

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY**  
**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

Director of Legal & Governance, Graham Britten  
Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service  
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**Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive**  
Jason Thelwell

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To: Members of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority

4 June 2018

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS**  
**AND PUBLIC**

Please note the content of Page  
2 of this Agenda Pack

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held in Meeting Room 1, Fire and Rescue Headquarters, Stocklake, Aylesbury on **WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2018 at 11.00 am** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Graham Britten'.

Graham Britten  
Director of Legal and Governance

Councillors Carroll, Clare, Cranmer, Exon, Farrow, Geary, Glover, Hopkins, Irwin, Lambert, Marland, McDonald, Reed, Roberts, Teesdale, Watson and Wilson



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## **Recording of the Meeting**

The Authority supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. Requests to take photographs or undertake audio or visual recordings either by members of the public or by the media should wherever possible be made to [enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk) at least two working days before the meeting.

The Authority also allows the use of social networking websites and blogging to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens.

## **Adjournment and Rights to Speak – Public**

The Authority may, when members of the public are present, adjourn a Meeting to hear the views of the public on a particular agenda item. The proposal to adjourn must be moved by a Member, seconded and agreed by a majority of the Members present and voting.

Prior to inviting the public to speak, the Chairman should advise that they:

- (a) raise their hands to indicate their wish to speak at the invitation of the Chairman,
- (b) speak for no more than four minutes,
- (c) should only speak once unless the Chairman agrees otherwise.

The Chairman should resume the Meeting as soon as possible, with the agreement of the other Members present.

Adjournments do not form part of the Meeting and should be confined to times when the views of the public need to be heard.

## **Rights to Speak - Members**

A Member of the constituent Councils who is not a Member of the Authority may attend Meetings of the Authority or its Committees to make a statement on behalf of the Member's constituents in the case of any item under discussion which directly affects the Member's division, with the prior consent of the Chairman of the Meeting which will not be unreasonably withheld. The Member's statement will not last longer than four minutes.

## **Petitions**

Any Member of the constituent Councils, a District Council, or Parish Council, falling within the Fire Authority area may Petition the Fire Authority.

The substance of a petition presented at a Meeting of the Authority shall be summarised, in not more than four minutes, by the Member of the Council who presents it. If the petition does not refer to a matter before the Authority it shall be referred without debate to the appropriate Committee.

## **Questions**

Members of the Authority, or its constituent councils, District, or Parish Councils may submit written questions prior to the Meeting to allow their full and proper consideration. Such questions shall be received by the Monitoring Officer to the Authority, *in writing or by fax*, at least two clear working days before the day of the Meeting of the Authority or the Committee.

## **COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. To appoint the Authority's Standing Committees and Lead Members.
2. To determine the following issues after considering recommendations from the Executive Committee, or in the case of 2(a) below, only, after considering recommendations from the Overview and Audit Committee:
  - (a) variations to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
  - (b) the medium-term financial plans including:
    - (i) the Revenue Budget;
    - (ii) the Capital Programme;
    - (iii) the level of borrowing under the Local Government Act 2003 in accordance with the Prudential Code produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; and
  - (c) a Precept and all decisions legally required to set a balanced budget each financial year;
  - (d) the Prudential Indicators in accordance with the Prudential Code;
  - (e) the Treasury Strategy;
  - (f) the Scheme of Members' Allowances;
  - (g) the Integrated Risk Management Plan and Action Plan;
  - (h) the Annual Report.
3. To determine the Code of Conduct for Members on recommendation from the Overview and Audit Committee.
4. To determine all other matters reserved by law or otherwise, whether delegated to a committee or not.
5. To determine the terms of appointment or dismissal of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, and deputy to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, or equivalent.
6. To approve the Authority's statutory pay policy statement.

## **AGENDA**

### **Item No:**

#### **1. Election of Chairman**

To elect a Chairman for 2018/19

#### **2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

To appoint a Vice-Chairman for 2018/19

#### **3. Apologies**

#### **4. Minutes**

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 14 February 2018 (Item 4) **(Pages 11 - 18)**

#### **5. Disclosure of Interests**

Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests they may have in any matter being considered which are not entered onto the Authority's Register, and officers to disclose any interests they may have in any contract to be considered.

#### **6. Chairman's Announcements**

To receive the Chairman's announcements (if any).

#### **7. Petitions**

To receive petitions under Standing Order SOA6.

#### **8. Questions**

To receive questions in accordance with Standing Order SOA7.

#### **9. Membership of the Authority**

Under the Buckinghamshire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996 Part III paragraph 12 – Each constituent authority shall, so far as is practicable, appoint such number of representatives to be members of the Authority as is proportionate to the number of local government electors in its area in relation to the number of such electors on the other constituent authority's area.

The electorate for Buckinghamshire County Council is 397,190 as at 1 December 2017 (Office for National Statistics, 22 March 2018) 67.2% (391,236 as at 1 December 2016, Office for National Statistics). The electorate for Milton Keynes Council is 193,847 as at 1 December 2017 (Office for National Statistics, 22 March 2018) 32.8% (189,986 as at 1 December 2016, Office for National Statistics).

Total Number of Members:			17	
Buckinghamshire	397,190	(67.2%)	11	Members
Milton Keynes	193,847	(32.8%)	6	Members

This equates to Authority Membership for Buckinghamshire County Council 11 Members and Milton Keynes Council 6 Members.

To note that the Constituent Authorities have appointed the following Members to serve on the Fire Authority for 2018/19:

Buckinghamshire County Council (11)

Councillors Carroll, Clare, Cranmer, Farrow, Glover, Irwin, Lambert, Reed, Roberts, Teesdale, and Watson

Milton Keynes Council (6)

Councillors Exon, Geary, Hopkins, Marland, McDonald and Wilson

**10. Committee Matters**

- (a) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

The Authority is required by the above Regulations to review the basis of allocation of seats amongst the Political Groups either at its Annual Meeting, or as soon as practicable thereafter, or following a change in its Membership. In making its review, the Authority is required, so far as reasonably practicable, to comply with the following principles:

- (i) Not all seats on each Committee are to be allocated to the same Group.
- (ii) The majority of seats is to be allocated to a particular Group if the number of persons belonging to that Group is a majority on the Authority.
- (iii) Subject to the above paragraphs, the number of seats on the Committees allocated to each Group should bear the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the Committees as that borne by the number of Members of that Group to the Membership of the Authority.
- (iv) Subject to paragraphs (i) to (iii) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to different political groups bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

Subject to formal notification of the Membership of each Political Group, the allocation of seats on the Authority is as follows:

Conservative Group:	12 seats	(70.59%)
Liberal Democrat Group:	3 seats	(17.65%)
Labour Group:	2 seats	(11.76%)

The above Regulations, with the Authority's Scheme of Delegation, require a notice in writing to be delivered to the Authority's Monitoring Officer signed by two or more Members of the Authority to establish a Political Group.

The Authority is asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Katie Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) – 01296 744633

Background papers: None.

(b) Committee Appointments

To consider making appointments to the Authority's committees. The membership of the Executive and the Overview and Audit committees is required to be mutually exclusive.

**Executive Committee**

The Authority is asked to make appointments to the Executive Committee in accordance with the wishes of the respective Political Groups (8 Members)

It is recommended that the seats should be allocated as follows:

Conservative - 6

Liberal Democrat – 1

Labour - 1

**Overview and Audit Committee**

The Authority is asked to make appointments to the Overview and Audit Committee in accordance with the wishes of the respective Political Groups (9 Members).

It is recommended that the seats should be allocated as follows:

Conservative - 6

Liberal Democrat - 2

Labour – 1

Contact Officer: Katie Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) – 01296 744633

Background papers: None.

**11. Calendar of Meetings**

Fire Authority

Wednesday 17 October 2018 at 11.00am

Wednesday 12 December 2018 at 11.00am

Wednesday 13 February 2019 at 11.00am

Wednesday 12 June 2019 at 11.00am

### Executive Committee

Wednesday 11 July 2018 at 10.00am

Wednesday 19 September 2018 at 10.00am

Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 10.00am

Wednesday 6 February 2019 at 10.00am

Wednesday 6 March 2019 at 10.00am

### Overview & Audit Committee

Wednesday 18 July 2018 at 10.00am

Wednesday 14 November 2018 at 10.00am

Wednesday 8 March 2019 at 10.00am

## **12. Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies**

### (a) Local Government Association Annual Conference

To appoint 1 Member to attend as the Authority's representative at the Local Government Association's Annual Conference.

### (b) Local Government Association Fire Commission

To appoint 1 Member and Standing Deputy to represent the Authority at the Local Government Association's Fire Commission.

### (c) Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference

To appoint 1 Member to attend as the Authority's representative at the Local Government Association's Annual Fire Conference.

### (d) Combined Fire Authorities Conference

To appoint 1 Member to attend as the Authority's representative at the Combined Fire Authorities Conference.

### (e) Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee

(i) To appoint 2 Representatives to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee.

(ii) To nominate 2 substitute members to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service – Joint Committee (in the event the 2 representatives are unable to attend).

## **13. Lead Member Responsibilities**

To consider the allocation of Lead Member Responsibilities. The Lead Member Responsibilities are currently as follows:

<b>Responsibility</b>
Community Protection
To lead on issues relating to prevention of, and protection from, harm to our communities.
People and Equality and Diversity
To ensure that the right staffing solutions are in place to provide the best possible service to our communities.
Finance, IT and Procurement
To lead on treasury management, MTFP and the longer term aspects of our finances to ensure that we can continue to deliver a high level of service to our community.
Health and Safety and Corporate Risk
To ensure that measures and policies are in place to mitigate risks to the organisation and our staff.
Property and Resource Management
To lead on the creation of the Blue Light Hub in Milton Keynes and other property issues and to also ensure that innovative, efficient and workable staffing solutions can be implemented to deliver the best possible service to our communities.
Collaboration and Transformation
To lead on collaboration across the blue light services in line with the Policing and Crime Act 2017; and on transformation in partnership with the Royal Berkshire and Oxfordshire fire and rescue services.

The Authority is recommended to approve the allocation of Lead Member Responsibilities.

Background Papers: None

**14. Fire and Rescue National Framework for England**

To consider Item 14 **(Pages 19 - 84)**

**15. Update on Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme**

To consider Item 15 **(Pages 85 - 106)**

**16. Implementing the Well-being Strategy**

To consider Item 16 **(Pages 107 - 122)**

**17. Update on the Fire Authority's financial support for sprinkler installation**

To consider Item 17 **(Pages 123 - 132)**

**18. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider excluding the public and press representatives from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including BMKFA); and Paragraph 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the report contains information in respect of which a claim to legal and professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings, and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:



## **19. Firefighters' Pensions Top Up Grant**

To consider Item 19

If you have any enquiries about this agenda please contact: Katie Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) – Tel: (01296) 744633 email: [knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk](mailto:knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk)

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Minutes of the meeting of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2018 at 11.00 am

**Present** Councillors Carroll, Cranmer, Exon, Glover, Lambert, Marland, McDonald, McLean, Reed (Chairman), Roberts, Teesdale, Watson and Wilson

**Officers:** J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), D Sutherland (Director of Finance and Assets), N Boustred (Head of Service Delivery), J Parsons (Head of Service Development), M Hemming (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), L Swift (Director of People and Organisational Development), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer), F Pearson (Communication and Consultation Manager), A Hussain (Principal Accountant) and Stuart Gowanlock (Corporate Planning Manager)

One member of the public

**Apologies:** Councillors Irwin, McCall and Sullivan

**FA41 WELCOME ANY NEW MEMBERS ONTO THE AUTHORITY**

The Chairman welcomed the new Member to the Fire Authority Councillor Keith McLean from Milton Keynes Council and advised that it was the Group Leader's wish that he be appointed to the Executive Committee and Councillor Luisa Sullivan be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor McLean be appointed to the Executive Committee and Councillor Sullivan be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee

**FA42 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 13 December 2017, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**FA43 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman's Announcements had been circulated in advance, but the Chairman also advised Members that he, along the Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Deputy Director of Finance and Assets had met with the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, the Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP. This meeting had been facilitated by the Rt Hon John Bercow MP.

**FA44 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

**Executive Committee – 7 February 2018**

**(a) Members' Allowances**

RESOLVED –

That a Scheme for Members' Allowances for 2018/19 (Appendix C which includes figures indicative of a 1% increase) with an uplift from the 17/18 Scheme to reflect any final Grey Book pay award for 17/18 be adopted.

**(b) The Prudential Code, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision**

RESOLVED –

That the Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement be approved.

**(c) Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2020/21**

A Member asked if the visit to the Minister had been worthwhile and was advised that it had given the Authority the opportunity to make the Minister aware of some matters he was not aware of, especially around the Authority's reserves position, what was allocated and why the Authority held a reserves balance.

A Member asked how the savings of £311k were accounted for and was advised that these came from various savings. There was some previous underspend on electricity, gas and utilities; additional aerial site income of £75k per year; revenue funding for sprinklers had been reduced, which would save £100k and there was increased treasury management income due to the excellent performance of investments.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that he was aware of the risks regarding a pay rise above 1% and continued USAR funding. These risks had been flagged for some time on the Authority's risk registers. In terms of pay rises, Members would be aware that a settlement had been agreed with the government up until 2020, which was in line with the governments expectations that pay rises would not be above 1%. If pay rises start to take off significantly above that, the government was well aware that it would need to be funding such pay rises.

RESOLVED –

That the Authority:

1. note and have due regard to the report and Statement of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 8 of Annex A).
2. approve a Council Tax precept of £62.70 for a band D equivalent property (a 2.99% increase from 2017/18 – equal to 3.5p per week) and the revenue budget as set out in Appendix 1.
3. approve the capital programme as set out in Appendix 2.

Details of the recorded vote were set out below:

	For	Against	Abstained
Carroll	✓		
Cranmer	✓		
Exon	✓		
Glover	✓		
Lambert	✓		
Marland			✓
McDonald	✓		
McLean	✓		
Reed	✓		
Roberts	✓		
Teesdale	✓		
Watson	✓		
Wilson			✓

#### FA45

#### TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018/19

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised that Members were briefed at the Overview and Audit Committee in November 2017 and following this meeting, changes had been proposed to the strategy for 2018/19. The significant changes were:

1. That the duration limit to be used for UK based counterparties for 2018/19 should be the Capita recommended limit plus six months (e.g. the limit for counterparties rated 'Red' would be 1 year).
2. That the limit of 100 days was removed from non-UK based counterparties and that the duration limit was as per the Capita rating (but not including the plus six months discretion).
3. Any counterparty rated at least 'Green' by Capita should be added to the counterparty list regardless of location.
4. The top-ten building societies (by group assets) should be added to the counterparty list. The duration of investment would be limited to 1 year and the total amount invested with any one non-rated building society at any point in time would not exceed £2 million.
5. That up to £3 million could be invested in a property fund (or funds).

It being proposed and seconded that an amendment be made to the officer's recommendation 2, so that the following text be added, "subject to a paper going to the Authority for approval" it was:

RESOLVED –

1. that the changes numbered 1-4 in the Executive Summary to the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Treasury Management Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2018/19 be approved.

2. up to £3 million can be invested in a property fund (or funds) be approved subject to a paper going to the Authority for approval.

3. work is undertaken to investigate the possibility of restructuring the existing debt portfolio, including potential renegotiation of early repayment charges be approved.

**FA46**

**FIRE AND RESCUE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLAND (GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION)**

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the Consultation seeks views on the revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, which was published on 27 December 2017. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 required the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England in connection with the discharge of their functions. FRAs had a statutory duty to have regard to the Framework.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised Members that the National Framework was last updated in 2012 and this revised version incorporates such changes as the creation of a new inspectorate, the National Fire Chiefs Council, along with the provisions contained within the Policing and Crime Act 2017 on emergency services collaboration and changes to fire and rescue governance. In preparation for the draft consultation response, a gap analysis between the 2012 version of the National Framework and the proposed revision has been undertaken. This analysis with the main changes could be found at Appendix B.

RESOLVED –

That the proposed draft response (Appendix C) to be consultation be approved.

**FA47**

**HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY AND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (HMICFRS)**

The Head of Service Development advised Members that currently HMICFRS were preparing to undertake three pilot inspections, one from each of the three main governance models. This Authority had been assisting HMICFRS in their preparations and the Chief Fire Officer was a member of the External

Reference Group. Each Tranche would be a mixture of service governance types and would consist of 15 services. This Authority was in tranche three and proposed to be inspected in spring 2019. Running parallel to the pilot inspections was the consultation process. In general the Authority's position was supportive of the framework and methodology as proposed.

RESOLVED –

1. That the content of the report be noted.
2. That the response to the formal consultation on the framework (Appendix F) be agreed.

#### **FA48**

#### **PAY POLICY PRINCIPLES AND STATEMENT 2018/19**

The Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity introduced the report and advised Members that the pay policy was required to be updated each financial year and was therefore being presented today as the 2018/19 Pay Policy for the Authority.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that it was pleasing to report that the Pay Multiples ratio of highest paid to lowest paid employee (as at December 2017) continued to fall for the sixth year running. This six year period saw the ratio improved by 22 per cent since 2012.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that the Government introduced a UK wide apprenticeship levy from April 2017. This levy was to help fund the increase in the quantity and quality of apprenticeship training and to give employers greater control of apprenticeships. The levy rate was set at 0.5 per cent of an employer's pay bill and was collected via PAYE. At the Executive Committee meeting on 29 July 2015, Members opted to use the apprenticeship training agency (ATA) model for the recruitment of apprentices. The Authority would utilise apprenticeship opportunities wherever practicable as part of a blended approach to improving diversity and refreshing the workforce. The Authority would reward apprentices appropriately, recognising competence and performance during the various development stages of their apprenticeship.

RESOLVED –

That the Pay Policy Principles and Statement as set out in Annex A be approved as the statutory Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19.

#### **FA49**

#### **APPRENTICESHIP DIVERSITY CHAMPTIONS NETWORK**

The Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity advised Members that the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) was an initiative promoted by the National Apprenticeship Service. This report detailed the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network, its relevance to the Authority, the

benefits of being a member and the requirements of becoming signatories to the Pledge.

The Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity also advised Members that this Authority had lead the way in recruitment of apprentices and its diversity of the workforce had changed as a result of this in a positive way. This was about core principles and how the Authority challenges diversity of its workforce and to have a workforce that more closely reflects the communities across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

The Director of People and Organisational Development advised Members that the National Fire Chiefs Council had recommended that up to four fire and rescue services joined this network as it fits with what fire and rescue services in the broader sector were trying to achieve around diversity and Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service was one of those four. The reason for bringing this proposal now was because it fits with the Authority's priorities for next year and it also gives the Authority free tools and techniques to use. It is supported by the National Apprenticeships Service, part of the Department for Education, who want to promote careers in fire and police. The National Apprenticeships Service were promoting a joint fire and police apprenticeship event on the first day of National Apprenticeship week 5-9 March 2018.

The Employee Relations and Engagement Manager asked Members to note the benefits of signing this pledge and the core principles of the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN). Membership included; employing apprentices; driving an inclusive culture; championing diversity, gathering data, reporting back; and making a pledge. If adopted, a number of activities would need to be developed to achieve the goal of increasing the diversity of our workforce through apprenticeships.

A Member asked who wrote the pledge, whether it was a standard format, what were the consequences of not signing and who was the dedicated diversity champion going to be and was advised that there was a template to use, but the pledge in this report had been written with guidance from the network. It was proposed that the Director of People and Organisational Development would be the diversity champion. The consequences of not joining the network would be that the Authority would need to invest more money in front end recruitment, by using the national apprenticeship network, the Authority can use their systems to advertise vacancies; receive help with free campaigns and use their expertise to help us reach the diverse groups within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

A Member asked a further question regarding what was the time line for the pledge and was advised that most of the work the Authority was already undertaking in its four year equality and diversity inclusion which Members approved in 2016. What had been put in the pledge was measurable, so progress could be shown.



Members agreed that the Chairman should write to the Apprenticeship Minister to invite him to come and visit this service.

RESOLVED –

That the Pledge for the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network is endorsed for signature by the Chairman of the Authority, the Lead Member for People and Equality and Diversity and the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive.

