the year, at Stockton FS and Manchester respectively. A proposed Midland Area Meeting was cancelled by our potential host.

Area Newsletter Metropolitan issued 3.

Events 2018-19 Being the first year of the new Society management structure not all geographical / regional posts are filled.

The attached FBS What's On 2018-19 details the proposed events *. This will be updated as The Society year progresses. Members will be supplied with version 1 of FBS What's On 2018-19 by the method they have elected to the Membership Secretary. Version 1 and subsequent updates will appear on The Society's web site. (Note: FBS What's On 2018-19 was distributed to member with Fire Cover 219.)

It is emphasized that planning / arrangement, any transport, refreshments, etc., for all visit, will be self-funded by members attending the visit. If montages are provided, these will be funded through the visit also. It is expected that all attendees pay for any transport provided, the person organising transport should not be travelling 'freely'.

Newsletters Geographical / regional newsletters will be distributed electronically. Where Newsletters need to be hardcopy these will be sent by mail to the recipient.

I will be seeking to ensure the sizing of geographical / regional Newsletters is kept at agreed levels and within budget. It is not expected that hard copy documents will be in colour unless produced 'freely' and at no cost to The Society.

Corporate Events The Society has been invited to the 2018 Fire Fighters Commemorative event at the NMA Alrewas and will no doubt be invited to the Civil Defence event too. In the past the wreaths presented have often been self-funded by donation. However, allowance for the costs of wreaths, if attendance is agreed, of £60 must be made. It is emphasized that any member can attend this respectful, yet colourful event free of charge, but local parking are charges may apply.

National Visit 2018 This will be to North Wales over the weekend of 8-10 June 2018 and will be totally self funding.

Overseas Visit 2018 This will be to Hannover, Germany, and will be totally self funding.

Proposed Budget 2018-19

ITEM	2018-19 BUDGET
Geographical / Regional Newsletters (Printing)*	£600
Expenses (non-visit related postage, phone calls, etc)	£20
Travel Costs	£40
Corporate Events	£60
TOTAL	£720

Based on ten geographical / regional units operating

Steve Dodge, Event Manager.

WEB MANGER

Current Website The current website is no longer fit for purpose. Since the current design and functions date from 2011, the way people access websites and how they access other media has changed and the website needs to reflect this change.

With a vast array of devices available to view websites, over 65% now use tablets or mobile phones, so the site needs to be responsive and the content able to fit different screen sizes. This does not mean the same content does not appear on different screens, but the way it is displayed will change.

My skills in building websites no longer includes HTML, which the current site is built on, although the old skills can come in useful sometimes. I currently build websites on the 'Wordpress' platform, which is database driven and originally designed as a blogging platform. Currently over 43% of the worlds websites are built this way

The new site could have pages as required with content as we have now. Basically we start with a theme for the design, which sets out colour schemes and menu layouts, etc., for the whole site. These can be changed and content will not be affected. You then set which page is the 'home' page, and which page will take the 'posts'. 'Posts' will be news items which will be most recent at the top, and all news items can be archived, usually with access to them via tabs for each months posts, etc. If we require documents to appear as they would printed, these would have to be attachments as because the site needs to change on different size screens a fixed size cannot work.

I would propose content such as pictures and videos be hosted on a dedicated site, for instance photos on a 'Flickr' account and videos on 'Youtube'. This has two main advantages (1) the bandwidth of your site is not compromised by people viewing large files and (2) it helps Google find you website as you can add tags and other words to find it, also people generally expect to look on these sites for the relevant media anyway.

Current Website Costs

Details	Company	Full information	Due date	Cost Inc VAT £
SSL Certificate for .co.uk	123 Reg	Website Security Certificate	01/01/2018	35.99
thefirebrigadesociety.org.uk	Easily.co.uk	Domain name	20/03/2018	7.48
thefirebrigadesociety.info	Easily.co.uk	Domain name	20/03/2018	17.99
thefirebrigadesociety.com	Easily.co.uk	Domain name	20/03/2018	17.99
thefirebrigadesociety.org	Easily.co.uk	Domain name	20/03/2018	17.99
thefirebrigadesociety.uk	123 Reg	Domain name	25/06/2018	9.59
thefirebrigadesociety.co.uk	123 Reg	Domain name	01/07/2018	9.59
Web Hosting	123 Reg	Linux Starter Yearly	19/07/2018	43.06
TOTAL				159.68

The costs for a 'Wordpress' site would be as follows:

Minimum requirement: Hosting would be £100.80 per year. Required paid 'plugin' for security app £70 per year. Added to existing costs would bring yearly cost to £290.

Ideal requirement: Hosting would be £288 per year, but this would include the SSL, no net cost £255. This would give us a more reliable faster site. Required paid plugin £70. Ideal option added to existing costs would bring yearly cost to £439. This would be with hosting videos and images on 'free' websites (Pro versions will be paid for but have no advertising). Implementing a new site would involve deleting completely the existing website, getting Wordpress installed onto the domain, and the new theme and content being added. This would mean a period of downtime where

a 'maintenance' page would be displayed. With the Wordpress site being database driven, it can in the future be used for members or officers 'logging in' to view relevant content, etc. Depending what is required, other 'plugin' purchases may have to be made.

Social Media Social Media could play a part in raising the profile of The Society to groups of people we may not yet be reaching, but it is always a trade off as it can work against you as well as with you. Social Media is currently a place where it is easy to hide behind an identity and try to cause mischief. We would have to have clear objectives to use social media, and it would need a volunteer to monitor and post items with a clear remit as to how to reply to certain posts, etc.

Emails Although not ideal we are using Gmail for email addresses, but with the current hosting cost of addresses, using the firebrigadesociety.co.uk, is prohibitive. If we are anticipating more than one person accessing an email address on gmail (i.e. 2 officers) this will present them with an issue as gmail will ask each time a different person logs on for security verification as it knows the usual browser and IP address used to access the account. This may become a little tiresome.

Summary

Request for forthcoming year would be in order: £439 for ideal hosting option (*Option agreed by the Executive Supervisory Board*), £290 for lesser option, £160 for as we are, with no changes possible to website other than 'content'.

I would also be looking at creating a Youtube Account and Flickr Account on behalf of The Society. However, I will not be implementing anything on Social Media at this time.

Steve Udall, Web Manager.

SALES MANAGER

The plan is to re-launch the Sales Unit, which has been dormant since Eddie Baker retired.

Initially, the stock will be consolidated into one location from the current temporary storage locations and a full stock take undertaken.

It is proposed that the stock will be sorted and assessed, with the prime aim to clear existing holdings via clearance sales.

An initial Sales Unit float of £500 would be required to source new stock.

Fire Cover Sales Unit advertisements will be re-introduced. Sales lists will be made available on The Society's web site. The use of an eBay shop is proposed.

Attendance with the Mobile Sales Unit at events is proposed, with a trial of attending events other than 'fire related' ones to investigate the potential of new markets.

The aim is that the majority of sales items will be 'fire related' books.

Eddie Mills, Sales Manager.

Issue on behalf of the Executive Supervisory Board, May 2018