



## **THE FIRE BRIGADE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021 & 2022 - 2023 OPERATIONAL PLAN**

### **2020 – 2021 AUDITED ANNUAL ACCOUNTS**

*(Reference Fire Cover [FC] 233, Notice Board, page 2)* The 2020 – 2021 Audited Annual Accounts were provided to members in accordance with their mandate registered with Membership Services and are available on The Society's web site. The accounts are the subject of a membership vote.

### **ANNUAL REPORT / THE SOCIETY'S OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020 – 2021 PROGRESS REPORT**

For the 2020 – 2021 Society Year, all operational units delivered their individual parts of The Society's Operational Plan within budget. Some units delivered under budget these being the Publications Unit, Membership Services Unit, and Distribution Unit.

Quarterly progress Reports for the 2020 – 2021 Society's Operational Plan have been published in 'Notice Board' as follows:

FC129, page 2- Publications; Membership Services (including Distribution); Information Technology and the Finance Unit.

FC231 page 4- Publications; Membership Services (including Distribution) and Information Technology.

#### ***2021 – 2022 Society's Operational Plan Progress***

FC233, page 2, provided the first quarter's progress from; Publications; Membership Services (including Distribution); Information Technology and the Finance Unit (Audited Accounts).

FC 234, accompanying this report, page 2, provided the second quarter's progress from; Publications; Information Technology and the Finance Unit.

*(Reference – all operational units are required to provide quarterly reports in accordance with The Fire Brigade Society Year & Activity Planner (a copy is available from The Society's web site in section 'Admin'), this reporting process mandated by a membership vote.*

### **THE SOCIETY'S OPERATIONAL PLAN 2022 - 2023**

This Operational Plan mainly concentrates on those units with the highest budget impact.

#### **FINANCE UNIT**

##### ***Membership Rates 2022 - 2023***

Membership rates are planned to increase from the start of the next Society year on 1st April 2022. An increase in rates is never taken lightly and is often not welcome news for members. However, increases in prices are inevitable in all aspects of life and it has been seven years since the last increase. The Society Accounts in recent times have shown that we have been losing money each year. This has depleted our reserves down to the point where The Society is getting close to financial insolvency. Clearly positive action needs to be taken to address this issue, and one of those actions is to revise the membership rates to better reflect the expenditure of The Society.

The primary expenditure of The Society is on Fire Cover printing and postage. The primary source of income is membership fees. Therefore the new membership rates have been calculated so that the primary expenditure is matched by the primary source of income. The recent survey gave a clear message that Fire Cover in printed form is the preference for the overwhelming majority of members.

Therefore the Executive Supervisory Board has voted to recommend the following rates to members:

	Membership Rates		
	From 1/4/15 (£)	From 1/4/22 (£)	Increase (£)
Ordinary UK Membership	29	35	6
Associate Membership	3	5	2
Junior Membership	18	22	4
Overseas Membership- Europe	31	38	7
Overseas Membership- Rest of the World	36	43	7
Honorary Life	0	0	0

Ordinary members (the largest category of membership) will see an increase of £6 for the year. This is less than a £1 increase per year if the fees had been increased annually since 2015. It helps to reduce the administrative burden to take bigger steps every few years. The £6 spread over the Society year equates to 50p per month. It is hoped that this amount is affordable for most members.

A budget for the Finance Unit of £200, for bank charges, is required.

**Richard Thompson, Treasurer**

### **PUBLICATIONS UNIT - FIRE COVERS APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023**

The Editorial Team (ET) have produced an Operational Plan since they took over the production of FC in the Autumn of 2002. Up to the restructuring of The Society these plans were accepted by a Committee vote, but are now the subject of a full democratic membership vote.

Throughout, the ET has always based their recommendations on income from membership fees.

As a result of reduced run quantities in this Society year, to closer match needs, the production of FC will out-turn at £9,928 instead of the budgeted £10,556, a 6% saving. The sale of binders raised £251.

As the Treasurer has noted, the recent survey on the format of Fire Cover delivered an overwhelming majority view from the membership.

MP printers have quoted a range of extremely generous costs for the production of FC, this against them facing increased cost, especially energy.

Providing income supports this approach, it is recommended that the FCs for 2022 – 2023 should be what the ET defines as a 'standard FC', that being 52 pages, including 4 page centre colour, plus cover (4 pages) all colour. This will cost £2,340 per edition, totalling £9,360 pa and resulting in an individual cost of **£4.68** per copy.