**FA50**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Authority noted that the next meeting of the Fire Authority was to be held on Wednesday 13 June 2018 at 11.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.20PM

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 June 2018
<b>OFFICER</b>	Mick Osborne, Deputy Chief Fire Officer
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Roger Reed
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Fire and Rescue National Framework for England</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>On the 8 May 2018 a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework for England was published alongside a report containing the Government's responses to the outcomes of the public consultation in relation to the same that was run between 27 December 2017 and 14 February 2018.</p> <p>The draft National Framework, together with a recommended response to the consultation, was presented to the Authority at its 14 February 2018 meeting. The Government's position on the issues raised by the Authority in its response to the consultation is set out at Appendix A. The full report on the outcomes of the national consultation and Government responses to the same is shown at Appendix B.</p> <p>The revised National Framework (shown at Appendix C) will take effect from 1 June 2018 and has been comprehensively updated to reflect:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1/ the effect of legislative changes (notably the Policing and Crime Act 2017) and other reforms that have been introduced since the last edition of the Framework was published in 2012; and,</li> <li>2/ the feedback from the public consultation.</li> </ol> <p>The revised Framework seeks to embed key elements of the Government's reform agenda for fire and rescue including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformation of local governance by enabling mayors and police and crime commissioners to take on responsibility for fire and rescue from existing fire authorities where a local case to do so is made;</li> <li>• The establishment of a new regime of inspection via Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue (HMICFRS);</li> <li>• A comprehensive set of professional standards (the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service announced</li> </ul>

	<p>the Government’s approach to improving professional standards for fire and rescue services across England on 22 May. This includes the creation of a new Fire Standards Board to ensure standards are nationally coordinated to a high level across the sector – further details of the approach are shown at Appendix E);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More efficient procurement and collaboration;</li> <li>• Improved transparency via publication of greater performance data and a new national website for fire and rescue;</li> <li>• An ambitious programme of workforce reform.</li> </ul>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the content of the new National Framework and the Government’s response to the outcomes of the public consultation in relation to the same, be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>No material changes to the requirements for integrated risk management planning specified in the 2012 National Framework have been made.</p> <p>In the response to the 2018 National Framework consultation the Government noted that there was some demand for additional guidance in relation to integrated risk management planning and stated that:</p> <p><i>“The NFCC’s commissioned Community Risk Programme is in the process of developing a comprehensive, evidence-based and accredited risk analysis toolkit which should be used by FRAs to inform IRMPs. However, given the nature of the Framework, we have not made specific reference to this work”.</i></p> <p>It is not yet known whether the toolkit will be available in time to inform the development of the Authority’s 2020-2025 Public Safety Plan, preparations for which are already underway.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	No immediate or direct financial implications arising from the publication of the revised National Framework are envisaged.
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	Section 21 of the Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004 (FRSA 2004) requires Fire & Rescue Authorities to ‘have regard’ to the National Framework in carrying out their functions.
<b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b>	<p>The new National Framework restates the existing statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities, police forces, and ambulance trusts to collaborate set out by the <a href="#">Policing and Crime Act 2017</a>. It also requires, at section 2.15, that:</p> <p><i>“Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with</i></p>

	<p><i>other fire and rescue authorities to deliver intraoperability (between fire and rescue authorities) and interoperability (with other responders such as other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums) in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with the National Resilience Lead Authority to ensure interoperability is maintained for National Resilience assets”.</i></p> <p>Intraoperability and interoperability are further defined at sections 2.16 and 2.17 respectively.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>In response to the consultation findings, the new National Framework has been modified to make more specific reference to mental health in the ‘People Strategy’ section which now states, at section 6.1, that this should:</p> <p><i>“...take into account the principles set out in the NFCC’s people strategy and at a minimum cover [amongst other things]... health and safety, wellbeing, disabilities and support (e.g. mental health and physical support)...</i></p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>In its response to the consultation findings the Government noted, at paragraph 37, that:</p> <p><i>“One representative body found the detail in the Workforce section light and lacking any ‘teeth’ and invited Home Office to consider the re-introduction of national targets or diversity measures, or to require FRS to set local targets/diversity measures underpinned through appropriate data for their local communities.</i></p> <p><i>Response – The current lack of diversity amongst firefighters is unacceptable and although we have seen improvements in the most recent data on new joiners for whole-time staff, there is still a lot further to go. Firefighters should represent the communities they serve which is why diversity targets should be set locally rather than nationally. We would expect FRAs to have an improvement plan in place and consider and scrutinise available data to improve diversity year on year”.</i></p> <p>The People Strategy therefore states, at section 6.1, that an FRS should be <i>“continuously improving the diversity of the workforce to ensure it represents the community it serves”.</i></p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>The arrangements for setting, reviewing and implementing strategic and operational objectives; Performance monitoring, including budget monitoring; achievement of strategic objectives and best value performance</b></p>

	<p><b>indicators.</b></p> <p>Given the statutory requirement for fire and rescue authorities to 'have regard' to the National Framework in carrying out their functions, the requirements of the Framework will inform the Authority's approach to pursuit of its strategic objectives and enablers via its Public Safety and Corporate plans.</p> <p><b>Communication with stakeholders</b></p> <p>The new National Framework sets out requirements for fire and rescue authorities relating to stakeholder consultation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That each Integrated Risk Management Plan must "<i>reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners</i>" (section 4.6i);</li> <li>• "<i>In demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need [amongst other things] to: ...provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement...</i>" (section 7.12);</li> </ul> <p>These essentially re-state what was in the 2012 Framework and are not considered to impose any additional burdens on the Authority.</p> <p><b>The system of internal control</b></p> <p>Officers will have regard to National Framework requirements when preparing key strategic documents covered by the scope of the Framework such as the Public Safety Plan (IRMP), Medium Term Financial Plan, Annual Statement of Assurance and People Strategy.</p> <p><b>The medium term financial strategy</b></p> <p>The new National Framework specifies a number of requirements at section 5, in particular in relation to the production of medium term financial plan, efficiency plan and reserves strategy. The Authority is already fully compliant with these requirements.</p> <p><b>The balance between spending and resources</b></p> <p>No immediate or direct revenue or capital costs arising from the publication of the new Framework.</p> <p><b>The management of the asset base</b></p> <p>The new National Framework confirms, at section 3.1 relating to national resilience, that:</p> <p><i>"The Government retains responsibility for the provision of national resilience assets and capabilities managed and delivered through fire and rescue services. This responsibility extends to undertaking the National Risk Assessment which informs the</i></p>
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	<p><i>requirements for fire and rescue national resilience capabilities. In meeting this responsibility, the Government has committed significant financial resource to build national resilience capabilities and to support their ongoing maintenance”.</i></p> <p><b>The arrangements to promote and ensure probity and propriety</b> Requirements in relation to accountability and transparency are set out at sections 7.10 – 7.12 and 7.14 – 7.16 of the Framework document. Officers are of the view that the Authority already meets these requirements.</p> <p><b>Environmental</b> No new or specific requirements specified in or arising from the publication of the new Framework.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background</b> The draft 2018 National Framework and proposed response to the public consultation in relation to the same was presented to the Authority for approval at its 14 February 2018 meeting (at agenda item 9): <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/9615/1782/8239/FIRE_AUTHORITY_AGENDA_AND_REPORTS_140218-min.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/9615/1782/8239/FIRE_AUTHORITY_AGENDA_AND_REPORTS_140218-min.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>APPENDICES</b></p>	<p>Appendix A: Home Office responses to BMKFA consultation feedback; Appendix B: Home Office response to national consultation outcomes; Appendix C: 2018 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England; Appendix D: Home Office letter announcing approach to re-development of the Incident Recording System; Appendix E: Ministerial announcement regarding approach to fire professional standards.</p>
<p><b>TIME REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>15 Minutes</p>
<p><b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b></p>	<p>Stuart Gowanlock <a href="mailto:sgowanlock@bucksfire.gov.uk">sgowanlock@bucksfire.gov.uk</a> 01296 744435</p>

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<b>Issues raised by BMKFA</b>	<b>Home Office Response</b>
<b><i>Delivery of Core Functions</i></b>	
<p>BMKFA welcomes the focus on core functions and the additional emphasis made around prevention and protection activities and agrees that fire and rescue authorities can make a positive contribution to the delivery of public services locally, however not at the expense of delivery of core functions.</p>	<p><i>The revised Framework has been changed to clarify (para 2.6) that "this should not be at the expense of effective delivery of their statutory core fire functions". The Government has retained the requirement that wider activity should not be at the expense of core functions as fire and rescue services are ultimately funded to deliver core functions as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and no additional activity should be at the detriment of that.</i></p>
<p>This section appears to be heavily focused on life safety and fails to mention that FRSs have a role to play in identifying risk and preventing economic and social loss.</p>	<p>The Government did not respond specifically to this point in their report on the outcomes of the consultation. However, the new National Framework states at paragraph 2.4: <i>"Consideration could also be given to non-domestic premises which are at risk from fire in order to mitigate loss to economic wellbeing".</i></p>
<b><i>Inspection, Accountability and Assurance</i></b>	
<p>BMKFA agrees that the provision of data is essential for future evidence based decision making on policy and transparency. However, the current arrangements for providing data to the Home Office (in particular the Incident Recording System - IRS) is inefficient and outdated and requires government investment.</p>	<p>The Government did not respond to this point in their report on the outcomes of the consultation nor in the finalised framework document. However the Home Office set out how they intend to approach the renewal of the IRS system in a letter to CFOs and Fire Authority Chairs issued on 23 March 2018 (shown at Appendix D).</p>
<b><i>Achieving Value for Money</i></b>	
<p>The NFCC R&amp;D function is still in its infancy and not yet in a position to satisfy all the needs of the UK FRS collectively. Also, many research projects are small scale and involve local collaborations with academic institutions. This allows academic development of individuals as well as supporting individual FRS needs. This should not be stifled...</p>	<p>The Government did not respond to this point in their report on the outcomes of the consultation. However the new Framework states at paragraph 5.15: <i>"Where fire and rescue services embark on research and development outside of any national programme, processes should be put in place to ensure it meets quality standards and, where possible and appropriate, is available to the sector to enable good practice to be shared".</i></p>

<b>Issues raised by BMKFA</b>	<b>Home Office Response</b>
<p>It would be helpful in this section to also define the role of the Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST) in supporting FRS research and development. Currently CAST is better established and financed by the Home Office to support Police, Border Force much more effectively than FRS. We feel this should change and CAST be supported by the Home office to work further with FRS, NFCC and the R&amp;D function.</p>	<p>The Government did not respond to this point in their report on the outcomes of the consultation nor in the finalised framework document.</p>
<b>Governance</b>	
<p>NFCC - It would be fair to describe this subcommittee, which has no separate legal status from CFOA Ltd, as in an embryonic state. It is therefore questionable as to whether it is prudent to give the NFCC quasi-statutory status by recognition in the statutory National Framework and in the proposed revised statutory Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities.</p>	<p>The Government did not respond to these points individually but summarised the feedback as follows:          “There were a number of different comments on the role of the NFCC as outlined in the Framework including “...it is not clear however the mechanism or method by which a fire and rescue authority can effectively consult with the NFCC”, “there is a concern over the capacity of the NFCC to support potential expectations”, “the reference to NFCC needs to be stronger as the professional leadership and voice of FRSs” and “Home Office should provide the NFCC with financial support to best equip it to ensure it fulfils its remit”.</p> <p>It then responded as follows:  <i>The NFCC has been involved in the drafting of the Framework and their views have been fully considered in its development. Home Office is content to discuss all relevant issues with the NFCC, including funding and structure, however we do not see these as being issues for inclusion in the Framework. Within the Framework, there is an expectation for engagement between the NFCC and individual FRAs and it is for them to determine the best mechanism for doing so.</i></p>
<p>It is suggested that fire and rescue authorities could consult and seek advice from the NFCC in their preparation of any action plans arising from an inspection (para 3.5)...</p> <p>It is not clear however the mechanism or method by which a fire and rescue authority can effectively consult with the NFCC within the meaning of the National Framework. Nor is it known whether the NFCC has the resources to provide, and the processes to sign off or endorse, the advice given in its name on any proposed action plan.</p>	

Issues raised by BMKFA	Home Office Response
<p>Paragraph 4.15 (expectation that FRS engage with NFCC and it, in turn, supports and represents every FRS) is merely a self-serving aspiration of the type found in the NFCC's 'arrangement and operating principles'. It can have no proper place in the National Framework.</p>	<p>As above.</p>
<p>Even if it were able to agree protocols for its internal approval of the level and type of support and advice it is unclear how the NFCC would be able to resource this, including managing potential conflicts of interests, when it is reliant on a pool of well-meaning volunteers and the tolerance of fire and rescue authorities which permit these volunteers to participate in these extramural activities.</p>	
<p>The same concerns pertain and become even more apparent in connection with the relationships which would be created with a fire and rescue authority, the Secretary of State, and the NFCC in the new role envisaged for the NFCC by the draft National Framework in the proposed revised statutory Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action.</p>	<p>The Government did not specifically respond to this point in their report on the outcomes of the consultation. However, the new Framework states at paragraph 6 of the Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities (Annex D to the Framework document):  <i>"HMICFRS will play a leading role in identifying any fire and rescue authority that is failing, or is likely to fail, in providing efficiency, effectiveness and leadership for the public. The NFCC and the LGA and/or APCC, will play an important liaison role in engaging the wider sector in supporting those authorities at risk and work collaboratively with key bodies, identify at an early stage serious risks to performance or the requirement to act in accordance with the Framework. The NFCC and/or Local Government Association and/or the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners will work with these bodies to prevent the escalation of those risks to avoid any risk to public safety or any negative impact on the reputation of the sector"</i>.</p>

<b>Issues raised by BMKFA</b>	<b>Home Office Response</b>
<b>Workforce</b>	
<p>Light on the promotion of workforce reform and recommendations from previous reviews (e.g. 2016 Thomas report).</p>	<p><i>The NFCC people strategy clearly articulates the areas which fire and rescue services should consider and put in place as part of their own workforce strategy. The framework allows flexibility for other strategies and work by other organisations to be considered by only stating minimum requirements. It would not be feasible to include every organisation and strategy that exists.</i></p>
<p>In 6.6 (dealing with re-appointment of principal fire officers post retirement) the opening line mentions 'same fire and rescue authority'. Can it be read that 6.7 extends this principle across all fire and rescue authorities and indeed other bodies related to fire and rescue authorities?</p>	<p>This point was not addressed specifically. However the following response was given to the generality of the issues around re-appointment of principal fire officers:  <i>"As mentioned in the introduction to both the consultation document and this response document..., as we had previously consulted on the section about 're-engagement of senior officers' post-retirement we were not seeking further comments. However, several comments questioned whether this section was compatible with the principle of 'appointment on merit'... Response - If the retired senior officer was appointed through fair and open competition as being the best person for the job, the principles in this section of the Framework would not apply".</i></p>
<b>Issues raised by BMKFA</b>	
<b>Home Office Response</b>	
<b>National Resilience</b>	
<p>BMKFA note and approve the continuing commitment from Government to provide national resilience but would welcome a longer commitment to funding in order to improve resilience and assist with contingency planning.</p>	<p><i>Any national resilience capability gaps raised by FRAs would be considered and/or discussed at the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board. Following liaison, as necessary, with other government departments and the devolved administrations, decisions will be taken which would seek to address the matter raised. These matters will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with the solution not always being one relating to, or requiring, additional funding. Therefore, we believe it would be over prescriptive, and not add further clarity, to indicate any further funding at this stage.</i></p>

<b>Issues raised by BMKFA</b>	<b>Home Office Response</b>
<p>The addition of MTFAs is noted along with the interpretation from Government that this is an agreed function of fire and rescue services as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).</p>	<p><i>Responding to acts of terrorism is an agreed function of fire and rescue services as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book), and is encompassed within the broad descriptions within the existing agreed firefighter role maps: to save and preserve endangered life, and safely resolve operational incidents. To ensure no misunderstanding we have re-drafted this section to distinguish between terrorist attacks in general and Marauding Terrorist Firearm Attacks (MTFA) so now the Framework does not assert that MTFAs have specifically been agreed as part of the Grey Book.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, the Response section of the framework has been redrafted to clarify the position that fire and rescue authorities must make every endeavour to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties - including MTFAs duties - at all times, including periods when business continuity arrangements are in place. The draft Framework had restated this requirement within the MTFAs section and that duplication has been removed.</i></p>

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Home Office

# Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

## Government response to consultation

May 2018





# Ministerial Foreword

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England provides the overall strategic direction to fire and rescue authorities in England. I felt the Framework, last revised in 2012, no longer fully reflected the changing role and landscape of fire and rescue in England, nor the Government's reform programme.

In close partnership with the sector, we are delivering a reform programme that seeks to support the continuous improvement of fire and rescue services, enabling them to be more accountable, effective and professional than ever before, building on the great strides in prevention and collaboration that they have already made. I therefore wanted to revise the National Framework to embed these reforms, including:

- outlining how the transformed local governance of fire and rescue should operate, including the requirements placed on mayors and police and crime commissioners who take on responsibility for their fire and rescue service;
- establishing how fire and rescue authorities should work with the National Fire Chiefs Council and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), in particular how they should respond to inspections;
- supporting the development of a comprehensive set of professional standards to drive sector improvement;
- encouraging services to transform commercially with more efficient procurement and collaboration, including engaging in national commercial programmes; and
- explaining what we require from fire and rescue authorities to support delivery of our ambitious programme for workforce reform.

It is against this backdrop that the Government launched a consultation on our revisions – as well as the contents of the wider Framework – in December 2017. I am grateful to all those who took the time to respond to the public consultation. This document sets out the results of that public consultation. We have carefully considered each and every comment received and have amended the Framework accordingly. The final revised National Framework has been published separately. Some comments received were outside the scope of the Framework but are nevertheless incredibly useful in shaping our wider policy thinking which we are undertaking with the fire sector.

Finally, I will update the National Framework - as required - to ensure that the learning and recommendations from Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, as well as those from the wider Grenfell Tower Inquiry, are captured and reflected. Should changes be considered necessary the Government will undertake a further consultation.



Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP

Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service

# Introduction

1. In December 2017, the Government launched a consultation on revisions to the Fire and Rescue National Framework in England ('the Framework'). This document provides a summary of the responses to the consultation and sets out the Government's response. It is being published alongside the revised Framework.

## Background

2. Section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework which sets priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England in connection with the discharge of their functions. FRAs have a statutory duty to have regard to the Framework. The 2004 Act requires the Secretary of State to keep the Framework under review. Revisions to the Framework may be made, with significant revisions subject to statutory consultation with representatives of fire and rescue authorities and their employees, and any other persons deemed appropriate.
3. The National Framework was last updated in 2012 apart from an addendum in 2014 on fitness principles. Changes are needed which warrant a full revision of it at this time to embed the fire reform programme. This includes outlining how reforms should work in practice such as the role and responsibilities of the new inspectorate for fire and rescue and the National Fire Chiefs Council with how services should in turn engage with them; and how the provisions in the Policing and Crime Act 2017 on emergency services collaboration and changes to fire and rescue governance should apply.
4. The public consultation ran from 27 December 2017 to 14 February 2018 and comments were invited on each section of the Framework. Please note that in response to the consultation we have since re-ordered some chapters and moved some text within the final Framework and so this Government response reflects the consulted on version of the Framework.
5. Within the Workforce chapter of the draft National Framework, the section on 're-engagement of senior officers post-retirement' had been the subject of an earlier, separate consultation which the Government responded to in December 2017<sup>1</sup>. In our consultation document we outlined that we were not consulting on this text further. The National Framework includes the proposed wording following our initial consultation and no further changes to that section have been made.
6. The consultation included, as an annex, a revised 'Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities'. The Government is also required to consult on revisions to this protocol which we have done as part of this consultation. The final version of the protocol is being published as an annex to the Framework and the Government's response to the issues raised on the protocol raised through this consultation is included within this response.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/re-employing-senior-fire-officers-after-their-retirement>

7. The Government intends for the new National Framework to come into effect on 1 June 2018 prior to the commencement of fire inspection. The outputs from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety will be considered on an ongoing basis and further changes may be made to the Framework as required. Any such changes will be subject to a separate consultation.

## Responses

8. A total of 71 responses were received: 39 from FRAs, 8 from police and crime commissioners (PCCs), 9 from representative bodies, 8 from other bodies and 7 from members of the public. 23 were received via the online form and 48 via e-mail or post. Responses provided online which were either incomplete or not formally submitted were not considered as part of the consultation response. Annex A lists the key stakeholders that responded to the consultation.
9. Respondents were asked to comment on each section within the draft Framework in free-text rather than answer specific questions. Respondents were also given the opportunity to add any other views or comments, or raise any other related issues as part of the consultation.
10. Not all respondents to the consultation provided comments on each chapter of the draft Framework as some limited their responses to particular areas of interest. All views expressed have been taken into consideration and changes have been made to the published Framework in light of the comments received.
11. A summary of the responses received to each chapter and the Government's conclusions are set out in the following pages.

