Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MEETING	Overview and Audit Committee
DATE OF MEETING	22 July 2020
OFFICER	AC Calum Bell, Head of Protection & Assurance
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Steven Lambert
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	**Operational Assurance Improvement Plan**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress that continues to be made, with regard to the delivery of the Service's approved Operational Assurance Improvement Plan (OAIP).
	The OAIP is a dynamic document, used to enhance our ability to capture, scrutinise and respond to operational learning originating from events such as our own operational debriefs, which are now customary for all notable incidents, assurance visits and external reviews.
	Our internal approach toward how we now gather and assess learning from operational activity, has better enabled us to effectively identify emerging issues and then implement practical and corrective solutions, in order to enhance operational performance.
	A fundamental part of the external assurance process remains the Authority's contractual agreement with Operational Assurance Limited (OAL), which is due to end on the 31 August 2020. This agreement has enabled the Service's risk critical operations to be subject to regular independent scrutiny, thereby strengthening the Authority's ability to deliver the best possible public service and improve the safety of Firefighters by:
	• Improving our performance at incidents;
	• Cope with future changes in the operational environment;
	• Drive development and innovation.
	The second operational review undertaken by representatives from OAL, took place over a 4½ day period during November 2019, focusing on the following operational activity:
	• High Rise Procedures
	• Command Support
	As a consequence of the visit, specific areas of

	improvement were identified that culminated in 14 recommendations being made within the final report, the content of which is currently being reviewed. It would be fair to say the timeframe between the conclusion of the visit and receipt of the final report, has for varying reasons taken longer than would normally be expected. All resultant recommendations were either marked as being **Advisory**, where OAL felt that positive management action in this area may be required, or **Suggested**, where OAL recommend that management undertake a review of the issue identified. The 14 recommendations were made up as follows: (x9) Advisory (x5) Suggested These recommendations will be presented to members of the Operational Assurance Group, who will then determine, which of these are deserving of further consideration and inclusion onto the OAIP.
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	It is recommended that the progress made against each improvement recommendation detailed within the updated OAIP is noted.
RISK MANAGEMENT	Delivery of the OAIP will contribute toward ensuring the Service's operational safe systems of work are continuously improved to conform to the latest safety standards and are efficient, effective and responsive to significant changes in the external or internal environments. Failure to deliver the OAIP could expose: • the Service, its personnel and the public to operational, health and safety risks; • Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) to reputational and / or financial risks. The OAIP will inform the ongoing development of our operational workforce plan particularly in relation to areas such as maintenance of operational skills, acquisition training and assessment. Furthermore, the OAIP does not appear to raise any immediate privacy issues.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Whilst there are no negative, financial implications associated with this report. It is nevertheless important to be reminded of the previously approved £50,000 per annum investment that has resulted in a contractual three year (two years, with the option to extend by a further year) programme of assurance visits, intended to drive continual service

	improvement.
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	There are no negative legal implications associated with this report.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	Although the Authority has committed to a default position of collaboration with Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs). The OAIP relates specifically to BFRS operational activity, however any opportunity to collaborate will be explored, as will the sharing of any identified operational learning.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	There are no negative implications on health and safety associated with this report. The delivery of the OAIP will continue to promote and enhance the existing health and safety culture within the Service.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	No immediate issues identified in relation to the OAIP, however, IIAs and DPIAs will be completed for any changes that result from any subsequent activity, where there is the potential for equality, diversity and privacy issues to arise.
USE OF RESOURCES	**Communication with stakeholders** Learning from operational activity or recommendations following debrief and assurance visits are routinely published and communicated to all staff, utilising either the I:Drive or Operational Assurance newsletter. This approach is intended to ensure there is a clear understanding and appreciation of the collective responsibility there is toward continuous improvement in respect to operational performance. **The system of internal control** From a monitoring and reporting perspective, the Head of Protection & Assurance leads on the improvement plan and is chair of the Operational Assurance Group (OAG). The Head of Operational Training and Assurance has responsibility for delivering the OAIP in conjunction with the OA team. **The medium-term financial strategy** It is intended that delivery of the OAIP, continues to be achieved within the existing budget. **The balance between spending and resources** In light of the previous challenges associated with adapting the already procured and purchased E-safety application and following approval of the growth bid during the BTB meeting held on the 1 August 2019. Coordinated visits to other fire services and informal discussions with suppliers have taken place, in order to identifying the different active monitoring systems commercially available. This has resulted in trial being