In case income cannot support a 'standard FC' approach, quotes have been secured for FCs as follows.

48 pages, including 4 page centre colour, plus cover (4 pages) all colour, costing £8,880 per annum (pa), an individual cost of **£4.44** per copy.

44 pages, including 4 page centre colour, plus cover (4 pages) all colour, costing £8,480 pa, an individual cost of **£4.24** per copy.

A further option was evaluated for future consideration, that being 72 pages, including 4 page centre colour, plus cover (4 pages) all colour. This option would be three issues per year costing £8,520 pa, an individual cost of **£4.26** per copy. However, this approach currently attracts no significant distribution savings.

All the above quotes are for a 500 copy run and no single FC cost more than £4.68.

No consideration of moving to A5 sized FCs has been entered in to as this has been investigated previously (FC213, Editorial, page 2 refers).

**Fire Cover add-ons** Quotes have been secured for the following, these rates to cover all options: (a) Four extra colour pages £120 and (b) Four extra B & W pages / or insert £80.

**Photo copying** Black and white: 5p per A4 per side and 10p per A3 per side. i.e. 10p double sided A4 and 20p double sided A3.

All the photocopied inserts to FC since April 2021 have been provided by MP Printers free of charge for which we thank them.

**Expenses (including travel)** The ET has requested no budget for expenses.

No alterations to the standardised layout, titling, front cover approach, the approach to editing and Editorial procedures are envisaged as these can attract increased FC production costs.

**Les Edkins, Mike Smith, Ralph Horton, The Editorial Team, The Fire Brigade Society's Publications Unit**

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES UNIT

**2021-2022 Update** At the end of October 2021 there were 439 Society members, consisting 388 full UK members, 8 Irish Members, 16 other European members, 4 rest of the world members and 23 associate members.

No change to the operating procedures of the Unit is envisaged.

A budget of £100, of which £58 is for printing of membership cards, is required.

**Richard Williams, Membership Secretary**

## DISTRIBUTION UNIT

**2021-2022 Update** With two issues of FC distributed, and the preparation for the despatch of the third well underway, we are within the predicted budget, and currently see no reason that this will change by the end of The Society year.

During the course of the current year, I have explored further possibilities for streamlining the operation, and reducing costs. Thanks to the willing help of Mary, and my local postmaster, the operation is already very slick and has a quick turn round. The magazines are usually in the Post Office the same day I pick them up, or at the latest first thing the next morning. They are then with Royal Mail no later than the next day. By then, some have usually already landed on member's doormats.

I have looked at different packaging, including recyclable and non-recyclable polybags, but none are as economic as paper envelopes. Our volumes are too small for any "bulk postage" rates, and to get a commercial company to aggregate ours with their other customers for cheaper rates attracts labour costs, and VAT, which far outweigh any savings in postage.

Considering these criteria in, and applying an assumed rate of inflation, a budget totalling £3,450 (4 x £810 for FC [average of £2.07 per FC to distribute + £210 other distribution) will be required. No miscellaneous expenses are required.

**Richard Williams, Distribution Manager**

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT

The web site has been the subject of updates with news postings, galleries, Museum Watch, a sales platform and a 'flash banner' sale of packs of FCs, as well as the posting of administration documentation. Investigation has taken place and experience has been gained in the provision of a Facebook social media platform for future implementation.

Quick links to **FRSLINKS4U-BITESIZE** published in FCs are now available from the website in the 'News' section.

A budget of £475 is required to maintain the current web site platform.

**Steve Udall, Web Site Manager**

**CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION, EVENTS UNIT and SALES UNIT** No reports.

## SUMMARY

UNIT	BUDGET
Publications Unit	£9,360
Distribution Unit:	£3,450
Membership Services Unit:	£100
Information Technology Unit:	£475
Finance Unit:	£200
Central Admin & Events Unit	£0
Sales Unit	£0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£13,585</b>

Based on current membership numbers, and assuming some non re-joiners, membership income should support this budget.

## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY & DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

The membership are advised that Richard Williams, who carries out the above roles, is standing down from 31st December 2021, although his current term of office is due to end on 31st March 2022.

**The Executive Supervisory Board**

**November 2021**