## Delivery of Core Functions

12. Out of 71 overall responses received, 61 provided comments on this section. A number of responses commented that they found the section clear, specific and proportionate. They agreed and supported the changes made and overall were content with the section.
13. Some responses sought clarification on the requirement for FRAs to “identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face” as they considered that this could be much broader than focusing on statutory responsibilities of the fire and rescue authority and that this would directly impact on resourcing requirements to deliver against any local plans. It was suggested that guidance was required on how to assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks.

*Response – The requirement for FRAs to “identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face” is not new and was included in the existing Framework which FRAs have been operating to since 2012. These risks should be captured in their Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) in addition to their core functions. It is for each fire and rescue authority to determine what they regard as foreseeable fire related risks and other related risks as the nature of the risks faced by services will vary from area to area and will need to take account of local circumstances.*

14. While welcoming the focus on prevention and protection, some responses sought clarity around the statement that wider prevention activity that may increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public services should not be engaged in ‘if it impacts adversely on core fire functions’ as it appeared to weaken local discretion. Other responses asked for the reference to be changed to ‘statutory core functions’.

*Response – The revised Framework has been changed to clarify (para 2.6) that “this should not be at the expense of effective delivery of their statutory core fire functions”. The Government has retained the requirement that wider activity should not be at the expense of core functions as fire and rescue services are ultimately funded to deliver core functions as outlined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and no additional activity should be at the detriment of that.*

15. Although fully supportive of the need to ensure robust business continuity planning arrangements are in place, some FRAs expressed concern regarding the wording around meeting the full range of service delivery duties and commitments. Based on previous experience of managing industrial action and withdrawal of labour from the operational workforce, the services doubted whether they could give absolute assurance that they would meet this requirement, especially in relation to specialist services.

*Response – FRAs are under a statutory duty to have business continuity plans in place that ensure that they are able to continue to perform their functions. This is not a new requirement as it was included in the 2012 version of the Framework. However, in recognition of the issues raised the wording in revised Framework has been changed to include “must make every endeavour to” in respect of the following sentence: “Within these arrangements, fire and rescue authorities must make every endeavour to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties”.*

16. A number of responses mentioned functions, types of emergency or prevention initiatives that they thought should be covered in the Framework. For example, reference to sprinkler schemes and the principle of invest to save, road safety, flooding, water safety, Emergency Medical Response (EMR), ‘Safe and Well’ visits and Primary Authority Schemes (PAS).

*Response – The Home Office welcomes and supports the efforts of FRAs in terms of the work being done on prevention, protection and response across a number of important areas. However, this section of the National Framework concentrates on the core functions of FRAs, leaving decisions on additional functions to FRAs and their communities – as identified through their risk analyses and their IRMP. But as the Framework states, these additional functions should not be at the expense of their statutory core functions.*

*The Government believes FRAs already have the discretionary powers they need to respond to all local incidents including major flooding under their general duties in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and in response to the risks set out in their Integrated Risk Management Plans.*

*We strongly support emergency services collaboration and EMR between fire and ambulance services. This is a key area where we believe collaboration could potentially deliver better outcomes for local communities. The decision as to whether to undertake emergency medical responding is for individual fire and rescue authorities and ambulance trusts given they are best placed to understand local requirements. The requirements under the Police and Crime Act 2017 supports collaboration and we would not want to specify any further.*

*The Framework encourages sharing of best practice, which may include - but is not limited to - PAS. We decided against including reference to PAS in the Framework in case it was seen to be limiting or under-valuing other protection interventions. There will also be instances where PAS is not appropriate.*

*The appropriate fire protection intervention will depend upon a number of factors and we do not prescribe what would be best. Sprinklers are an effective life and property protection measure but they are not necessarily the only – or the most cost-effective - option. The Hackitt Review is examining the whole system of building regulations and fire safety as it applies to the construction and occupation phases of the life cycle of a building. Upon publication the recommendations from the Review will inform and be incorporated into the National Framework as required.*

17. Some FRAs questioned the section on evaluation (now paragraph 2.7) saying that it suggests that services should only pursue those prevention and protection activities that demonstrably reduce risk effectively and cost-efficiently and that some prevention activity will only show impact over time, such as long-term changes in people's safety related behaviour.

*Response – We have clarified the wording of this paragraph to take into account comments received. Fire and rescue services undertake a range of prevention and protection activity which we believe should have clearly measured outcomes and be evaluated to identify if the activity met its desired outcome. We recognise the nature of the evaluation will need to be tailored to the specific activity. The Framework now says that FRAs “should assess what they are aiming to achieve through the activity, what type of intervention is most likely to achieve the aims and how best to measure and evaluate outcomes”.*

18. There was some demand in responses for further guidance on Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP).

*Response – The NFCC's commissioned Community Risk Programme is in the process of developing a comprehensive, evidence-based and accredited risk analysis toolkit which should be used by FRAs to inform IRMPs. However, given the nature of the Framework, we have not made specific reference to this work.*

## Inspection, Accountability and Assurance

19. Out of 71 overall responses received, 52 provided comments on this section. A number of responses commented that they fully support and agree with the expectations and requirements set out within this chapter.

20. While generally very supportive of the new inspection process, some responses commented that if the inspection regime leads to fire and rescue authorities pulling resources away from front line delivery to deal with inspections, then it may be to the detriment of local service delivery.

*Response – A key Home Office principle for the new inspectorate has always been to ensure burdens placed on fire and rescue authorities should be kept to a minimum. The Home Office has been working closely with HMICFRS throughout its inspection development to ensure this principle will be met and we believe their proposed inspection methodology is proportionate and resource requirements kept to a minimum.*

*It is ultimately a local decision for fire and rescue authorities to determine the level of resource to allocate to service the inspectorate. However, we will keep this issue under review.*

21. Further guidance was also sought regarding the responsibilities of FRAs in responding to the independent inspection and that the phrase 'give due regard' to reports and recommendations would benefit from being expanded and strengthened, as would the expectation around how the reports and action plans should be scrutinised.

*Response - The Framework has been amended to ensure it appropriately mirrors the requirements on policing to respond to HMICFRS recommendations in the Policing Act 1996, including the need to provide reasons if an FRA does not propose to undertake any action as a result of a recommendation.*

22. In terms of intervention powers, responses sought clarity on whether or not PCC fire and rescue authorities will be subject to the same powers.

*Response - The Framework and intervention protocol in the Annex make clear that PCC FRAs – like all FRAs regardless of governance - will be subject to intervention powers as a last resort.*

23. Some responses suggested making it clear that the inspectorate was only one way of providing assurance and that there is also a raft of other such assurance methods such as external and internal audit and peer reviews.

*Response - The Home Office recognises that other assurance mechanisms are available, including the LGA's sector improvement support, and that these can complement inspection. We are therefore content to reference alternative mechanisms and this has been included in the revised Framework.*

24. In terms of transparency, responses pointed out that as a result of different legislation there is a difference in transparency requirements between FRAs, in particular with PCC FRAs. While relatively minimal, this will mean that different authorities are publishing different information. It was suggested that opportunities to streamline this should be sought so that one set of transparency information is required from all FRAs.

*Response - Where a PCC takes on responsibility for the fire and rescue service(s) in their force area and becomes a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, the Policing and Crime Act 2017 provides that they are subject to transparency requirements set out in section 11 of the 2011 Act in relation to their FRA functions. This means that they are no longer subject to the transparency requirements set out in the Local Authority Transparency Code 2015.*

## Governance

25. Out of the 71 overall responses received, 50 commented on this section. Many responses commented that they welcomed what is proposed in the draft framework, that it provided clarity and was aligned to legislation.

26. However, some responses indicated that the Governance section would benefit from greater clarity, particularly to prevent different interpretations that may serve to confuse the public. Issues highlighted included confusion between IRMP and fire and rescue plans (FRP), their lifespans, consultation requirements and governance arrangements in London and Mayoral Bodies.

*Response – We have re-drafted this section to provide further guidance around what plans FRAs should produce and we have inserted a table (Annex A) to provide additional clarity. The time periods of the IRMP and FRP can be being linked, however, where a PCC takes on governance, they will inherit an IRMP which will remain extant until replaced which the PFCC may wish to do before the end of the IRMP period.*

27. Responses said that there appears to be no requirement for fire and rescue expertise to be represented on the Police, Fire and Crime Panel (PFCC) and also that the differences between Police, Fire and Crime Panels and Police and Crime Panels needs to be clarified, particularly in relation to their relative powers, responsibilities and membership requirements.

*Response – As mentioned in the Introduction, the Framework does not repeat all the duties placed on FRAs in connection with the discharge of their functions. The Policing and Crime Act 2017 requires a PFCC to review its membership and to make any required changes to its membership to ensure that the panel has the necessary skills, expertise and knowledge to fulfil its functions in relation to fire and rescue. The Act also extends the role of police and crime panels to scrutinise the exercise of the PCC's fire and rescue functions in the same way as they scrutinise the PCC's policing functions.*

28. A number of FRAs expressed the view that the whole framework gives focus to PCC FRAs above and beyond other governance models and that equity should be struck where possible.

*Response – This was not the intention, although the Home Office wanted to use the revised Framework to provide further detail about PCC FRAs which were only recently created by the Policing and Crime Act 2017. However, we have reviewed the Framework and sought to better balance the contents where possible so that it is reflective of all governance mechanisms.*

29. There were a number of different comments on the role of the NFCC as outlined in the Framework including "...it is not clear however the mechanism or method by which a fire and rescue authority can effectively consult with the NFCC", "there is a concern over the capacity of the NFCC to support potential expectations", "the reference to NFCC needs to be stronger as the professional leadership and voice of FRs" and "Home Office should provide the NFCC with financial support to best equip it to ensure it fulfils its remit".

*Response - The NFCC has been involved in the drafting of the Framework and their views have been fully considered in its development. Home Office is content to discuss all relevant issues with the NFCC, including funding and structure, however we do not see these as being issues for inclusion in the Framework. Within the Framework, there is an expectation for engagement between the NFCC and individual FRAs and it is for them to determine the best mechanism for doing so.*



## Achieving Value for Money

30. Out of 71 overall responses received, 48 commented on this section. Many responses said that they were supportive of the principles outlined in the draft Framework.

31. The main issues raised on the section were the need to provide further clarity on efficiency plans and the reserves strategy, and whether this amounted to a new burden, and also clarity on which types of FRAs were required to provide which documents.

*Response - The requirement for a medium term financial plan, efficiency plan and reserves strategy applies to single purpose, metropolitan, and PFCC fire and rescue authorities. We have re-drafted this section to clarify that where fire and rescue is part of a County Council, Unitary Authority or Mayoral Body we expect that these requirements will be included within the parent authorities' documentation. In the case of London, the efficiency plan and reserves strategy will be produced by the London Fire Commissioner.*

*The Framework clarifies the Home Office's expectations on how reserves information should be presented in a way that is clear and understandable to members of the public. This is in line with existing statutory requirements and financial reporting best practice and should therefore not result in additional costs for authorities. The reserves strategy can be published either as part of their medium term financial plan or as a separate reserves strategy document. Efficiency plans can also be included as part of the medium term financial plan. The National Framework requires justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of Net Budget Requirement (as opposed to total reserves and/or General Expenditure).*

32. In the section on commercial transformation relating to aggregation of procurement, one organisation commented that: "the 45 FRSs in England have functioned largely autonomously until recently and have tended to be divergent rather than collaborative. Suppliers to the Services have found, for example, that they must paint their fire appliances differing shades of red or provide one of 97 variants of ladder depending on which FRS is the customer. ...Collaborative procurement must be underpinned by greater standardisation where possible and output-based specifications that should be agreed between the FRSs collectively and the supply industry".

*Response - The importance of transforming the way FRAs undertakes its commercial activities is a key part of the overall fire reform programme and the NFCC is already undertaking significant work in this area with the creation of a new commercial strategy. The National Framework highlights the objectives of the Fire Commercial Transformation Programme and looks to embed these within the decision making of individual FRAs, including the need for standardisation and aggregation where appropriate.*

33. On trading, one organisation had concerns about FRAs offering commercial services to public or private organisations as this could create a conflict of interest and gives them an advantage through their status.

*Response - The wording in the Framework makes clear that FRAs must ensure that their commercial activities are performed in accordance with all existing legislative requirements and any actions taken in respect of their trading companies are considered against the requirements of competition law.*

## Workforce

34. Out of 71 overall responses received, 53 commented on this section. Many said that they welcomed and fully supported the requirement for a people strategy as outlined in the draft framework.
35. Comments on the Workforce section from a representative body included that there was “no reference made to the National Joint Council and its work and yet makes reference to the NFCC’s people strategy”. Also that “the draft Framework requires each FRA to have a people strategy that has been designed in collaboration with the workforce yet makes no reference to engaging with representative bodies or encouraging good industrial relations”.

*Response - The NFCC people strategy clearly articulates the areas which fire and rescue services should consider and put in place as part of their own workforce strategy. The framework allows flexibility for other strategies and work by other organisations to be considered by only stating minimum requirements. It would not be feasible to include every organisation and strategy that exists.*

*Although we are supportive of productive industrial relations, it is down to individual fire and rescue services how they engage with unions and whether they do so in developing people strategies and is not something we would want to prescribe as part of the National Framework.*

36. Several responses commented that this section mentions 'wellbeing' but doesn't mention mental health or learning disabilities.

*Response - Mental health is already covered within the wording of the Framework; however, we have re-drafted this to make it explicit so now the People Strategy section reads to 'support including health and safety, wellbeing and disabilities.'*

37. One representative body found the detail in the Workforce section light and lacking any 'teeth' and invited Home Office to consider the re-introduction of national targets or diversity measures, or to require FRS to set local targets/diversity measures underpinned through appropriate data for their local communities.

*Response – The current lack of diversity amongst firefighters is unacceptable and although we have seen improvements in the most recent data on new joiners for whole-time staff, there is still a lot further to go. Firefighters should represent the communities they serve which is why diversity targets should be set locally rather than nationally. We would expect FRAs to have an improvement plan in place and consider and scrutinise available data to improve diversity year on year.*

38. One representative body strongly expressed the view that the Framework should make direct reference to measures that will ensure firefighter safety.

*Response – Firefighter safety is of paramount importance and should be a key consideration in all activities undertaken by fire and rescue services. FRAs have a duty to ensure the safety of their employees. However, as the Framework does not repeat all legislative requirements fire and rescue services are subject to, we had not felt this needed to be referenced. However, in order to respond to this point we have now amended the People Strategy section to include 'health and safety'.*

39. A number of responses sought greater clarity on the proposal for development of professional standards, including further detail, timing and links to National Operational Guidance. There was also concern over the wording that FRAs “must implement the standards approved through this work”.

*Response – The Home Office will provide further details on this element of the fire reform programme shortly. The Framework outlines the importance of all fire and rescue authorities implementing these national standards which will be produced by the fire and rescue sector. The requirement for FRA’s to implement these standards should not result in additional costs for authorities as any financial contributions made by fire and rescue authorities are expected to remain within established budgets for this type of work and will enhance collaboration and efficiency between services through the use of common standards. HMICFRS will consider their implementation and impact as part of their inspections and will in turn provide feedback - where necessary - to inform their future development.*

40. There were numerous comments received on the Fitness Principles, with views differing depending on whether they were from an FRA or a representative body. For example, an FRA said that “it is disappointing that these are simply reiterated from the previous addendum to the Framework .... They appear to be generous and allow someone who fails their fitness test for no good reason, a minimum of 6 months to regain their fitness”. Another said that “the existing Fitness Principles ... are overly prescriptive and build in significant and unnecessary cost for authorities”. Whereas one representative body said that the Framework “(still) does not provide the protection in line with the Government guarantee made to firefighters in relation to fitness and capability in December 2014”.

*Response – The fitness principles were added to the National Framework as an addendum in 2014 to respond to concerns that changes to the pension scheme would leave firefighters - if they were unable to maintain their fitness to a higher retirement age - without access to a job or with a reduced pension. We therefore consider it is important to maintain the principles as part of this revised Framework, but will keep this section under review. Although HMICFRS will not consider this issue in isolation, they will consider it as part of their full inspection framework and we will reassess in light of their findings.*

41. As mentioned in the introduction to both the consultation document and this response document (see paragraph 5 above), as we had previously consulted on the section about ‘re-engagement of senior officers post-retirement’ we were not seeking further comments. However, several comments questioned whether this section was compatible with the principle of ‘appointment on merit’. In addition, there was a query about whether this could adversely affect a whole-time employee wishing to move to or continue as part of the ‘retained duty system’ (RDS).

*Response - If the retired senior officer was appointed through fair and open competition as being the best person for the job, the principles in this section of the Framework would not apply. In terms of an RDS role, this would be seen as a different role in the organisation and the principles would not apply. We did not believe any changes were needed to this section.*

## National Resilience

42. Several concerns were raised about the paragraphs dealing with response to terrorist attacks. One FRA said that “The draft framework makes the assertion that responding to acts of terrorism, and by extension MTFA capability, is part of the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book). Although there are differing legal opinions on this, the majority view of the Authority is that MTFA capability is not currently part of the Grey Book which is why it remains the subject of negotiation between the National Joint Council and the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). The Authority understands the framework’s emphasis on maintaining national resilience. The Authority would expect to be able to provide all national assets (including MTFA specialist teams) when required. However... asking fire and rescue services to provide a guarantee to ‘ensure their teams are fully available at all times, including periods when business continuity arrangements are in place’ is an unrealistic and excessive burden”.

*Response – Responding to acts of terrorism is an agreed function of fire and rescue services as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (the Grey Book), and is encompassed within the broad descriptions within the existing agreed firefighter role maps: to save and preserve endangered life, and safely resolve operational incidents. To ensure no misunderstanding we have re-drafted this section to distinguish between terrorist attacks in general and Marauding Terrorist Firearm Attacks (MTFA) so now the Framework does not assert that MTFA has specifically been agreed as part of the Grey Book.*

*Additionally, the Response section of the framework has been redrafted to clarify the position that fire and rescue authorities must make every endeavour to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties - including MTFA duties - at all times, including periods when business continuity arrangements are in place. The draft Framework had restated this requirement within the MTFA section and that duplication has been removed.*

43. Regarding gap analysis of national resilience capabilities, one FRA response commented that “the previous Framework referenced that where there is a gap that needs to be filled, if necessary - and where appropriate - this will involve funding of new national resilience capabilities, in line with the new burdens doctrine. Though the Framework outlines steps which may be taken to address such gaps, greater clarity on the funding of any gaps which do remain would be beneficial”.

*Response – Any national resilience capability gaps raised by FRAs would be considered and/or discussed at the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board. Following liaison, as necessary, with other government departments and the devolved administrations, decisions will be taken which would seek to address the matter raised. These matters will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with the solution not always being one relating to, or requiring, additional funding. Therefore, we believe it would be over prescriptive, and not add further clarity, to indicate any further funding at this stage.*

44. Although supportive of the lead authority concept, one response raised the “need to be mindful of fair competition for things such as ‘devolved training’ – whilst the words ‘as necessary’ are included, the framework could be interpreted as directing FRS “to use the Lead Authority as the sole training provider”.

*Response - This paragraph relates to National Resilience as the lead authority is the centrally-funded training provider for the national resilience capabilities. The lead authority co-ordinates the training needs assessment, and arranges for appropriate courses, which is provided both by them, by other appropriate FRAs who are also training providers, and/or by external trainers, as appropriate. The reference in the Framework to FRAs co-operation on devolved training relates solely to national resilience training for which there is Home Office-provided grant funding; it does not bind authorities to use the lead authority on other FRA training which they may elect to undertake at their own costs.*

## Intervention Protocol (Annex A)

45. Various responses suggested additions to Intervention Protocol including:

- “powers under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999 which were recently used to carry out a best value inspection of Avon Fire Authority”;
- the joint initiative by the LGA and NFCC to adapt the previous process of Peer Review or Peer Challenge to create a mechanism to support FRs to improve, to be branded as 'Sector Support';
- the Policing Panels’ role in supporting and challenging PFCCs in their roles could be critical in bringing about improvements in a way that is transparent and accountable to local people;
- that it is made clear for PCC-style FRAs that the APCC rather than the LGA will have a role as required; and
- more detail on what would constitute a failing Service.

*Response - The Intervention Protocol is required by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The Secretary of State must prepare, and may revise, a protocol about the exercise of his power when a fire and rescue authority is failing, or is likely to fail, to act in accordance with the Framework in terms of promoting public safety, or the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the fire and rescue authority. There is no intervention protocol required for Best Value inspections. The intervention protocol is clear that, in terms of a failing service, this is one failing to act in accordance with the Framework. However, the failure would have to be sufficiently serious as to require Government intervention, and only as a last resort. The Intervention Protocol has been amended in places to take on the other suggestions.*

## Other comments

46. In Chapter 8, Timescales and Scope, it was commented that it would support FRA long term planning if the anticipated period of currency and review date for this Framework document was set.