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	commenced that will then be subject to evaluation, before a final decision is made in respect to its suitability.
	It was also recognised early on that by transferring the information held on the OAIP, within its current spreadsheet type format, onto 'Viper'. Would make it easier to both interpret and report on the progress being made, in relation to the different improvement recommendations. However, progress has unfortunately been delayed, primarily due to the other work commitments involving the Data Intelligence Manager.
	The management of the asset base
	There are currently no identified impacts on the asset base.
	The arrangements to promote and ensure probity and propriety
	Delivery of the OAIP is expected to have a positive impact against these criteria by creating a more vigorous and transparent operational assurance environment within the Service.
	Environmental
	Delivery of the OAIP will enhance the Service's ability to identify and manage potential environmental hazards in both the internal and external surroundings.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	**Background** Overview and Audit Committee: 20 November 2019, 2019 (see pages 81-84) https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/03/overview_and_audit_committee_agenda_and_reports_201119-min.pdf/
APPENDICES	Appendix A: Operational Assurance Improvement Plan
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	Steve Wells, Head of Operational Training and Assurance swells@bucksfire.gov.uk 01296 744426

Ref	Report Title	Section	Recommendation	Action	Priority	Lead Officer	Lead Dept	Start date (Authorised by OAG)	Delivery Date	RAG	Progress & Issues Report	Status
					H/M/L	Resp.				Status		
							Operational Assurance Limited (OAL) checkpoint report					
7.4.1	OAL review report	Element 7.4.1	Currently the service is still progressing a number of outstanding development plans. This process is to be further supported by detailed guidance to be included within a 'Validation Training Procedure Note', currently under draft.	Is the Service progressing a Validation procedure note?	M	SC	Ops Training & Assurance		31\3\2019		Sean Cunningham to review draft Validation procedure note (SG 06/02/2019) In progress (SC 21/03/2019) In progress (SC 20/11/2019) In progress (SC 28/01/2020)	In-Progress
							Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Assurance Report					
19	JESIP Assurance Report		We would suggest a review of the original Standard Airwave Test provided by JESIP to help increase confidence around talk group use and changing channels. This requires co-ordination between the services and should include a method that allows commanders on duty to be included, not just control rooms. The test should also be recorded in terms of it taking place and if deemed appropriate shared with the LRF partners.	AC Powell RBFRS project lead for this.	M	SW	Ops Training & Assurance		30\10\2018		DN discussed Airwave testing a Joint Coordinating Group. TVP implement Airwave testing and will include BFRS but this will not be on a specific rota. SH will let BFRS know when Airwave testing has happened. BFRS to monitor and report back. (DN 20/11/2019) This was discussed with the TVFCS SROs two weeks ago. It has been agreed that SCAS/TVP will be approached at strategic level to influence a change in the way that the test is conducted. I will of course let you know as and when anything changes, but progressing this will now sit with the JESIP strategic leads (SH 24/02/2020).	In-progress
							Fire at Olleco in Aston Clinton: Operational Incident Report - 18/04/2018					
OL2	Olleco Incident Report 18/04/2018	Recommendation 2	Ensure BFRS have facilities or venues available to enable operational crews to train with foam to maintain competence.	ST on requirements for supporting training with foam.		ST	Response Policy				Initial discussion took place with the property manager reference the use of new MK hub. Discussions currently on hold. (ST 11/12/18) No further update, due to competing priorities (ST 11/02/19) As previous, no further progress (ST 21/03/19) As previous, no further progress due to competing priorities. Suggest allocate task to property as a customer requirement (ST 16/5/19) As previous. Difficult to schedule any time with property manager currently (ST 20/11/2019) The Property department is looking to carry out significant work at Buckingham in the next 12-18 months. Therefore installing an interceptor tank at Buckingham Fire Station with a bund wall surrounding the drain could be feasible to provide an area that facilitates foam training, which would then be safely collected prior to removal by a specialist waste contractor (ST 21/11/19) This recommendation will be included within the forthcoming Property Strategy, for a purpose built facility at Buckingham Fire Station. (ST 30/01/20)	In-progress