*Response- Home Office is committed to keeping the National Framework under continuous review, taking on board key developments that affect the sector. However, there is no intention to revert to fixed term revisions.*

## Annex A

### Respondents to the consultation

Responses were received from the following organisations.

#### **Fire and Rescue Authorities/Services**

Avon Fire & Rescue Authority  
Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire & Rescue Authority  
Cheshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Cleveland Fire & Rescue Authority  
Cornwall Fire & Rescue Authority  
Cumbria Fire & Rescue Authority  
Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority  
Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
East Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority  
Greater Manchester Combined Authority  
Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Hertfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Humberside Fire & Rescue Authority  
Kent & Medway Towns Fire & Rescue Authority  
Lancashire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Fire & Rescue Authority  
London Fire & Emergency Planning Authority  
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority  
Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham Fire & Rescue Authority  
Northamptonshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Norfolk Fire & Rescue Authority  
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Shropshire Fire & Rescue Service Authority  
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Surrey Fire & Rescue Authority  
Suffolk Fire & Rescue Authority  
South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue Authority  
North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority  
West Sussex Fire & Rescue Authority  
West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority (2)  
West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Authority

#### **Representative bodies**

Local Government Association  
National Fire Chiefs Council  
Fire Officers Association  
Fire Brigades Union  
Women in the Fire Service

Retained Firefighters Union  
The Association of Police & Crime Commissioners  
Association of Policing and Crime Chief Executives  
Fire Leaders Association

**Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner**

Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner

**Police and Crime Commissioner**

Northamptonshire Police & Crime Commissioner  
Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner  
Hertfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner  
Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner  
Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner  
North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner  
Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner

**Other Bodies**

British Approvals for Fire Equipment  
Fire Industry Association  
Avon Fire Scene Examination Services Ltd  
Institution of Fire Engineers  
Forensic Science Regulator  
Fabtic (specialising in juvenile firesetting behaviour)  
Centre for Public Scrutiny Ltd  
Nottingham Trent University

**Members of public**

7 member of the public responded



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Home Office

Appendix C

# Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

May 2018



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# Foreword

Fire and rescue services play a crucial role in making our communities safer, whether it be preventing and protecting people from fire and other risks, or responding swiftly and effectively to the incidents and emergencies that occur.

Over the past decade we have witnessed a significant decrease – almost half - in the number of fires attended which suggests that we are, as a society, becoming safer than ever from the risks and consequences of fire. This decrease can be attributed to many factors, including in part testament to the successful fire prevention and protection work that fire and rescue services deliver day in, day out, up and down the country. We must continue to work hard to keep people – especially those whose vulnerability to fire is increased by age, infirmity, mental health, domestic violence or any of the other complex issues some of us are living with – as safe from fire risks as possible. In many cases, this means engaging effectively with other agencies to work together to better protect and improve the outcomes for these individuals. Nevertheless, the awful tragedy at Grenfell Tower provided a stark and terrible reminder that we can never afford to become complacent.

The past decade has also seen fire and rescue services respond to an ever growing number of non-fire incidents. I expect collaboration to be at the heart of how services operate so that services can work with, or on behalf of, local providers, to deliver a range of public safety activity to protect their local communities, where it is in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness for them to do so. But such activity must not be at the expense of services' core functions around prevention, protection and response as that is ultimately what the taxpayer funds fire and rescue services to deliver.

In 2016, the Home Office outlined an ambitious programme of reform which it is delivering with the fire and rescue sector. We want to support the continuous improvement of fire and rescue services, enabling them to be more accountable, effective and professional than ever before, building on the great strides in prevention and collaboration that they have already made. This revised National Framework seeks to embed these reforms, which include:

- transforming local governance of fire and rescue by enabling mayors and police and crime commissioners to take on responsibility for their fire and rescue service where a local case is made;
- establishing Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) as an independent inspection regime for fire and rescue services;
- developing a comprehensive set of professional standards to drive sector improvement;
- supporting services to transform commercially with more efficient procurement and collaboration;
- increasing the transparency of services with the publication of greater performance data and the creation of a new national fire website; and
- driving forward an ambitious programme for workforce reform including through enhancing: professionalism; management and leadership; training and development; equality and diversity; culture; and options for flexible working.

It is against this background that the Government issues this revised National Framework. I am grateful to all those who responded to our consultation. We have carefully considered every response and amended the National Framework as appropriate. Our consultation response has been published separately.

The National Framework will continue to provide an overall strategic direction to fire and rescue authorities, but Whitehall will not run fire, and fire and rescue authorities and their services remain free to operate in a way that enables the most efficient and effective delivery of their services, drawing upon their considerable skills and experience to best reduce the risks from fire. Ultimately, it is to local communities, not Government, that fire and rescue authorities are accountable. The fire landscape is changing with different governance models, the new inspectorate and the recently created National Fire Chiefs Council. This revised framework outlines the new roles and responsibilities of these changes and sets expectations for how services should work with the new arrangements.

Finally, it is vital that we learn the lessons from Grenfell. I very much welcome the publication of Dame Judith Hackitt's interim report setting out a comprehensive analysis of the current system of building regulations and fire safety and providing recommendations for how it can be improved. We agree with her call for a change in culture and a more effective system that will encourage people to do the right thing and hold to account those who try to cut corners. The scale of the change indicated in her Interim Report cannot be delivered by government alone. We will work closely with Dame Judith and other partners – including the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue services – to implement her short-term recommendations and to identify the long-term changes that will need to be made to the system over time. We will update the National Framework as required to ensure that the learning and recommendations from this Review, as well as those from the wider Grenfell Tower Inquiry, are captured and reflected. In the meantime, we acknowledge the vital work that local fire and rescue services, and the National Fire Chiefs Council - as a member of the Expert Panel - are doing to ensure that building owners are taking all the necessary steps to ensure those living in high rise buildings are safe and feel safe to remain in their homes.

I look forward to continuing to see the important and life-saving work that fire and rescue services deliver.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nick Hurd".

Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP

Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Powers

- 1.1 Under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (“the 2004 Act”), the Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework. The Framework:
  - a) must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;
  - b) may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions; and
  - c) may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.
- 1.2 In setting out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in England, the requirements are best calculated to promote public safety and the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities. The Framework sets out high level expectations; it does not prescribe operational matters which are best determined locally by fire and rescue authorities and their staff.
- 1.3 In preparing the Framework, the Secretary of State undertook a public consultation which met the requirements of the 2004 Act, namely to include fire and rescue authorities or their representatives; persons representing employees of fire and rescue authorities; and any other persons considered appropriate as required by the 2004 Act.
- 1.4 Every fire and rescue authority must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions. Every authority must publish an annual statement of assurance of compliance with the Framework (see Chapter 4).
- 1.5 Fire and rescue authorities function within a long-established statutory and policy framework. This document does not repeat all the duties placed on them in connection with the discharge of their functions, or more generally as a public service provider and employer.
- 1.6 The term ‘fire and rescue authority’ in this Framework applies to every fire and rescue authority in England unless otherwise stated.

### Priorities

- 1.7 The priorities in this Framework are for fire and rescue authorities to:
  - make appropriate provision for fire prevention and protection activities and response to fire and rescue related incidents;
  - identify and assess the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks their areas face;
  - collaborate with emergency services and other local and national partners to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the service they provide;
  - be accountable to communities for the service they provide; and
  - develop and maintain a workforce that is professional, resilient, skilled, flexible and diverse.

## 2. DELIVERY OF FUNCTIONS

### Identify and Assess

- 2.1 Every fire and rescue authority must assess all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect their communities, whether they are local, cross-border, multi-authority and/or national in nature from fires to terrorist attacks. Regard must be had to Community Risk Registers produced by Local Resilience Forums and any other local risk analyses as appropriate.
- 2.2 Fire and rescue authorities must put in place arrangements to prevent and mitigate these risks, either through adjusting existing provision, effective collaboration and partnership working, or building new capability. Fire and rescue authorities should work through the Strategic Resilience Board where appropriate when determining what arrangements to put in place.

### Prevent and Protect

- 2.3 Fire and rescue authorities must make provision for promoting fire safety, including fire prevention, and have a locally determined risk-based inspection programme in place for enforcing compliance with the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in premises to which it applies.
- 2.4 We expect fire and rescue authorities to target their fire safety, prevention and protection resources on: those individuals or households who are at greatest risk from fire in the home; those most likely to engage in arson or deliberate fire setting; and on those non-domestic premises where the life safety risk is greatest. Consideration could also be given to non-domestic premises which are at risk from fire in order to mitigate loss to economic wellbeing.
- 2.5 To identify those at greatest risk from fire, we expect fire and rescue authorities to work closely with other organisations in the public and voluntary sector, as well as with the police and ambulance services. Wherever appropriate, we expect fire and rescue services to develop partnerships to support risk reduction services to those identified as vulnerable, including from exploitation or abuse, and wherever possible to share intelligence and relevant risk data.
- 2.6 In many cases, fire and rescue staff may be in a position to identify individuals' wider vulnerabilities and exposure to risks beyond fire. By working closely and collaboratively with other public and voluntary sector organisations – both nationally through the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and through local arrangements – we recognise fire and rescue authorities can make an important contribution to increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of public services and alleviating pressures on local response resources. However, this should not be at the expense of effective delivery of their statutory core fire functions.
- 2.7 In all their prevention and protection activities, fire and rescue authorities should assess what they are aiming to achieve through the activity, what type of intervention is most likely to achieve the aims and how best to measure and evaluate outcomes. Fire and rescue authorities should share details of their interventions to support each other to understand and improve the evidence base of what works best and what is most cost-effective.



2.8 Given the wide range of roles that fire and rescue personnel undertake, including with people with complex needs and vulnerabilities, fire and rescue authorities will need to ensure that all their staff in public-facing roles have the necessary skills and training to meet such demands. They also should have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place – including ensuring staff have appropriate vetting clearance - to provide the public with the reassurance and confidence that they have every right to expect.

## **Respond**

2.9 Fire and rescue authorities must make provision to respond to incidents such as fires, road traffic collisions and other emergencies within their area and in other areas in line with their mutual aid agreements.

2.10 Fire and rescue authorities must, so far as is practicable, enter into reinforcement schemes, or mutual aid agreements, with other fire and rescue authorities for securing mutual assistance.

2.11 Fire and rescue authorities must have effective business continuity arrangements in place in accordance with their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Within these arrangements, fire and rescue authorities must make every endeavour to meet the full range of service delivery risks and national resilience duties and commitments that they face. Business continuity plans should not be developed on the basis of armed forces assistance being available.

## **Collaboration**

2.12 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 created a statutory duty on fire and rescue authorities, police forces, and ambulance trusts to:

- keep collaboration opportunities under review;
- notify other emergency services of proposed collaborations that could be in the interests of their mutual efficiency or effectiveness; and
- give effect to a proposed collaboration where the proposed parties agree that it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness and that it does not have an adverse effect on public safety.

2.13 The duty is deliberately broad to allow for local discretion in how it is implemented and recognises that local emergency services are best placed to determine how to collaborate for the benefit of their communities. However, the duty sets a clear expectation that collaboration opportunities should be considered.

2.14 The duty does not preclude wider collaboration with other local partners, such as local authorities and wider health bodies. To reflect their wider role, ambulance trusts are required to consider the impact of the proposed collaboration on their wider non-emergency functions and the NHS when determining if it would be in the interests of their efficiency or effectiveness.

2.15 Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with other fire and rescue authorities to deliver intraoperability (between fire and rescue authorities) and interoperability (with other responders such as other emergency services, wider Category 1 and 2 responders and Local Resilience Forums) in line with the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP). Fire and rescue authorities must collaborate with the National Resilience Lead Authority to ensure interoperability is maintained for National Resilience assets.

2.16 Intraoperability includes, but is not limited to:

- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment;
- common command and compatible control and co-ordination arrangements;
- effective information, intelligence and data sharing;
- compatible operational procedures, and guidance with common terminology;
- compatible training and exercising (both individually and collectively); and
- cross border working with other English fire and rescue authorities and those in the devolved administrations.

2.17 Interoperability includes, but is not limited to:

- compatible communications systems, control rooms and equipment, as appropriate;
- compatible command, control and co-ordination arrangements;
- effective inter-agency working and liaison and, where appropriate, information, intelligence and data sharing;
- shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, guidance and terminology;
- robust multi-agency plans for managing risks identified in the National Risk Assessment and community risk registers;
- multi-agency training and exercising; and
- cross border working with other responders in England and the devolved administrations.

### 3. NATIONAL RESILIENCE

- 3.1 The Government retains responsibility for the provision of national resilience assets and capabilities managed and delivered through fire and rescue services. This responsibility extends to undertaking the National Risk Assessment which informs the requirements for fire and rescue national resilience capabilities. In meeting this responsibility, the Government has committed significant financial resource to build national resilience capabilities and to support their ongoing maintenance.
- 3.2 The Government relies on the strategic leadership role of the NFCC to maintain fire and rescue national resilience capabilities in a high state of operational readiness through a comprehensive assurance regime delivered through lead authority arrangements.
- 3.3 Fire and rescue authorities must work with the lead authority to support the national resilience assurance processes in order to ensure capabilities are maintained at a high state of operational readiness. This includes co-operation of fire and rescue authorities, as necessary, on devolved training and, where applicable, on the long-term capability management arrangements.
- 3.4 Fire and rescue services, through the NFCC's representation on the Strategic Resilience Board, must also work with Government to identify and address any national resilience capability gaps identified through ongoing analysis of the National Risk Assessment.

#### Gap Analysis

- 3.5 Fire and rescue authorities' risk assessments must include an analysis of any gaps between their existing capability and that needed to ensure national resilience (as defined above).
- 3.6 Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas.
- 3.7 As part of their analysis, fire and rescue authorities must highlight to the Home Office or the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board, any capability gaps that they believe cannot be met even when taking into account mutual aid arrangements, pooling and reconfiguration of resources and collective action.
- 3.8 The Home Office, in liaison with other government departments and the devolved administrations, will support fire and rescue authorities in considering and defining the gap between existing capability and the capability required to ensure national resilience.

## **National Coordination and Advisory Framework**

3.9 The National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF) has been designed to provide robust and flexible response arrangements to major emergencies that can be adapted to the nature, scale and requirements of the incident. Fire and rescue authorities must proactively engage with, and support, the NCAF arrangements including the NFCC's lead operational role.

## **Response to Terrorist Attacks or Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attacks**

3.10 Fire and rescue services must be able to respond to the threat of terrorism and be ready to respond to incidents within their areas and across England. Fire and rescue services should also be interoperable to provide operational support across the UK to terrorist events as required. Government recognises the critical contribution of fire and rescue services when responding to acts of terrorism. This is an agreed function of fire and rescue services as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service ("the Grey Book") and is encompassed within the broad descriptions within the existing agreed firefighter role maps: to save and preserve endangered life, and safely resolve operational incidents.

3.11 To enhance resilience to terrorist risks, the Government has committed significant financial resources to develop a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack (MTFA) capability, with the support of fire and rescue services. This is aligned to the National Risk Assessment and provides a specialist response across the country. Fire and rescue authorities are responsible for maintaining the robustness of this capability.

3.12 MTFA arrangements shall be further enhanced by putting in place an appropriate multi-agency assurance mechanism that will ensure the capability is effective and delivered to the agreed standard.

## **National Resilience Assurance**

3.13 Fire and rescue authorities must continue to work collectively and with the Fire and Rescue Strategic Resilience Board and the national resilience lead authority to provide assurance to government that:

- existing national resilience capabilities are fit for purpose and robust; and
- risks and plans are assessed and any gaps in capability that are needed to ensure national resilience are identified.

3.14 Fire and rescue authorities with MTFA teams must work with police forces and ambulance trusts to provide tri-service assurance of this capability.

## 4. GOVERNANCE

- 4.1 Fire and rescue authorities operate with a range of different locally determined governance arrangements including an individual – either a police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC) or a mayor – having sole responsibility for being the fire and rescue authority for an area. Each fire and rescue authority has a statutory duty to ensure provision of their core functions as required by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.
- 4.2 Where police and crime commissioners under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 – and mayors – wish to develop a local proposal to take on governance responsibility for fire and rescue in their area, fire and rescue authorities must provide them with such information that they reasonably require to develop a proposal. The Secretary of State can only give effect to a fire governance proposal where, in their view, it appears to be in the interests of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, or in the interests of public safety. The Secretary of State cannot give effect to a proposal if, in their view, it would have an adverse effect on public safety.
- 4.3 In London, the Mayor appoints a London Fire Commissioner who, in addition to being the fire and rescue authority, may have an operational role. The Mayor of London, who has overall responsibility for setting the strategic direction for the London Fire Brigade and holding the Commissioner to account, should give due regard to the advice of the London Fire Commissioner when making decisions about the service. The London Fire Commissioner is responsible for ensuring fire and rescue services in London are efficient and effective and prepares the Integrated Risk Management Plan for approval by the Mayor.

### Managing the Fire and Rescue Service/Chief Fire Officer

- 4.4 Each fire and rescue authority will appoint an individual – commonly known as a Chief Fire Officer – who has responsibility for managing the fire and rescue service. This role does not have to be operational but includes managing the personnel, services and equipment secured by the fire and rescue authority for the purposes of carrying out functions conferred on it by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, Civil Contingencies Act 2004, and other enactments. Each fire and rescue authority must hold this person to account for the exercise of their functions and the functions of persons under their direction and control.
- 4.5 The chief fire officer must, in exercising their functions, have regard to the fire and rescue authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and any set objectives and priorities which may be outlined in a strategic plan. The fire and rescue authority should give due regard to the professional advice of the Chief Fire Officer while developing the Integrated Risk Management Plan and when making decisions affecting the fire and rescue service.

## Documents to be Prepared

4.6 Each fire and rescue authority is required to produce (see Annex A for further details):

### i. Integrated Risk Management Plan

Each plan must:

- reflect up to date risk analyses including an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risks that could affect the area of the authority;
- demonstrate how prevention, protection and response activities will best be used to prevent fires and other incidents and mitigate the impact of identified risks on its communities, through authorities working either individually or collectively, in a way that makes best use of available resources;
- outline required service delivery outcomes including the allocation of resources for the mitigation of risks;
- set out its management strategy and risk-based programme for enforcing the provisions of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in accordance with the principles of better regulation set out in the Statutory Code of Compliance for Regulators, and the Enforcement Concordat;
- cover at least a three-year time span and be reviewed and revised as often as it is necessary to ensure that the authority is able to deliver the requirements set out in this Framework;
- reflect effective consultation throughout its development and at all review stages with the community, its workforce and representative bodies and partners; and
- be easily accessible and publicly available.

### ii. Annual statement of assurance

The statement should outline the way in which the authority and its fire and rescue service has had regard – in the period covered by the document – to this National Framework, the Integrated Risk Management Plan and to any strategic plan (e.g. the Fire and Rescue Plan – see 4.10 below) prepared by the authority for that period. The authority must also provide assurance to their community and to government on financial, governance and operational matters. For PCC FRAs, this statement is subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel. The name of this statement differs across governance models (e.g. in the case of PCC FRAs it is called the ‘Fire and Rescue Statement’ and in Greater Manchester the ‘Fire and Rescue Declaration’).

### iii. Financial plans

A medium-term financial strategy, an efficiency plan and a reserves strategy. These can be combined or published separately. Please see section 5 for further details.

## PFCC FRAs

4.7 A police, fire and crime commissioner (PFCC) must additionally produce a **fire and rescue plan**. The plan should set out the fire and rescue authority’s strategic vision, priorities and objectives for their fire and rescue service over the period of the document in connection with the discharge of their functions. This plan can be revised as frequently as considered necessary but the Government’s expectation is that a plan should be produced and issued shortly after the PFCC takes office. In

developing this plan, the PFCC must make arrangements for obtaining the view of the community as they currently do in preparing their Police and Crime Plan. These views can cover both the Fire and Rescue Plan and the Integrated Risk Management Plan and so there is no need for separate consultations to be undertaken, although local areas can consult as often as they consider necessary. The Government's expectation is that this plan should inform the Integrated Risk Management Plan which should in turn outline how the PFCC's priorities will be met.

- 4.8 The PFCC must have regard to both the Fire and Rescue Plan and the Police and Crime Plan when carrying out their functions. The plans can be combined. Where a joint Police, Crime and Fire and Rescue Plan is developed, the plan must set out both policing and fire and rescue priorities and objectives. Such plans are subject to scrutiny by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.
- 4.9 The function of preparing and issuing the Integrated Risk Management Plan may be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer – or Chief Officer where a single employer has been put in place – however, the plan must be approved by the PFCC as the fire and rescue authority.

### **National Fire Chiefs Council**

- 4.10 The NFCC brings together the operational leadership of the UK's fire and rescue services to provide co-ordinated professional, operational and technical leadership of the sector, advising and supporting central and local government, and other stakeholders.
- 4.11 The NFCC fulfils a multifaceted role that is reflected throughout this document and other national frameworks. The NFCC represents the sector in local and national structures, helping to develop national policies and strategies. The NFCC is the first line of operational advice to central and local government during major incidents. This is outlined within the National Coordination and Advisory Framework (NCAF), which fire and rescue services must proactively engage with.
- 4.12 The NFCC has a role to drive continuous improvement and development throughout the sector. Fire and rescue services should consult the NFCC for advice and support when developing improvement plans, particularly in response to inspections.
- 4.13 The expectation is that fire and rescue services in England engage with the NFCC and, in turn, that the NFCC works to support and represent every service.

## 5. ACHIEVING VALUE FOR MONEY

- 5.1 Fire and rescue authorities must manage their budgets and spend money properly and appropriately, and ensure the efficient and effective use of their resources, pursuing all feasible opportunities to keep costs down while discharging their core duties effectively. Fire and rescue authorities should regularly review the numbers and deployment of firefighters and other staff to ensure that their fire and rescue service has a workforce that is commensurate with the risks that they face.
- 5.2 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure that financial decisions are taken with the advice and guidance of the chief finance officer and that decisions are taken with an emphasis on delivering value for money to the public purse. Fire and rescue authorities should ensure that management of their finances is undertaken with regard to published guidance including those set out at Annex B.
- 5.3 Combined and Metropolitan Fire and Rescue Authorities should produce and publish a medium term financial plan, efficiency plan and a reserves strategy (see para 5.8 below). The efficiency plan and reserves strategy can form part of the medium term financial plan and do not need to be separate documents. Where fire and rescue is part of a County Council, Unitary Authority or Mayoral Body we expect that these requirements will be included within the parent authorities' documentation. In the case of London, the efficiency plan and reserves strategy will be produced by the London Fire Commissioner.
- 5.4 The medium term financial plan should include funding and spending plans for revenue and capital. The plan should take into account multiple years, the inter-dependencies of revenue budgets and capital investments, the role of reserves and the consideration of risks. It should have regard to affordability and also to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The strategy should be aligned with the fire and rescue authority's Integrated Risk Management Plan and – if appropriate – the Fire and Rescue Plan.
- 5.5 Local Authorities (including combined fire and rescue authorities) were required to produce robust, transparent and locally owned efficiency plans and publish them on their website in order to receive a four year funding settlement from 2016/17 to 2019/20. Each fire and rescue authority should publish an annual report on their progress against these efficiency plans, and publish any updated efficiency plan if produced. Again, this can form part of the medium term financial plan.

### Reserves

- 5.6 Sections 31A, 32, 42A and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires billing and precepting authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
- 5.7 Fire and rescue authorities should establish a policy on reserves and provisions in consultation with their chief finance officer. General reserves should be held by the fire and rescue authority and managed to balance funding and spending priorities and to manage risks. This should be established as part of the medium-term financial planning process.



- 5.8 Each fire and rescue authority should publish their reserves strategy on their website, either as part of their medium term financial plan or in a separate reserves strategy document. The reserves strategy should include details of current and future planned reserve levels, setting out a total amount of reserves and the amount of each specific reserve that is held for each year. The reserves strategy should cover resource and capital reserves and provide information for the period of the medium term financial plan (and at least two years ahead).
- 5.9 Sufficient information should be provided to enable understanding of the purpose(s) for which each reserve is held and how holding each reserve supports the fire and rescue authority's medium term financial plan. The strategy should be set out in a way that is clear and understandable for members of the public, and should include:
- how the level of the general reserve has been set;
  - justification for holding a general reserve larger than five percent of budget; and
  - details of the activities or items to be funded from each earmarked reserve, and how these support the FRA's strategy to deliver a good quality service to the public. Where an earmarked reserve is intended to fund a number of projects or programmes (for example, a change or transformation reserve), details of each programme or project to be funded should be set out.
- 5.10 The information on each reserve should make clear how much of the funding falls into the following three categories:
- a. Funding for planned expenditure on projects and programmes over the period of the current medium term financial plan.
  - b. Funding for specific projects and programmes beyond the current planning period.
  - c. As a general contingency or resource to meet other expenditure needs held in accordance with sound principles of good financial management (e.g. insurance).

### **Commercial Transformation**

- 5.11 Each fire and rescue authority must demonstrate that it is achieving value for money for the goods and services it receives. Every fire and rescue authority should look at ways to improve its commercial practices including whether they can aggregate their procurement with other fire and rescue authorities and other local services (e.g. police) to achieve efficiencies.
- 5.12 Fire and rescue authorities must demonstrate and support national and local commercial transformation programmes where appropriate. Each fire and rescue authority should be able to demonstrate full awareness of the objectives to standardise requirements, aggregate demand and manage suppliers of products and services within their commercial arrangements.
- 5.13 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure that their commercial activities, be that the placement of new contracts or the use of existing contracts, is in line with their legal obligations, including but not limited to the Public Contracts Regulations, the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and transparency commitments.

## Research and Development

- 5.14 Fire and rescue authorities should engage with national research and development programmes, including those overseen by the NFCC, unless there is a good reason not to.
- 5.15 Where fire and rescue services embark on research and development outside of any national programme, processes should be put in place to ensure it meets quality standards and, where possible and appropriate, is available to the sector to enable good practice to be shared.

## Trading

- 5.16 Fire and rescue authorities have the power to trade and make a profit but they must ensure that their commercial activities are performed in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011), the Local Government Order 2009 and the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970. Fire and rescue authorities must also ensure that such commercial activities are exercised through a company within the meaning of Part 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 5.17 A trading company is a separate legal entity and elected members and officers should at all times be aware of potential conflicts of interest when carrying out their roles for their authorities, or when acting as directors of trading companies.
- 5.18 Fire and rescue authorities must ensure any actions taken in respect of their trading companies are considered against the requirements of competition law. Any financial assistance – in cash or in kind – given by an authority that establishes or participates in it, should be for a limited period, set against the expectation of later returns, and re-paid by those returns. Any assistance should be provided under a formal agreement with the company and must be entered into for a commercial purpose. Before entering into such an agreement, the authority should satisfy itself that it will achieve its objective, and the company should satisfy itself that it will meet its objective in terms of its business plan. The parties should consider any State Aid implications and obtain their own expert advice where necessary.

## 6. WORKFORCE

### People Strategy

- 6.1 Each fire and rescue authority should have in place a people strategy that has been designed in collaboration with the workforce. This should take into account the principles set out in the NFCC's people strategy and at a minimum cover:
- continuously improving the diversity of the workforce to ensure it represents the community it serves;
  - equality, cultural values and behaviours;
  - the various routes available in terms of recruitment, retention and progression;
  - flexible working;
  - professionalism, skills and leadership;
  - training opportunities;
  - health and safety, wellbeing, disabilities and support (e.g. mental health and physical support); and
  - tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- 6.2 The Home Office collects and publishes a range of workforce data which fire and rescue authorities are required to provide. This includes workforce diversity, information on new joiners, reasons for leaving and firefighter injuries.

### Professional Standards

- 6.3 To enhance professionalism of fire and rescue services, a coherent and comprehensive set of professional standards across all areas of fire and rescue services' work will be developed, drawing on existing standards where appropriate. The development of new standards will be on an ongoing basis.
- 6.4 All fire and rescue authorities must implement the standards approved through this work and the inspectorate will have regard to these standards as part of their inspections.

### Fitness Principles

- 6.5 Firefighting is a physically demanding occupation and it is essential that firefighters have sufficient levels of fitness to enable them to carry out their tasks as safely and effectively as possible. As such, this requires higher levels of fitness than most other occupations and therefore there is a requirement for operational personnel to maintain levels of personal fitness. It is recognised that fitness levels may decline with age and whilst this may be mitigated by fitness training, diet and other lifestyle changes, it is acknowledged that there may be a general decline in fitness as a result of the ageing process.
- 6.6 Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment. Each fire and rescue authority must comply with the fitness principles set out at Annex C.

## Re-engagement of Senior Officers

- 6.7 The re-appointment of principal fire officers to the same or similar posts within the same fire and rescue authority, a short time after they have retired, has caused concern in recent years and increases costs for taxpayers. These individuals very often receive their pension benefits on retirement (such as their tax free lump sum) and then return on favourable terms, including an increase in take-home pay through avoiding paying employee pension contributions.
- 6.8 Fire and rescue authorities must not re-appoint principal fire officers<sup>1</sup> after retirement to their previous, or a similar, post save for in exceptional circumstances when such a decision is necessary in the interests of public safety. Any such appointment must be transparent, justifiable and time limited.
- 6.9 In the exceptional circumstance that a re-appointment is necessary in the interests of public safety, this decision should be subject to agreement by a public vote of the elected members of the fire and rescue authority, or a publicised decision by the appropriate elected representative of the fire and rescue authority, taking into account the legislative requirements of PCC FRA Chief Fire Officer appointment procedures. The reason why the re-appointment was necessary in the interests of public safety, and alternative approaches were deemed not appropriate, must be published and the principal fire officer's pension must be abated until they cease to be employed by a fire and rescue authority.
- 6.10 To ensure greater fairness and the exchange of talent and ideas, all principal fire officer posts must be open to competition nationally, and fire and rescue authorities must take account of this in their workforce planning.
- 6.11 While the above requirements only extend to principal fire officers, we expect fire and rescue authorities to have regard to this principle when re-appointing at any level.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this Framework, Principal Officers refers to those officers at Brigade or Area Manager level, and above, or those with comparable responsibilities to those roles.

## 7. INSPECTION, INTERVENTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Inspection

- 7.1 Independent inspection of fire and rescue authorities in England – and the fire and rescue service they oversee - is delivered by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The chief fire and rescue inspector and inspectors of fire and rescue authorities in England have powers of inspection given to them by the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, as amended by the Policing and Crime Act 2017.
- 7.2 The inspectorate will provide a crucial assurance function to consider how effective and efficient fire and rescue authorities are, how well they manage their people and whether they are fulfilling their statutory obligations. The inspectorate will also highlight good practice and identify areas where improvement is needed so that remedial or constructive action can be taken. Alongside the inspectorate, other mechanisms exist for fire and rescue authorities to seek assurance or views on how they operate and/or the service they deliver, for example the Local Government Association’s sector improvement support. The Government’s expectation is that these mechanisms should complement inspection rather than duplicate or hinder it.
- 7.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 requires the chief fire and rescue inspector for England to publish an inspection programme setting out what inspections of fire and rescue authorities in England they propose to carry out, and an inspection framework setting out the manner in which inspections will be carried out, including the matters that will be inspected. The inspection framework and programme applies to every fire and rescue authority in England. The 2017 Act also requires the chief fire and rescue inspector for England to submit an annual report to the Secretary of State providing an assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of fire and rescue authorities in England for the period in respect of which the report is prepared.
- 7.4 All fire and rescue authorities must cooperate with the inspectorate and its inspectors to enable them to deliver their statutory function. This includes providing relevant data and information to inform inspections. The Home Office and HMICFRS will work together to align data and information collections where possible to avoid duplication.
- 7.5 Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and – if recommendations are made – prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned. If the fire and rescue authority does not propose to undertake any action as a result of a recommendation, reasons for this should be given. When forming an action plan, the fire and rescue authority could seek advice and support from other organisations, for example, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association; and, for those areas where a PFCC has responsibility for fire governance, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.

### Intervention

- 7.6 Section 22 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 gives powers to the Secretary of State to intervene should a fire and rescue authority fail, or be likely to fail, to act in accordance with this Framework. The Secretary of State is required to prepare a protocol about the exercise of these powers and to have regard to it when exercising the section 22 powers. The intervention protocol for these powers is attached at Annex D.

- 7.7 The 2004 Act allows the Secretary of State, by order, to require the fire and rescue authority to do something; to stop doing something; or not to do something in order to ensure the fire and rescue authority acts in accordance with this Framework. An order could be made if the Secretary of State considers it would promote public safety or the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the relevant fire and rescue authority. Before any such order is made the Secretary of State must give the authority an opportunity to make representations about the order proposed.
- 7.8 Use of this power is a last resort and intervention would only be considered if there was clear evidence that an authority was failing to act in accordance with the Framework, and that the failure was sufficiently serious as to warrant Government intervention. The expectation is that the fire and rescue authority should put in place remedial measures to overcome any concerns, seeking sector-led support as appropriate.
- 7.9 The Secretary of State also has other powers of intervention (for example, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999) but the Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities at Annex D relates solely to ensuring fire and rescue authorities act in accordance with the National Framework.

## Accountability

- 7.10 Fire and rescue authorities are expected to have governance and accountability arrangements in place covering issues such as financial management and transparency, complaints and discipline arrangements, and compliance with the seven principles of public life.<sup>2</sup>
- 7.11 Each fire and rescue authority must hold the individual who has responsibility for managing the fire and rescue service – an operational or non-operational Chief Fire Officer – to account for the delivery of the fire and rescue service and the functions of persons under their direction and control. In London, the Mayor of London must hold the London Fire Commissioner, as fire and rescue authority for Greater London, to account for the exercise of the Commissioner's functions.
- 7.12 In demonstrating their accountability to communities for the service they provide, fire and rescue authorities need to:
- be transparent and accountable to their communities for their decisions and actions;
  - provide the opportunity for communities to help to plan their local service through effective consultation and involvement; and
  - have scrutiny arrangements in place that reflect the high standard communities expect for an important public safety service.

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<sup>2</sup> Selflessness; Integrity; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Honesty; and Leadership

## Assurance and scrutiny

7.13 More broadly, a Police, Fire and Crime Panel will perform a scrutiny function, providing both support and challenge to the PFCC on the exercise of their functions and scrutiny of their Fire and Rescue Plan and Fire and Rescue Statement (see Section 4). The powers, responsibilities and membership requirements of PFCCs are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and apply in relation to fire as they do policing.

## Transparency

7.14 Each fire and rescue authority must comply with their statutory transparency requirements. The nature of the requirements is dependent on the legal basis of the authority; for example, combined fire and rescue authorities would be subject to the Local Authority Transparency Code 2015 while PCC FRAs must comply with requirements under section 11 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011. All fire and rescue authorities should therefore publish certain information, including: senior salaries; register of interests; staffing; income and expenditure; property; rights and liabilities; and decisions of significant public interest. Fire and rescue authorities must make their communities aware of how they can access data and information on their performance.

7.15 Furthermore, section 26 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 states that a fire and rescue authority must:

- a) submit to the Secretary of State any reports and returns that are required; and
- b) give the Secretary of State any information with respect to its functions that are required.

7.16 Fire and rescue authorities also have a responsibility to provide regular data to the Home Office as stipulated by MHCLG's Single Data List process. The data supplied are the source for the official and national statistics published by the Home Office and are used for the purposes of policy development across a range of organisations including Government as well as providing a publicly available national overview of activity by fire and rescue services.

## 8. TIMESCALE AND SCOPE

### Timescales

- 8.1 This Framework has an open-ended duration. The Secretary of State continues to be responsible for keeping the terms of the Framework under review under section 21(3) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 and is required under section 25 to prepare a biennial report to Parliament on the extent to which fire and rescue authorities are acting in accordance with the Framework.

### Scope

- 8.2 The Framework covers England only. It does not apply to Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales where responsibility for fire and rescue is devolved.



Annex A - Requirements on Fire and Rescue Authorities in England

	Metropolitan FRA	Combined FRA	County/unitary FRA	PFCC FRA	London	Mayor led FRA
<b>Overall responsibility for fire and rescue functions</b>	FRA	FRA	FRA/ council committee	PFCC	London Fire Commissioner	Mayor
<b>Who scrutinises decision making?</b>	FRA	FRA	FRA/ council committee	Police, Fire and Crime Panel	London Assembly	Mayor (or specific committee if created)
<b>Need to identify priorities and objectives?</b>	No	No	No	Yes ('Fire and Rescue Plan')	Yes	Yes (Greater Manchester (GM): 'local risk plan')
<b>Need to provide an assessment of all foreseeable fire and rescue related risk and how those risks will be mitigated?</b>	Yes ('IRMP')	Yes ('IRMP')	Yes ('IRMP')	Yes ('IRMP')	Yes ('IRMP' – 'London Safety Plan')	Yes (GM: 'local risk plan')
<b>Need to produce an annual assurance statement about compliance with the National Framework?</b>	Yes ('National Framework Annual Statement of Assurance')	Yes ('National Framework Annual Statement of Assurance')	Yes ('National Framework Annual Statement of Assurance')	Yes ('Fire and Rescue Statement')	Yes	Yes (GM: 'fire and rescue declaration')
<b>Need to produce a medium term financial plan ('MTFP')?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.
<b>Need to produce an efficiency plan? (This can be part of the 'MTFP')</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.
<b>Need to produce a reserves strategy? (This can be part of the 'MTFP')</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation.	Yes – part of parent authority's documentation
<b>Service subject to HMICFRS inspection?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Annex B - Published Financial Guidance** (see Chapter 5)

- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government which sets the financial reporting framework for local government bodies, including fire and rescue authorities.
- The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom issued by CIPFA /LASAAC, which constitutes proper practices for local government bodies, including fire and rescue authorities.
- The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) issued by CIPFA as the relevant internal audit standards setter for local government and the fire and rescue service.
- Local Government Application Note for the United Kingdom Public Sector Internal Audit Standards issued by CIPFA.
- Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework issued by CIPFA/SOLACE.
- Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Public Service Organisations issued by CIPFA.
- Standing Guide to the Commissioning of Local Authority Work and Services issued by CIPFA.
- Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities issued by CIPFA.
- Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes issued by CIPFA.
- Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police issued by CIPFA.
- Position Statement on Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police issued by CIPFA.
- Statutory guidance for local authorities on the framework for flexible use of capital receipts issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) and CIPFA bulletins that provide topical guidance on specific issues and accounting developments.

## Annex C - Fitness Principles

Fire and rescue authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment. Each fire and rescue authority must:

- have a process of fitness assessment and development to ensure that operational personnel are enabled to maintain the standards of personal fitness required in order to perform their role safely;
- ensure that no individual will automatically face dismissal if they fall below the standards required and cannot be deployed operationally;
- ensure that all operational personnel will be provided with support to maintain their levels of fitness for the duration of their career;
- consider where operational personnel have fallen below the fitness standards required whether an individual is able to continue on full operational duties or should be stood down, taking into account the advice provided by the authority's occupational health provider. In making this decision, the safety and well-being of the individual will be the key issue;
- commit to providing a minimum of 6 months of development and support to enable individuals who have fallen below the required fitness standards to regain the necessary levels of fitness;
- refer an individual to occupational health where underlying medical reasons are identified that restrict/prevent someone from achieving the necessary fitness; and ensure that individual receives the necessary support to facilitate a return to operational duties; and
- fully explore opportunities to enable the individual to remain in employment including through reasonable adjustment and redeployment in role where it appears the medical condition does not allow a return to operational duties.

In those circumstances where there are no such opportunities and suitable alternative employment is either unavailable or, where available, is not agreed by the individual, then the fire and rescue authority will commence an assessment for ill-health retirement through the Independent Qualified Medical Practitioner process.

If no underlying medical issues are identified, and following a programme of development and support it becomes apparent that an individual will be unable to regain the necessary levels of fitness, then a fire and rescue authority will fully explore opportunities for reasonable adjustments and/or suitable alternative employment. In those circumstances where there are no opportunities for reasonable adjustments or suitable alternative employment, the fire and rescue authority will in the case of an employee aged at least 55, consider commencement of the authority initiated early retirement process for it to determine whether the individual should be retired with an authority initiated early retirement pension.