	**Operational Assurance Limited (OAL): BFRS Review of Operational Arrangements - November 2018**											

ID	Report	Element	Recommendation	Action	M	Owner	Dept	Date 1	Date 2	RAG	Update	Status
ROA3	Review of Operational Arrangements	Element 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25,26,	Operational Assurance	Actions contained within recommendations table of report.	M	SG	Ops Assurance	05/06/2019		(green)	18-Complete, 19.-Complete, 20.-Complete, 21.-Complete, 22.-Complete, 23.-Complete, 24 Open, 25. Complete, 26. Complete	In-Progress
								Fire at the Gables, Wolverton: Operational Incident Report - 12/7/2019				
G 02	The Gables Report		Investigate the possibility of carrying a search/evacuation/high-rise template so that searched/unsearched and clear areas are easily recordable.	Response policy to look at templates for using in search and evacuation scenarios and incidents.	M	ST	Response Policy	11/09/2019	01/03/2020	(amber)	New Thames Valley high rise search coordination template is currently on trial on Command Support Unit and will go to MK stations for full evaluation. (ST 20/11/2019) Initial feedback is very positive. Response Policy have sourced quotes for A2 acrylic high rise/search board. Circa £100 each, so will require budget of £3000 to include on each appliance. A larger one (A1) could also be purchased for the Command Unit. Need to consider Thames Valley partners and all is pending a full evaluation report. (ST 30/01/20)	In-Progress
G 04	The Gables Report		Command support ineffective in early stages.	Instigate Command Support training focusing on the early stages of an incident.	M	SW	Ops Training & Assurance	11/09/2019	31/03/2020	(amber)	Training package to be developed by Operational training incident command lead in discussion with OAT. Content to be considered when the OAL audit outcomes are delivered. (SG 22/11/19) PowerPoint presentation has been developed, final training details to be confirmed (SC 28/01/2010)	In-Progress
G 07	The Gables Report		Lack of usable white board space in command packs for capturing information.	Review the contents of the command wallet to see if this needs updating.	M	ST	Response Policy	11/09/2019	01/03/2020	(amber)	Command Support packs will be reviewed and updated as part of operational alignment and JESIP. Useable whiteboard space will feature alongside implementation of the new Command Support Software, and developing the roles of Command Support operatives. (ST 20/11/2019) No further update (ST 30/01/20)	In-Progress
								Fire at MK Waste Recovery Park: Operational Incident Report - 2/6/2019				
MKW	MK Waste Fire report	1 to 7	All recommendations		M/L	SG	Ops Assurance to share	25/11/2020	01/05/2020	(amber)	1. Complete-FDO training Feb 2020 2.Complete-FDO training Feb 2020 3 Action sent to Operational Training 4. Now the H&S department is at full strength there will be the capacity to develop and implement the package. (AC 12/05/2020) 5. Work is underway with the providers of PRMS, as currently the system is not fully auditable. And this is required for the current Prevention and Protection work streams (PM 12/05/2020). 6.complete	In-Progress
								Beaconsfield Railway Station: Operational Incident Report - 27/1/2020				
BRI	Beaconsfield Rail Incident	1 to 7	All recommendations	as per report	M/L	SG	Ops Assurance	20/05/2020	20/10/2020	(amber)	1. TVFCS reviewing (SH at OAG 20/05/2020) 2. On going 3. On going 4. On going 5. On going 6. On going 7. On going	In-progress
								Fire at Hipwell Court, Olney: Operational Incident Report - 24/1/2020				
HC	Hipwell Court	1,2,4,5,6,7	Recommendations 1-7 (not 3, 4 or 5 no further action-see report).	as per report	M/L	SG	Ops Assurance	20/05/2020	20/10/2020	(amber)	1. On going 2. On going 6. On going 7. Closed-presented at FDO training	In-Progress
								Official Sensitive - Restricted Circulation				