## Annex D - Protocol on Central Government Intervention Action for Fire and Rescue Authorities

### Introduction

1. It is a requirement under section 23 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) that an intervention protocol be prepared, and for the Secretary of State to have regard to it in the exercise of their power of intervention.
2. The Secretary of State's order-making powers under section 22 of the 2004 Act are to ensure that fire and rescue authorities act in accordance with the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (the Framework). Intervention is by order, subject to the negative Parliamentary procedure, and can only be made if the Secretary of State considers it would promote public safety; and the economy, efficiency or effectiveness of the relevant fire and rescue authority, or the services it provides.
3. To date there has been no formal intervention in the operations of a fire and rescue authority by the Secretary of State under these powers. Use of this power is seen as a last resort. The expectation is that the political and professional leadership of the fire and rescue authority will put in place processes to ensure that sector-led support is provided to any fire and rescue authority that needs it.
4. This intervention protocol ("the protocol") broadly sets out the arrangements between the Secretary of State, the Local Government Association (LGA), the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and fire and rescue authorities should formal intervention be considered necessary.
5. In this protocol the term 'intervention' is used to refer to action by the Secretary of State in exercise of their powers under section 22 of the 2004 Act. Although the Secretary of State also has other powers of intervention (for example, under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999) this protocol does not apply to an intervention under those powers.

### Role of partners in supporting fire and rescue authorities at risk

6. HMICFRS will play a leading role in identifying any fire and rescue authority that is failing, or is likely to fail, in providing efficiency, effectiveness and leadership for the public. The NFCC and the LGA and/or APCC, will play an important liaison role in engaging the wider sector in supporting those authorities at risk and work collaboratively with key bodies,<sup>3</sup> identify at an early stage serious risks to performance or the requirement to act in accordance with the Framework<sup>4</sup>. The NFCC and/or Local Government Association and/or the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners will work with these bodies to prevent the escalation of those risks to avoid any risk to public safety or any negative impact on the reputation of the sector.

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<sup>3</sup> This could refer to fire and rescue authorities, the relevant professional leadership including the National Fire Chiefs Council, other sector-owned bodies, inspection bodies and HMICFRS in particular, and/or government departments

<sup>4</sup> There is a joint initiative by the LGA and NFCC, "Sector Support", to adapt the previous process of Peer Review or Peer Challenge to create a mechanism to support FRSs to improve. This specifically includes a provision for those services/authorities that may be at risk of failing.

7. If there are specific concerns in respect of performance, or if there is evidence that indicates a fire and rescue authority is failing or is at risk of failing to act in accordance with the Framework, either through inspection by HMICFRS or through sector-led processes, the NFCC and/or the Local Government Association, and/or the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, and/or the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners will work with the authority to help them address the issues and seek improvement.

### **Circumstances leading to statutory intervention**

8. No intervention would be considered unless there was clear evidence that an authority was failing to act in accordance with the Framework and that the failure was sufficiently serious as to require Government intervention.
9. If, following a sustained and determined attempt to resolve problems through sector-led improvement an issue cannot be resolved, or if a fire and rescue authority is unwilling or unable to engage with sector-led improvement measures, the Secretary of State can, under section 28 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, commission HMICFRS to lead an investigation. Under this provision, the Secretary of State also has the power to require HMICFRS to undertake any further inspection of fire and rescue authorities in England as required for the purpose of furthering their efficiency and effectiveness. The Secretary of State may also seek advice and information from other persons/bodies (for example, the NFCC) in respect of specific identified issues.
10. The Secretary of State has a range of powers including to request information about a fire and rescue authority's functions<sup>5</sup> and conferring on a fire and rescue authority functions relating to emergencies<sup>6</sup>. Inspection powers – powers to obtain information and access premises – are also held by HMICFRS' inspectors.<sup>7</sup>

### **What happens upon statutory intervention?**

11. In the event that statutory intervention is considered necessary, the Secretary of State will consult the authority concerned and any other body or authority which is considered necessary, such as HMICFRS, the NFCC and the Local Government Association, before exercising powers of intervention under section 22 of the 2004 Act.
12. The form or extent of any formal intervention will be a matter for determination on a case by case basis, taking into account the views of the fire and rescue authority, HMICFRS, the NFCC, the Local Government Association, the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the Police Fire and Crime Panel and any other consultees, depending on the nature and the severity of the failure under consideration. Following such deliberations, the Secretary of State will agree a course of action, and how the required improvement will be delivered.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 26 of the 2004 Act

<sup>6</sup> Section 9 of the 2004 Act

<sup>7</sup> Section 28 of the 2004 Act





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23 March 2018

### **To all Chief Fire Officers & Chairs of Fire and Rescue Authorities**

As you will be aware there has been a longstanding requirement to update the current Incident Recording System (IRS), which is at the end of its economic life, to better meet future needs. The need for accurate and timely data is more important than ever with the forthcoming HMICFRS inspections, the development of the new national fire website over the next few months, and the increased awareness and interest in fire related topics over the last year.

Since the responsibility for fire policy moved from DCLG [now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government] to the Home Office, we have been considering how best to update the national IRS. We now have the go-ahead from the Minister for Policing and Fire to develop a business case of the potential options which will include an assessment of the commercial approach and financial implications.

One of the options we want to look at more closely is the work currently being developed by West Midlands Fire Service which uses an innovative and flexible approach to collecting data. However, we are keen to know of any other work that is taking place across the sector which could be explored as part of this next stage.

We recognise that not all fire and rescue services use the current national IRS and that we will need to ensure that any new system is compatible with the local systems that currently feed into the national IRS.

It is also absolutely essential that we work closely with the NFCC to ensure sector buy-in and that the new system is as useful and usable as possible, so over the coming months we will be asking for engagement into the development of the new IRS. In the first instance Home Office officials will be working with Shantha Dickinson who is the data lead for the NFCC and will be looking to re-establish the NFCC IRS working group.

In the meantime we are working hard to keep the current system up and running and look forward to working with you.

Regards,

David Blunt

Home Office Chief Statistician & Head of Fire, Licensing and Public Order Analysis Unit

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# Government announces new standards for fire and rescue services

A new Fire Standards Board (FSB) will be overseeing and commissioning professional standards for fire and rescue services across England.

Published 22 May 2018

From:

[Home Office](#) and [The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP](#)



Addressing the Local Government Association's Fire Commission yesterday, the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, announced a new approach to improve professional standards for fire and rescue services across England.

While some professional standards currently exist for fire and rescue services, they are inconsistently applied and the government believes they can be expanded. A Fire Standards Board will be created to ensure standards are nationally coordinated to a high level across the sector.

The proposal was developed in conjunction with the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Local Government Association and other partners. This new board will be independent from government and supported by the NFCC's central programme office which will produce the standards, drawing on external expertise as required.

It will be for the board to determine its workplan but initial issues the Board could consider include:

- workforce issues like leadership and development
- the identification and mitigation of risks
- fire prevention and the approach to protecting the public from other emergencies

The board will also be responsible for agreeing priorities in response to the recently published Hackitt review, the Grenfell Tower inquiry, and other emerging issues facing fire and rescue services.

The Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Nick Hurd said:

We all recognise the bravery and dedication of our firefighters who work tirelessly every day to protect the communities they serve.

Creating a new Independent Board to oversee professional standards across England will support the continuous improvement of fire and rescue services and support them to become more professional than ever before.

This move is a key element of the government's ambitious fire reform programme which aims to improve the professionalism, effectiveness and accountability of fire and rescue services by:

- establishing an independent inspection regime – Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - for fire and rescue
- encouraging employers to drive workforce reform, including increasing the diversity of the workforce
- bringing greater accountability to the work of local fire and rescue services by enabling Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to take on responsibility for fire and rescue services where a strong local case is made
- supporting services to transform commercially with more efficient procurement and collaboration
- increasing the transparency of services with the publication of further information to allow the public to hold their service to account and the creation of a new national website in the summer



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 June 2018
<b>OFFICER</b>	Lynne Swift, Director of People & Organisational Development
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Steven Lambert
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Update on Buckinghamshire &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This report is presented to members of Buckinghamshire &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority (the Authority) as an update on the Authority's apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>The Authority introduced its apprenticeship programme in 2016, with its key areas of focus being: how apprentices can be utilised most effectively; highlighting the importance of improving the diversity of our workforce; offering career development opportunities to our existing employees, and increasing the resilience of our workforce.</p> <p><b>2017/18:</b></p> <p>At the end of 2017/18, apprentices made up 6.6 percent of the Authority's total workforce, working to a number of different apprenticeship standards (summarised in Annex A). This exceeds (the Government's target of 2.3 percent which equates to the equivalent of 12 full time equivalent (FTE) per year. 2017/18 was the first full year of the Government's apprenticeship reform agenda, and for which all providers have to submit reports to the National Apprenticeship Service by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Whilst targets and the apprenticeship levy were introduced for 2017/18, the aim of the Authority's programme continues to be the strategically targeted and sustainable refreshment of the workforce, rather than designed to meet Government targets.</p> <p><b>2018/19</b></p> <p>Fourteen new apprentice firefighters started their initial acquisition training, known as the Firefighter Development Programme, in April 2018. This 12 week blended training course is accredited by Skills For Justice and delivered under the Training Partnership with The Fire Service College. Once completed, the apprentice firefighters will be placed on station from</p>

	<p>23July 2018.</p> <p>In August 2018, the first cohort of apprentices (18 firefighters and two business administrators) who started in 2016 will be finishing their apprenticeships.</p> <p>Two of the existing workforce are currently enrolled on apprenticeships in Management &amp; Leadership and, following the appointment of a Management Apprenticeship training provider, a further 20+ of the workforce will be enrolled on these apprenticeships in 2018/19.</p> <p>Again, based on these figures, the Authority has exceeded both the Government’s target for apprenticeships, and its own as outlined in the Pledge submitted to the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network. The total number of apprentices (including support services) compared to total headcount is currently 11 percent. Annex A provides a more detailed update on the Authority’s apprenticeship programme. Appendix 1 provides information on the national position – where the Authority makes a significant contribution through its representation on, and participation in, national work groups.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the content of the update be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>The following risks have been identified and mitigated as an outcome of the Authority’s apprenticeship programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputation – due to the Authority’s pro-active approach to implementing apprenticeships, it is well established with regards to utilising the levy payment and meeting the public sector targets</li> <li>• Resourcing – by recruiting apprentice firefighters in 2017 and increasing the number of firefighter apprentices recruited in 2018, pressure on the establishment has been relieved, helping to maintain minimum crewing levels</li> <li>• Resourcing – the workforce will be continue to be refreshed using a blended approach to balance the recruitment of apprentices with experienced transferees. In addition the Authority is piloting career pathways for On Call members of staff to whole time via the Flexi FF programme.</li> <li>• End Point Assessment (EPA) provision for the new firefighter trailblazer standard is currently limited by the provider accreditation process.</li> </ul>

	<p>This is being mitigated by a national procurement exercise which will be completed before the EPA is required in 2020.</p>
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>The apprenticeship levy costs the Authority c. £60k per annum (this cost has included in the budget since 2017/18).</p> <p>The Authority is seeking to maximise the return on this investment by introducing Management Apprenticeships at various levels throughout the organisation.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>None arising from the recommendation.</p>
<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>The Authority continues to work with its Thames Valley Fire Service partners, through regular resourcing meetings, to determine a collaborative approach to firefighter and apprenticeship recruitment. This has led to the establishment of links with Thames Valley Police on recruitment activity, in particular in looking at improving diversity.</p> <p>The Service has worked with other fire and emergency service partners on workforce reform, by supporting national and regional events, and through sharing best practice.</p> <p>Royal Berkshire are named on this Service's contract with the Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA). As such, if they wished to recruit apprentices using the ATA model, they could do so with our provider and without having to go out to tender.</p> <p>The Service has collaborated on multiple apprenticeship trailblazer standards at a national level, including the recently approved Emergency Call Handler standard.</p> <p>Following the TV Collaboration Steering Group Meeting on 19 March 2018, an action is underway to contact South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) with regard to the apprenticeship project, and a meeting is to be arranged late Spring/early Summer with the apprenticeship lead from Thames Valley Police (TVP) to explore further possibilities.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>No Health and Safety implications have been identified.</p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>Integrated impact assessments have, and will be, completed for any change programme which relates to the Authority's apprenticeship programme.</p> <p>The apprenticeship programme provides an excellent opportunity to improve the diversity make-up of the Authority. Targeted "have a go" days were organised for female and ethnic minority applicants, and there has been a significant increase in females being</p>

	<p>appointed across the 3 recruitment campaigns.</p> <p>Work on apprenticeships is scheduled for Summer 2018, linked to the On-Call operational resourcing programme, now that the part-time rules are clarified.</p> <p>In order to improve the diversity of the workforce through apprenticeship recruitment, the Authority endorsed the submission of a pledge to, and were the first from the Fire sector to be accepted by, the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN).</p> <p>Recent apprenticeships networking meetings in Milton Keynes, have enabled engagement with local community groups to help increase applications from BME communities.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>The arrangements for setting, reviewing and implementing strategic and operational objectives; Performance monitoring, including budget monitoring; achievement of strategic objectives and best value performance indicators;</b></p> <p>The Authority’s apprenticeship programme contributes to achieving it’s people strategic enabler set out in the Corporate Plan 2015 to 2020:-</p> <p>‘To optimise the contribution and well-being of our people’</p> <p>by using the opportunity provided by apprenticeship programmes to ‘adapt and refresh the workforce to improve service delivery and resilience’. This is especially relevant when considered in relation to the steadily increasing age of the operational workforce and the need to develop new skills in the Authority. As a result of the apprenticeship programme, the average age of whole-time firefighters has reduced from 41 to 39 years.</p> <p><b>Communication with stakeholders;</b></p> <p>A range of methods are used to communicate on workforce reform across the Service. Communication is delivered via the People &amp; Organisational Development Director’s blog, the leadership group and the I:drive. The success of the Authority’s apprenticeship programme is showcased internally and externally at visits from other services and national events.</p> <p><b>The system of internal control;</b></p> <p>All significant changes impacting on the Authority will follow an agreed process, including governance and approval. The apprenticeship programme is continually monitored through regular updates to the Authority and internal governance meetings.</p> <p>The programme is accredited by Pearson’s and yearly audits are undertaken by their representatives to</p>



	<p>ensure the required standards are being met.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Training Provider – Encompass - is audited by Ofsted to ensure compliance with funding regulations.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>Report to the Fire Authority held 14 February 2018: Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5415/1782/9457/ITEM_1_2_Apprenticeship_Diversity_Champions_Network_ADC_N_Fire_Authority_and_Annex_A.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5415/1782/9457/ITEM_1_2_Apprenticeship_Diversity_Champions_Network_ADC_N_Fire_Authority_and_Annex_A.pdf</a></p> <p>Report to the Fire Authority held 18 October 2017; Update on Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8715/0719/9540/ITEM_1_1_Apprenticeships_Update_Report_JPMAppentices.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/8715/0719/9540/ITEM_1_1_Apprenticeships_Update_Report_JPMAppentices.pdf</a></p> <p>Report to the Executive Committee held 29 July 2015: Apprenticeship Scheme  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/7114/5527/6772/EXECUTIVE_COMMITTEE_PACK_290715.compressed.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/7114/5527/6772/EXECUTIVE_COMMITTEE_PACK_290715.compressed.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>APPENDICES</b></p>	<p>Annex A: The Authority’s Apprenticeship Programme</p> <p>Appendix 1: Fire and Rescue Service Apprenticeships – update 10 April 2018 (NFCC Chiefs’ Briefing)</p> <p>Appendix 2: Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network – Quarterly Return – April 2018</p> <p>Appendix 3: Director’s Blog – National Apprenticeships Week 5 to 9 March 2018</p>
<p><b>TIME REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>10 Minutes</p>
<p><b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b></p>	<p>Station Commander Charlie Turner  <a href="mailto:cturner@bucksfire.gov.uk">cturner@bucksfire.gov.uk</a>                      01296 744493</p>

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## **Update on Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Apprenticeship Programme**

### Apprenticeship Training Agency:

As part of the approval of the Authority's apprenticeship programme in 2015, members opted to use the Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) model for the recruitment of our apprentices.

The ATA is an employment agency for apprentices, which directly employs and manages individuals who undertake their apprenticeship whilst being placed into the workplace.

The flexibility of the ATA model means the Authority has a continuous talent pipeline being developed, and can decide at the end of the apprenticeship programme if the establishment can offer full time, substantive positions to the apprentices.

Our ATA is Encompass Select. The contract commenced in April 2016 and lasts for four years, with an optional one year extension.

As part of the development of the relationship with Encompass, it was identified that some dedicated resource was required to undertake learner progress reviews, apprentice and line management support visits, the necessary checks to meet funding requirements, and to provide welfare to the apprentices on station and in their various departments. A member of staff from the Authority's learning and development team has been seconded to Encompass to undertake this role on an initial one year contract. This support function has proven invaluable in the progress being made by the apprentices.

### Current Establishment:

The original apprenticeship paper which went to the Executive Committee meeting on 29 July 2015, set out a three year Firefighter (FF) apprenticeship recruitment programme, recruiting 10 FFs per year. Based on workforce planning data, during the initial recruitment campaign it was identified that front loading in the first year would help meet future resource requirements and, therefore, 22 FFs were recruited during that first campaign.

<b>New Apprentice Recruitment</b>			
	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
<b>ICT</b>		1	
<b>Business Administration</b>	2	3	
<b>Workshops</b>	1		
<b>Firefighters</b>	22	12	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	25	16	14
<b>Leavers</b>	4		

The total number of apprentices (including support services) compared to total headcount is currently 11%.

The recruitment of the most recent cohort of new apprentices was managed in-house through social media. This has been costed at £41.36 per applicant, compared to £649.28 per applicant previously when using a recruitment agency. This was accompanied by a 13.5 percentage increase in the number of applications received.

#### Leadership & Management Apprenticeships:

From June – September 2017, the Service piloted an Aspiring Leaders Pathway (ALP); a new personal development process which all staff were invited to apply for. This process assisted in identifying future leaders, replenished the development pools for promotional purposes, produced personal development plans which will aid each individual's development and signposted a range of additional opportunities including lateral moves and secondments.

In addition, one of the proposed outcomes from the ALP was that a number of staff members would be identified and offered the opportunity to pilot a Management Apprenticeship Programme, with the aim of having apprenticeships embedded across all levels within the organisation.

Management Apprenticeships blend leadership and management theory with on-the-job training to develop staff, which has a real and immediate impact.

There are five levels of Management Apprenticeships standards:

Level	Standard
3	Team Leader/Supervisor
4	Associate Project Manager
5	Operations/Departmental Manager
6	Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship
7	Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship

The Service is able to draw down funding from its levy (up to a cap which will depend upon the standard that is being trained against) to cover the costs of training, including English and Maths (if the individual doesn't already possess these), assessment and certification.

A growth bid of £60,000 was approved by members on 24 October 2016 to prepare for the introduction of the levy, and details of how it will be utilised and re-invested back into the Authority are below.

The current costs for the varying levels of Management Apprenticeships are:

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Apprenticeship Standard</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Funding band maximum</b>
Leadership & Management	Senior Leader Master's	7	£18,000
Leadership & Management	<a href="#">Chartered Manager</a>	6	£27,000
Leadership & Management	<a href="#">Operations/Departmental Manager</a>	5	£ 9,000
Leadership & Management	<a href="#">Team Leader/Supervisor</a>	3	£ 5,000

The government has committed to top up an organisation's "levy pot" by funding any apprenticeships procured over and above their levy by 90 per cent, meaning the Authority will only need to fund the other 10 per cent if it spends more than the required levy.

The indicative costings to run a pilot Management Apprenticeship Programme require a tender process to be commissioned. This is due to the value of the contract that would be awarded to the Training Provider delivering the apprenticeship programme. Following the tender and appointment of Bucks College Group as the chosen training provider, the programme is due to commence in September 2018.

#### Notable changes to the Authority's apprenticeship programmes:

Since the 2016/17 recruitment, evaluations have taken place and a number of changes made to the recruitment processes. These changes have been implemented in an attempt to reduce the number of leavers, increase the number of applications, and ensure equality across the programmes we deliver.

This work is ongoing, and we are looking at ways to further improve the diversity of our applicants.

#### Driving Licence & Postcode Restriction:

To encourage applications from the local community, for the last two FF recruitments, we applied a postcode restriction that applicants must live within 20 miles of the border of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

#### Training Agreements:

During 2018/19, we will be reviewing the option of introducing a training agreement for future apprenticeship recruitment, which will allow the Service to re-coup some of the funds invested in an individual should they leave to join another Fire and Rescue Service within a certain timescale. The training agreement is common practice across the Authority when investing in staff for other training costs, and so it is proposed that this is also considered for

apprenticeship training as the Authority funds the full cost of initial Firefighter training at the Fire Service College – circa £5k per person.

Collaboration Opportunities:

A current priority relevant to this update is to determine a collaborative approach to firefighter and apprenticeships recruitment across the three Thames Valley Fire Services.

Royal Berkshire are named on this Service's contract with the Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA). Therefore, if they wanted to recruit apprentices using the ATA model, they could do so with our provider and without having to go out to tender.

In addition, we approached both Royal Berkshire and Oxfordshire to be named on the tender document for the provider of the management apprenticeship programme.

We have been heavily influential in the fire sector-specific trailblazer developments, working with other services, agencies and employers from the sector.

Scoping meetings have been held with Thames Valley Police, local colleges and other groups to improve networking and establish ways to improve the diversity of our applicants to all apprenticeship positions.

**National Apprenticeship Week 2018**

National Apprenticeship Week 2018 involved a vast amount of activity for the Authority, to promote awareness within the Community regarding apprenticeship careers across the Fire and Rescue Service, and this is detailed in Appendix 3.

On 19 April 2018, the Authority won a Public Sector Personnel Management Association (PPMA) Excellence in People Management Award in the category of "The Best Value Recruitment Campaign" for our 2016 apprenticeship recruitment. This was the result of a lot of hard work by the People & Organisational Development team to deliver a complex campaign against tight deadline. This category had the highest number of excellent nominees within it, and so to win is a real honour, and deserved recognition for the Authority and all staff.



## Fire and Rescue Service Apprenticeships – update 10 April 2018

The Fire and Rescue Service is embracing the government reform agenda on apprenticeships to continue to upskill its workforce; to improve diversity; and ensure it is best placed to continue to attract and retain talent for the future. The apprenticeships agenda is a positive opportunity to support delivery of the key elements of the FRS People Strategy 2017 to 2022.

### The main challenges facing the sector

Overall, Year 1 of the apprenticeships reform agenda 2017-18 has delivered a significant number of new start apprenticeships across the FRS. The FRS has faced a series of challenges which has impacted on the full delivery of national and individual services' apprenticeships plans. With collaborative working across the FRS, with Police, Home Office and partner agencies such as National Apprenticeships Service (NAS), the Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) and the Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) some challenges have been resolved and others continue. Currently, the main challenges are: -

### Training provision

Current limitations on options to deliver trailblazer standards, particularly sector-specific ones such as firefighting, is a significant barrier to the FRS optimising the significant contribution it can make to apprenticeships. The initial FRS plans assumed that the Register of Apprenticeships Training Providers (RoATP) would be opened quarterly. Approximately 40 per cent of FRSs expressed interest in applying. The RoATP did open Sept/October 2017 at short notice and, even with the excellent support of the NAS Head of Large Employers in arranging short notice workshops, only a smaller number were in a position to submit RoATP applications.

It is understood, but yet to be confirmed, that it could be September 2018 before the RoATP opens again. Clarity on the position would be helpful, as would consideration of opening earlier - which could, if necessary, be limited to sectors such as Fire and Rescue for which there are a very limited number of external suppliers who offer Fire Fighter training. There are many providers who offer management and general apprenticeships. With lengthy procurement tendering processes, if the RoATP doesn't open for another 6 months, FRSs may have to recruit operational staff using non-apprenticeship routes only.

### Workforce Diversity

Improving the diversity of the Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) workforce remains a key challenge. However, the FRS apprenticeships programme and the fire fighter predicted retirement profile over the next three years provides opportunity to promote diversity and demonstrate continual improvement on the current position. The challenge is to ensure appropriate diverse community education of what careers FRSs can offer, supported by specific candidate attraction processes which are in place.

## Options for FRSs with a high proportion of On Call (part time) Firefighters

Some FRSs employ a high proportion of On Call (part time) fire fighters where the FRS is not the primary employer. Whilst the guidance on part time apprenticeships allows for some to embark on apprenticeships over a longer time period, for many the extended time period would be unrealistic. The impact on these services includes difficulties in achieving the targets, and reduced scope to optimise levy investment to upskill the workforce.

### Funding and resourcing

The FRS has accepted lower than required funding bands for the Fire Fighter and Business Fire Safety Advisor trailblazer standards, so that standards are in place for the start of the 2018-19 FRS financial year and the start of Year 2 of the apprentice levy year. The challenge is to do everything as reasonably as possible through collaborative working, joint procurement, and finding ways to increase the numbers of FRSs on the RoATP register, as referred to earlier.

The funding band issues have elongated the time taken to develop trailblazer standards, which has impacted on operational apprenticeship new starts in 2017-18. With the withdrawal of the Fire Fighter apprenticeship framework on 1 October 2017, the FRSs were left with no option but to recruit fire fighter apprenticeships for five months of the year until March 2018.

Apprenticeships trailblazer standards development rely on significant FRS resources to deliver. This has been challenging throughout 2017-18 and what has been achieved to date is commendable, despite delays at most stages of the process. FRS workforce planning and organisational needs require new sector-specific apprenticeships standards as described in the trailblazer development update section of this update). External resources were approved to project manage each trailblazer development, with all FRSs contributing.

Whilst these challenges are described individually; there are interdependencies which amplify the overall impact on FRS apprenticeships delivery to date.

### Actions being taken by departments directly and other organisations on your patch (and relevant stakeholders) to overcome these challenges and meet the target

Resolving the challenges outlined earlier to enable implementation of the Year 2 programme (2018-19) is critical to the success of the FRS apprenticeships programme. Whilst driven by organisational requirements, not simply levy, it is important that FRSs are able to draw down the levy to meet their needs this year to invest before they start to lose it after two years.

The main actions to resolve challenges and pursue opportunities are: -

#### i) Ensuring FRSs have options for training provision soonest

- Collaborative procurement tender process has commenced
- NFCC Workforce Committee is setting up an Apprenticeships Board from late April 2018 and actions will be agreed to facilitate this process
- Determine possibilities to open RoATP register before September 2018



## ii) Workforce Diversity

- Home Office are supporting, for example, the promoting of careers in the FRS, community education and materials for candidate attraction
- NAS arranged Joint Police /Fire Widening Participation apprenticeships event, 5 March 2018, during National Apprenticeships Week has already increased networking and collaboration opportunities and will continue
- Membership of the Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network – early days to increase knowledge and share learning
- NFCC Workforce Committee Equalities Group – supporting apprenticeships diversity agenda
- LGA Inclusive Group has set improvement strategies, some of which relate to apprenticeships

These support mechanisms will be prioritised as part of the 2018 19 plan.

## iii) On Call Fire Fighter/Part time apprenticeships

- NFCC National On Call Group is reviewing current employment models, and outcomes of this work may help with this challenge
- In-depth local analysis planned for Summer 2018 with one FRS to determine barriers and potential ways forward to what is a 'not one size fits all' issue
- Discussions planned initially with NAS to determine if there is any potential to adapt the guidelines for specific cases such as On Call FFs
- Second half 2018-19 - one FRS to scope a pilot with primary employers to determine possibilities.

## iv) Funding and Resourcing

- Each FRS to be asked to monitor spend on Fire Fighter and Business Fire Safety Advisor trailblazer apprenticeships
- Review learns from trailblazer development to date with Employer leads and relevant agencies, and build into live and future developments
- NFCC have set up Central Programme Office to support major projects - Apprenticeships is included

## Specific actions to support organisations to achieve the target

- Continue to work with NAS to identify and progress a range of actions which fit with FRS plans. These include events, workshops, training and specific guidance and communications to share across the FRS
- NFCC Workforce Committee has set up an Apprenticeships Board to reinforce profile, and to optimise resources to best support FRSs deliver their plans
- Continue to collaborate with Police, Ambulance and Health to deliver joint trailblazers and seek opportunities
- Workshops on specific topics
- Joint procurement
- Developing career pathways based on the FRS leadership framework, which is currently being finalised. The career pathway includes apprenticeship levels.
- Ongoing development of sector-specific trailblazers, e.g. Fire Engineering pathway, following identification of difficulties to attract and retain skills in this high profile and important areas.

**The current position on the development of standards (and frameworks) that will help you achieve this target**, including who is developing them, latest status, expected completion and projected volumes (in collaboration with Institute for Apprenticeships)

- Firefighter (Level 3) standard approved for use – end February 2018
- Business Fire Safety Advisor (Level 3) approved for use – early March 2018
- Emergency Contact Handler (Police/Fire/ Ambulance/Health) approved and funding band now approved.
- Community Safety Advisor (Level 3) – currently scheduled for completion is autumn 2018 – assumes no delays as per earlier trailblazers. NB: The Community Safety Advisor existing framework was scheduled for removal October 2018. However, it would be very helpful to the FRS if this could wait until the new trailblazer standard is ready, so as not to have a gap.
- Fire Engineering/Fire Safety – a Level 4 Fire Inspector/Auditor standard is under development with a Level 6 Fire Engineer currently at the launch stage (late April 2018). With the Level 3 Business Fire Safety Advisor recently approved, the aim is to build a career pathway.
- The Leadership and Management pathway is at the design stage to incorporate the FRS Leadership framework and include management apprenticeships levels 3 to 7. These apprenticeships standards are already in place. The group are scoping out this work and expect to have an outline for autumn 2018.
- The FRS is utilising a range of non-sector specific apprenticeship standards to upskill the workforce and meet its targets. These include management, business administration and project management.

**Overview and analysis of latest MI from the Apprenticeship Service, including implications for future programme of work (e.g. How do your plans change? How are you using data to inform activity?)**

The FRS are involved in piloting and testing reporting systems with the Digital Apprenticeships Service and continue to work with NAS to ensure reporting and management information provision systems minimise administration for all agencies.

**Beyond the focus on achieving the target, please also include other strategic objectives, and planned actions and measures to achieve them (e.g. quality, social mobility)**

As per the previous update; in addition to achieving the targets of over 4000 new start apprenticeships in England's 45 FRSs over 4 years, the FRS has identified related strategic objectives for which the apprenticeships programme supports delivery. The main strategic objectives are: -

- Improve workforce diversity across the Fire and Rescue Service
- Refresh the workforce using apprenticeships as part of a blended approach to resourcing, against a national position of up to one third of fire fighters (which make up 80 per cent of the workforces) set to retire in the next 3 to 5 years.
- Develop or revise career pathways which are fit for purpose to meet challenges of FRS service diversification, which include attracting and retaining talent.
- Optimise effective and efficient use of resources – finances, procurement, policy development
- Building the Fire and Rescue Service Brand to promote Fire/Emergency Services
- Supporting ongoing professionalisation of the FRS as the Professional Standards Body is developed
- Promoting and evidencing collaborative working, including the 'duty to collaborate'
- Align youth engagement, cadet and apprenticeships strategies, and optimise the future technical skills development programmes within the Protective Services Employer Group to attract and upskill talent.

**Quantitative breakdown of the target, including projections over the coming years as well as progress to date and expected trajectory. We understand that you have limited levers and visibility. However, we would like to see a systematic attempt to understand the scale of the challenge, and what progress we can realistically expect to see as the programme develops (i.e. organisations adjust to the levy and new standards come on stream).**

Achievements of the apprenticeships targets across the FRS will, in the main, be 'back loaded' due to Year 1 having to set up sector specific trailblazer standards, and the challenges identified earlier.

For the 45 FRSs in England 40,180 staff (FTE) were employed by FRSs on 31 March 2017. This was a five per cent decrease compared with the previous year (42,347 in 2016). Of this total, 33,049 staff (FTE) were employed as firefighters on 31 March 2017.

The outline plans from FRSs for 2018-19, on updates received to date, indicate that achieving the aggregated target of 1000 for the year could be exceeded, and could go some way to offsetting the shortfall for the 2017-18 year. This assumes that the key challenges regarding training provision, etc., are resolved.

For 2017-18 the actual position is yet to be confirmed. However, based on actuals received to date, 360 are reported which will, of course, increase as the outstanding returns are received throughout April 2018.

*Lynne Swift*

NFCC Learning and Development Lead

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## Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network

### Quarterly Return – April 2018

Apprenticeship Starts (diversity breakdown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fourteen to start on 23<sup>rd</sup> April: Level 3 Operational Firefighter</li> <li>• Management Apprenticeships L3, 5, 6 due to start May/June – numbers to be confirmed</li> <li>• Diversity Breakdown to be presented at future meeting</li> </ul>
What diversity challenges you have faced / learning you have gained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging with communities and community groups that do not recognise the Fire &amp; Rescue Service as a principal employer.</li> <li>• Attracting females in to operational roles (firefighters).</li> <li>• Attracting Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) candidates.</li> </ul>
Update on the delivery of your pledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the ADCN to support our People Strategy to attract and retain a diverse workforce by encouraging and actively promoting employment applications from all groups in the community.</li> </ul> <p>Currently piloting e-Recruitment to encourage and promote applications from all community groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use our apprenticeship programme to maintain a skilled and committed professional workforce, and work towards employing a workforce that is more representative of the working-age population of Buckinghamshire Fire &amp; Rescue Service.</li> </ul> <p>Introduction of management apprenticeships at Levels 3, 5 and 6, which are due to start in May/ June. 25 of our current workforce have been identified for enrolment.</p> <p>Through the appraisal process, all individuals and their managers are</p>



	<p>encouraged and supported to identify apprenticeships as a route for personal development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure our resourcing activities relating to our apprenticeship programme include engagement with our communities through local schools and interest groups. We will work with a range of partners to target different priority groups such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds and BME to broaden the diversity of our talent pool.</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing work to engage with our local communities and, specifically, under-represented groups. Using networking links to access community groups for future engagement.</p> <p>Working with schools and other educational establishments for careers events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of 2018 it is planned that ten per cent of our workforce will either be apprentices, or will have completed an apprenticeship.</li> </ul> <p>We are on target to achieve this, with the current forecast identifying that we will exceed this by the end of 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure our apprenticeship programme is a key element in promoting an inclusive culture by creating pathways to facilitate the upskilling of our employees and creating visible opportunities for progression for all employees.</li> </ul> <p>Pathways have been identified through management apprenticeships; Fire Engineering/Safety standards (some currently in development). Also considering pre-entry level apprenticeships for firefighters; and looking at apprenticeships for all departments.</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll out unconscious bias training, initially to managers and then to make available to all employees.</li> </ul> <p>Senior Management training completed. Remainder to be progressed over the next two years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using our e-Learning platform, develop a range of Diversity and Inclusion learning and development tools and increase the uptake of completed modules.</li> </ul> <p>Learning and development tools are currently available through our eLearning system (HEAT). Regular review of available resources and tools, including updating and adding to the current suite.</p>
<p>Which employers have you introduced to ADCN?</p>	<p>Through the NFCC Workforce Committee, four Fire &amp; Rescue Services have been identified for consideration to join. Buckinghamshire F&amp;RS were the first to join, and in discussion with the other three.</p> <p>Through ongoing collaborative work with Thames Valley Police on apprenticeships and other workforce areas, discussions have also taken place with them around joining the ADCN.</p> <p>We will continue to promote the benefits of joining the ADCN throughout the Fire &amp; Rescue Service and other partners.</p>

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## Appendix 3



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### National Apprenticeships Week 5 to 9 March 2018

Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service is marking National Apprenticeships Week 2018 with a series of events which seek to promote our apprenticeship programmes externally, and celebrate our successes to date.

The main events are:

#### **Monday 5 March 2018**

The Chairman of the Fire Authority - Councillor Roger Reed, SC Charlie Turner, FF Georgina Randall and myself are representing the service at the Joint Fire and Police National **Apprenticeships Widening Participation** event in London. The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, Nick Hurd, is attending for part of the day.

Buckinghamshire FRS has played a key role in designing this event with Police colleagues and the National Apprenticeships Service. We will be running the final session of the day, 'Changing Perceptions', with Georgina presenting.

We will update you further after the event.

#### **Tuesday 6 March 2018**

The team responsible for apprenticeships at HQ will be hosting an **Apprentice Networking Event** in **Meeting Room 1** between **15:00 and 17:00**.

All our current apprentices have been invited to HQ on Tuesday afternoon to meet each other and members of the apprenticeship team. This invitation is also open to all staff who would like to find out more about the apprenticeship programmes we deliver. There is no set agenda. It will be a relaxed and informal environment in which to ask questions and contribute ideas for developing future apprenticeships across the service.

Drinks and nibbles will be provided so, hopefully, you will be able to pop in for some of the session.

#### **Wednesday 7 March 2018**

The Fire Authority endorsed our membership application to the National Apprenticeships Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) at its 14 February 2018 meeting.

Our membership is now approved and we are the first Fire or Police Service to join. Membership involves signing and publicising a pledge and we will be

reinforcing this pledge and ensuring all colleagues and our key stakeholder partners are aware of it. The pledge statements fit well with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion priorities for 2018.

The ADCN celebrates its one year anniversary on Wednesday 7 March 2018 and is holding an event for all members at the House of Commons, 10 am to 12 noon. As the latest new member, we have received a short notice invitation.

The Apprenticeships and Skills Minister, Anne Milton, and Helen Grant MP, Chair of the ADCN, will both be speaking at this event.

The Chief Fire Officer, SC Charlie Turner and Elias Williams – Operational Assurance Apprentice, are representing the service at this event and will provide an update on their return.

### **Thursday 8 March 2018**

The Chairman and the Chief Fire Officer, accompanied by officers and apprentices, are attending the launch of Buckinghamshire FRSs Management Apprenticeships Programme. Initially, this programme is open to those who have successfully completed the pilot Aspiring Leadership Programme in 2017, and the first apprenticeships programmes are scheduled for April.

This launch event is being held between 6.00-7.30 pm at the University Campus Aylesbury Vale (UCAV).

### **Friday 9 March 2018**

The MP for Milton Keynes North, Mark Lancaster, will be visiting Broughton Fire Station to meet a number of our Firefighter apprentices, learn about our apprenticeship programme, and discuss further opportunities to engage with the local community.

# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 June 2018
<b>OFFICER</b>	Lynne Swift, Director of People & Organisational Development
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Steven Lambert
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Implementing the Well-being Strategy</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This report sets out an overview of the Well-being Strategy, and the work of the Task and Finish Group to implement it.</p> <p>The Well-being Task and Finish Group was initially established to consider measures to improve the awareness of, and remove the stigma associated with, mental health illness throughout the Service. It was also asked to identify ways to improve the existing support networks available, and introduce new ones to assist those affected by mental health issues.</p> <p>The group carried out an organisational self-assessment against the College of Policing Blue Light Well-being Framework in February 2018 and as a result, it was agreed that the mandate of the group should be widened to consider well-being as a whole - and not limited to mental health issues.</p> <p>A well-being strategy has been created which sits under the embedded People Strategy and forms the foundation for the work of the group.</p> <p>An action plan will be created from the information gleaned from the self-assessment and this will form the basis of the programme to deliver improved well-being awareness and processes for members of the organisation.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the report be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	Employee well-being is a focus nationally, with particular attention being paid to mental health illness and stress issues and how organisations can both proactively and reactively support and assist their employees. It is, therefore, key that this work is undertaken to meet one of the main aims of our People Strategy - to <i>'create an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an</i>

	<p><i>employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation’.</i> (People Strategy (2016-2020))</p> <p><b>ABSENCE:</b></p> <p>There are several risks to the Authority of high absence levels, with the main ones being potential adverse impacts on operational resilience, higher than budgeted employee costs, poor employee morale and significant investment in case management. A focus on improved well-being will help to mitigate these risks.</p> <p>Not only is a well thought out and extensive well-being strategy morally the right thing to do, it also represents good business sense from a recruitment and retention perspective.</p> <p><b>WELL-BEING:</b></p> <p>A failure to support the well-being of our employees presents a risk to the Authority in terms of compliance with the rights of employees with mental health illness, and could lead to health and safety risks and claims to an employment tribunal under the Equality Act.</p> <p>With the growth in mental health issues and associated absence nationally, the programme will commence with mental health initiatives.</p> <p>As our employee demographic moves towards an ageing workforce, the programme will also contain initiatives to optimise employee contribution and mitigate the risk of claims through ill health.</p>
<p><b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>Initial funding has been identified within the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) for Mental Health awareness training, and a request to provide further funding may be required in the next financial year.</p> <p>Any future financial implications will be discussed with the Organisational Development Manager in terms of funding for training.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b></p>	<p>A failure to support the wellbeing of our employees can create a risk to the Authority in terms of non-compliance with the rights of employees with mental health illness; and could lead to health and safety risks, and claims.</p>
<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>The Group has collaborated with Oxfordshire FRS in terms of Mental Health First Aid training, and will continue to explore further opportunities for collaboration across Thames Valley in the future.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>This work will further support the health and well-being of employees, and will potentially reduce workplace absence through mental health and stress</p>

	<p>illness. This will be monitored by the Health &amp; Safety and Human Resources departments, and reported through the Performance Management Board.</p> <p>The Health &amp; Safety Executive have re-energised their work on work-related stress and are updating their Stress Management Standards which have been adopted in this Service as part of the stress risk assessment process. These Management Standards are considered best practice.</p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>The work of the group dovetails into the People Strategy, including the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion aspects.</p> <p>The project aims to improve well-being services for all employees and this will have positive impacts on those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>This initiative contributes to the Authority’s Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) programme by supporting those with disabilities, and protecting the Authority from risks arising from claims under the Equality Act.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p><b>Communication with stakeholders:</b></p> <p>Stakeholder communication will remain a significant element of the successful implementation of this initiative. Employees will be communicated with using a variety of established internal processes, for example via the intranet, letters, and face to face briefing sessions.</p> <p><b>The balance between spending and resources:</b></p> <p>The majority of the well-being initiatives will be completed using existing resources as a key management function, with support from the People and Organisational Development and Health and Safety departments.</p> <p><b>The medium term financial strategy:</b></p> <p>A reduction in absence levels and mitigation of health and safety risks contribute positively to the Medium Term Financial Plan.</p> <p>High absence levels impact adversely on operating costs and performance levels; at a time of reduced funding, this wastes valuable resources which could be used for service delivery and community safety improvements.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>A number of documents have been considered to inform the Strategy and Action Plan. These documents will continue to form the basis of the work going forward, and will assist the group in creating robust tools and processes to support improved well-</p>

	<p>being across the Service. Those documents include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The People Strategy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Blue Light Wellbeing Framework (College of Policing) Self-Assessment Toolkit</a></li> <li>• CFOA Ageing Workforce Toolkit</li> <li>• <a href="#">Dying to Work Campaign</a></li> </ul>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<p>Annex A: Well-being information paper  Appendix 1: Well-being Strategy  Appendix 2: Communications Plan</p>
<b>TIME REQUIRED</b>	15 minutes
<b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b>	<p>Ali Chart / Marie Crothers  <a href="mailto:achart@bucksfire.gov.uk">achart@bucksfire.gov.uk</a> /  <a href="mailto:mcrothers@bucksfire.gov.uk">mcrothers@bucksfire.gov.uk</a>  01296 744490 / 01296 744430</p>

## **Well-Being Task and Finish Group**

### **Information Paper – Fire Authority**

**June 2018**

## 1. Background

A Mental Health Well-being Task and Finish group was originally established to look at measures to improve awareness of, and to remove the stigma associated with, mental health illness throughout the Service. In addition, it was to identify ways to improve the existing support networks available and introduce new ones to assist those affected.

The group is made up of a cross-section of people from different departments across the organisation including Employee Relations, Health and Safety, Personnel, Operations, representative bodies, mental health champions, and also Member participation.

Through working on a comparison of our current organisational status against the College of Policing Blue Light Well-being Framework (Oscar Kilo), it became apparent that our focus on mental health only, would not be appropriate as it is only a small part of overall employee well-being. It was felt that a holistic view of well-being should be the focus of the group. This resulted in the creation of a well-being strategy lifecycle which will sit under the embedded People Strategy and became a focus of the role of the group (*see Appendix 1*).

The framework recognises that the state of well-being is linked to both physical and mental health. How people perform when they feel good is at the heart of getting well-being right. Its overarching focus is creating a positive working environment in which the workforce can draw meaning and purpose from a highly challenging and rewarding profession.

Contained within the Blue Light Well-being Framework is a self-assessment tool based on six categories:

- Leadership
- Absence management
- Creating the environment
- Mental health
- Protecting the workforce
- Personal resilience

**Leadership** – Asks questions around leadership and management training, policies and procedures such as bullying and harassment and whistle blowing and their effectiveness, and considers whether there are ongoing consultation and communications with staff on well-being issues.

**Absence management** – Asks whether the organisation supports absent employees; if return to work interviews are conducted; whether risk assessments are carried out for those high vulnerability roles; whether reasonable adjustments are made to assist employees, and whether absence trends are monitored.

**Creating the environment** - Considers how the organisation creates a workplace environment that is conducive to well-being through consultation and communication, and whether it demonstrates awareness of the legal obligations relating to health, safety and well-being.



**Mental health** – Explores what measures the organisation has taken to promote awareness of mental health, to proactively reduce the stigma around it, and what support mechanisms are in place to assist employees who are affected by mental health illness.

**Protecting the workforce** – Asks questions around how the organisation promotes physical health in terms of healthy eating, drug and alcohol use and other stressors i.e. financial. How it plans for an ageing workforce and whether engagement with employees is actively encouraged.

**Personal resilience** – Explores how organisations encourage physical activity in the workplace (through communication and promotion campaigns) and how self-efficacy and recognition of personal limitations in the workplace is encouraged.

As employee well-being forms part of the People Strategy, and as the framework is designed specifically for blue light emergency services, the group deemed it appropriate to carry out a self-assessment against the Blue Light Well-being Framework (College of Policing) document to determine the current position in terms of the assessment criteria - 'Fully developed'; 'In development' or 'Under development'. This will provide a benchmark from which an action plan can be established for improvement across those areas identified for development.

## **2. Current position**

### **a. Blue Light well-being Framework (College of Policing)**

The self-assessment against the six categories of the framework has been carried out which identified that, as an organisation, forty two areas are 'Fully developed; thirty two areas are 'In development' and nineteen areas are 'Under developed'. It is envisaged that a further assessment against this document will be carried out once the identified work to improve has been completed.

### **b. Policies and procedures**

There are a suite of policies and procedures in place that cover well-being. Examples of which, although not definitive, are the Stress, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD), Firefighter fitness, Anti Bullying and Harassment, Substance Misuse and Attendance Management.

### **c. Employee assistance and support networks**

The following employee assistance and support networks are in place:

- Employee Assistance Programme
- CISD
- Services of the Welfare Officer
- Counselling including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
- Intranet 'Fighting Fit' pages
- Stress audits
- Stress risk assessments
- Night workers annual medical questionnaires

### **3. Future work**

An initial training needs analysis has been completed to determine the training required to deliver Mental Health Awareness training across the organisation – this also includes costs. A further training needs analysis will be carried out to determine any additional training that might be necessary across the service later in the project. A request for further funding to facilitate any additional training may also be required at that stage.

Work has commenced on a gap analysis of those areas that are currently 'In development' and 'Under development'. This will be captured within an action plan which will detail required actions, progress, target dates for completion and a RAG status for each. This will be the first major task for the group and will provide a continuous record of progress made throughout the project.

A draft, high-level communications plan has been drawn up to support this work and will be reviewed and updated throughout the life cycle of this project – see *Appendix 2*.

An integrated impact assessment has been completed for the start of this project and it has been determined that there are no negative equality and diversity issues identified. Improvements in employee well-being can lead to positive outcomes for all protected characteristics.

Once the work detailed within the action plan has been completed, the self-assessment against the framework will be repeated in order to evidence the improvements made and benchmark the new position of the organisation.

Depending on the timeframe for completion of the action plan, it may be necessary to bring to SMB an interim paper to report progress, and there will also be a need for an end of project paper for evaluation purposes.

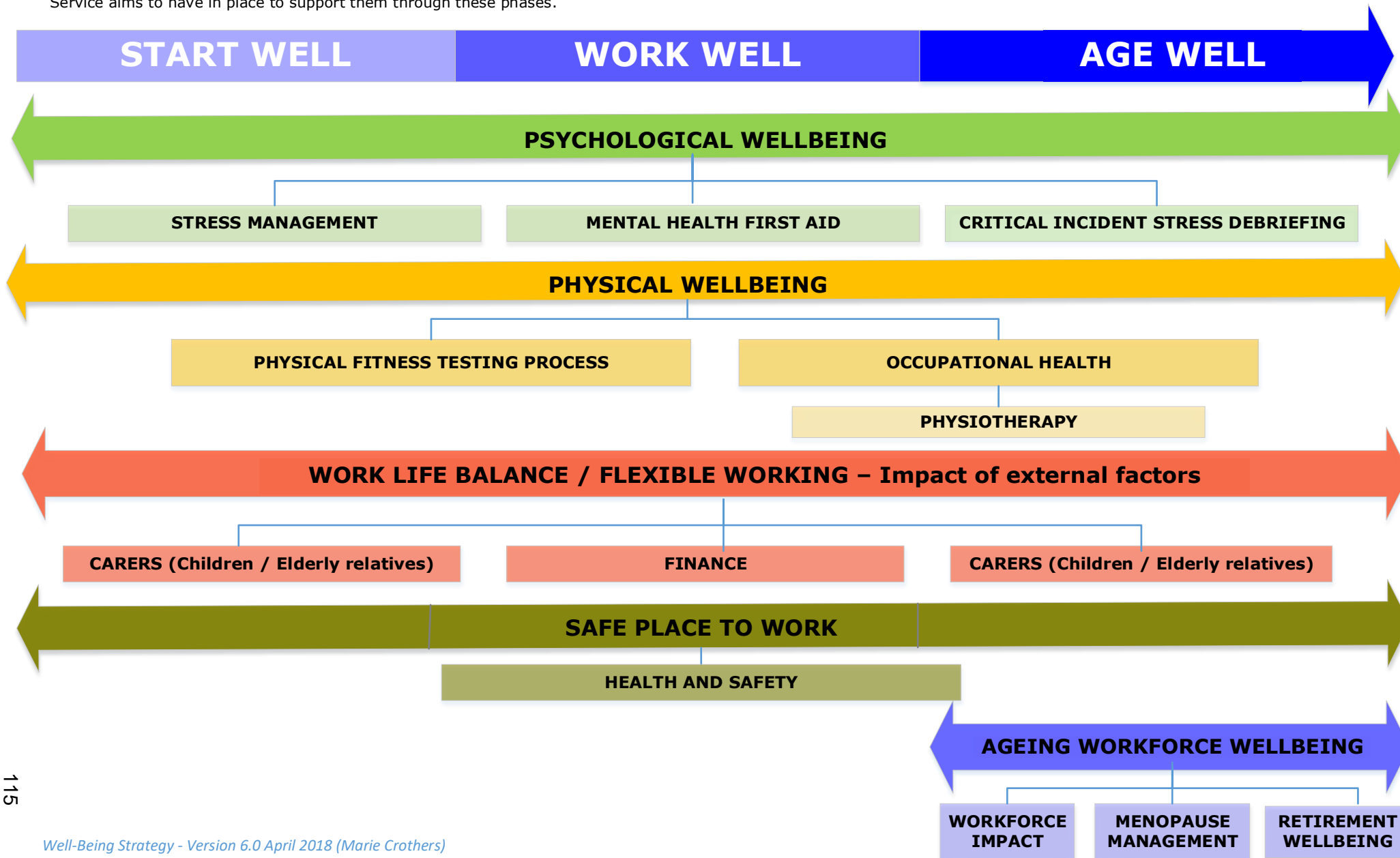
[Report ends]

# WELL-BEING STRATEGY

The ethos behind the Well-being Strategy is "Start Well, Work Well, Age Well". It provides a holistic overview of the well-being needs of an employee from the moment their career commences with the Authority until it ends. It encompasses a number of stages an employee may encounter during their career.

Psychological well-being / Physical well-being / Work life balance / Flexible working / Safe place to work / Health and Safety / Ageing workforce well-being

The strategy acknowledges the different stressors and pressures that people may face at various stages of their working lives and gives an indication of the support arrangements the Service aims to have in place to support them through these phases.



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## Appendix 2

Service Document Standard Form:

Project Management Process

# Stakeholder Engagement / Communications Plan



Linked documents: None

<b>PROJECT:</b>	<b>Well-being Improvement</b>
<b>FILE LOCATION:</b>	<i>N:\Wellbeing\Papers\CFA June 2018 [SMB 080519]</i>
<b>DATE:</b>	22 April 2018
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	Marie Crothers – Programme Manager
<b>PROJECT SPONSOR:</b>	Lynne Swift – Director POD
<b>VERSION NUMBER:</b>	V1.0
<b>APPROVALS:</b>	Persons required to approve this document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Well-being Task &amp; Finish Group</li><li>• Health, Safety &amp; Welfare Committee</li></ul>
<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Well-being Task &amp; Finish Group</li></ul>

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

<b>Version:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Notes:</b>
Version 1.0	27 April 2018	Initial version

## APPROVAL RECORD

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Approval:</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Version 1.0			

# STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

<b>PROJECT NAME:</b>	Well-being Improvement
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Ali Chart – Health & Safety Manager
<b>LAST UPDATED:</b>	27 April 2018

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY	CURRENT LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	DESIRED LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT	MINIMUM FREQUENCY OF COMMUNICATION REQUIRED BY STAKEHOLDER	STAKEHOLDER LEAD	KEY POINTS OF INTEREST IN PROJECT	POTENTIAL RISK EXPOSURE DUE TO POOR COMMUNICATIONS OR ENGAGEMENT
<i>Who needs to be communicated to?</i>	<i>What is the role and responsibility of the stakeholder? Why are they a stakeholder in the project?</i>	<i>What level of engagement with the project does the stakeholder have?</i>	<i>What level of engagement with the project is needed by this stakeholder?</i>	<i>When/with what frequency does the communication need to take place?</i>	<i>Who within the project is primarily responsible for communicating with the stakeholder?</i>	<i>What is it about the project that primarily interests the stakeholder?</i>	<i>What is the level of risk associated with failing to effectively engage with the stakeholder? Red – Significant Amber – Moderate Green – Little/none</i>
Operational employees – crews / officers / co-responders	Front line responders – increased risk of mental health issues due to exposure to incident trauma  Likely to use every aspect of the wellbeing strategy during their employment with the organisation.  Personal responsibility for own well-being	Some awareness of work around mental health and wellbeing.  No awareness that this project is being launched.	Full awareness of all initiatives undertaken by the group.  Engagement in initiatives where appropriate (participation in delivery of work / responsibility for communicating awareness and progress to others)	Minimum – monthly updates  Updates provided when initiatives are achieved and launched	All group members	All improved well-being initiatives / services provided by the organisation	<b>Red</b>  Poor knowledge of the services available with regard to well-being initiatives.  Potential lack of engagement – will affect ability of group to deliver initiatives  If an individual does not access services available, there may be a detrimental effect on their well-being
Support staff employees  118	Ensuring the effective delivery of a public sector organisation ( <b>Not</b> front line delivery)  Less likely to use every aspect of the well-being strategy during their employment with the	Some awareness of work around mental health and wellbeing.  No awareness that this project is being launched	Full awareness of all initiatives undertaken by the group.  Engagement in initiatives where appropriate (participation in delivery of work / responsibility for	Minimum – monthly updates  Updates provided when initiatives are achieved and launched	All group members	All improved well-being initiatives / services provided by the organisation	<b>Red</b>

	<p>organisation – may be prone to work related stress issues</p> <p>Personal responsibility for own well-being</p>		<p>communicating awareness and progress to others)</p>				<p>Poor knowledge of the services available with regard to well-being initiatives.</p> <p>Potential lack of engagement – will affect ability of group to deliver initiatives</p> <p>If an individual does not access services available, there may be a detrimental effect on their well-being</p>
Representative bodies / Employee Representatives	<p>Role is to represent their group members, to seek their views and update regarding progress of the project</p>	<p>Good engagement – Rep Bodies and Employee representative are members of the Task &amp; Finish Group</p>	<p>Full awareness of all initiatives undertaken by the group.</p> <p>Engagement in initiatives where appropriate (participation in delivery of work / responsibility for communicating awareness and progress to others)</p>	<p>Participation in Task Group meetings</p> <p>Minimum – monthly updates</p> <p>Updates provided when initiatives are achieved and launched</p>	Rep Body attendees	<p>All improved well-being initiatives / services provided by the organisation ensuring the needs of members are met</p>	<p>Poor knowledge of the services available with regard to well-being initiatives.</p> <p>Potential lack of engagement – will affect ability of group to deliver initiatives</p> <p>If the Rep Bodies are engaged with the work of the group, their members are likely to participate also.</p>
Senior / Strategic Managers	<p>Organisational responsibility to ensure that there are appropriate well-being services in place and that employees are encouraged to access them when required</p>	<p>High level awareness that work has been commenced</p>	<p>Full awareness of all initiatives undertaken by the group.</p> <p>Engagement in initiatives where appropriate (participation in delivery of work / responsibility for communicating awareness and progress to others)</p> <p>To act as 'Champions' for this initiative – will lead to improved organisational well-being culture</p>	<p>Minimum – monthly updates</p> <p>Progress reports via HS&amp;W Committee (BTB?)</p>	Group Chair / Vice-Chair	<p>All improved well-being initiatives / services provided by the organisation</p> <p>Reduction in sickness absence / increased take-up of services</p> <p>Any financial savings made through a reduction in sickness absence and potential claims against the organisation</p>	<p>Potential lack of engagement – if not 'championed' across the organisation, will affect ability of group to deliver initiatives to improve organisational well-being culture</p> <p>Potential breaches in legislation</p>

Authority Members	To champion initiatives and provide support to Strategic managers in the delivery of improved services	Limited awareness of Task & Finish Group and the proposed initiatives	To act as 'Champions' for this initiative – will lead to improved organisational well-being culture  Member participation in group	Minimum quarterly updates via HS&W Committee	Group Chair	All improved well-being initiatives / services provided by the organisation  Reduction in sickness absence / increased take-up of services  Any financial savings made through a reduction in sickness absence and potential claims against the organisation	<div style="background-color: #92d050; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> Reduced level of support for senior/strategic managers to ensure delivery of improved services
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# COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

<b>PROJECT NAME:</b>	Well-being Improvement
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Ali Chart – Health & Safety Manager
<b>LAST UPDATED:</b>	27 April 2018

ISSUE	WHEN	OUTCOME	AUDIENCE	MEDIA	MESSAGE	MEASURE
<i>What needs to be communicated?</i>	<i>When does it need to be done?</i>	<i>What is the outcome expected from sharing this message?</i>	<i>Who should be told (which stakeholder)?</i>	<i>What method of communication will be used?</i>	<i>What is/are the key points that need to be communicated?</i>	<i>How will you know that the message has been received and understood?</i>
Launch: That the Task & Finish Group has been established and work commenced	Once the Briefing paper has been delivered to Strategic Management Board	Approval to progress work in accordance with paper outline	All stakeholders identified	I-drive Notice boards	Broaden the range of well-being services available to all employees To request engagement and participation of employees where appropriate	That engagement and responses are received from employees outside the Task & Finish group.
Mental Health Initiative - delivery	Once the TNA has been approved at the Training Strategy Group	Volunteers to come forward to undertake different levels of Mental Health awareness training	All stakeholders identified	I-drive Notice boards	Improved awareness of mental health issues and how they affect individuals; an established support network to signpost to professional help	Trained individuals Support network More personnel accessing services Reduction in the stigma associated with mental health issues
Mental Health Initiative - Launch	Once all training has been delivered and initiative ready for use	All stakeholders aware of the service being provided	All stakeholders identified	I-drive Notice boards Personal letters Drop-in sessions	Details of service to be provided How to access Improved awareness of mental health issues and acceptance of 'It's OK not to be OK'.	Improved numbers of people accessing the service Reduction in sickness absence as a result of accessing service 'More people talking about mental health issues – accepted cultural change'

*Further actions to be added once the delivery plan has been finalised and work commenced.*

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



<b>MEETING</b>	Fire Authority
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	13 June 2018
<b>OFFICER</b>	Neil Boustred, Head of Service Delivery
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Jean Teesdale
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Update on the Fire Authority's financial support for sprinkler installation</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>This information paper has been requested by Members of the Fire Authority, with the purpose of providing an update on progress made since its decision, taken in 2016, to offer financial assistance to organisations considering installing sprinklers in domestic premises where the occupants are those who are most at risk from fire. The Authority decided to allocate a maximum sum of £250k from reserves to act as match-funding to promote sprinkler installation for projects across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. Since that innovative decision was taken, officers have attempted to overcome a number of obstacles (Appendix 1) including: a belief that sprinklers are unsightly; are financially prohibitive to retro install; and cause large amounts of costly water damage. A number of different approaches (Appendix 2) have been taken to achieve this objective. Whilst this Service supports sprinkler installation in commercial premises, this initiative was aimed at those domestic premises where the occupants are those most at risk from fire.</p> <p>Despite these efforts, there has been no request for joint-funding. Whilst this is disappointing, it is by no means the end of this initiative. Sprinklers remain important for fire safety; capable of maintaining safety for the public and firefighters. Continuing the various approaches will ensure the subject of sprinklers remains visible amongst housing providers, building designers and all those involved in promoting community safety. This approach of educating the public may well be supported by a regulatory change following the Grenfell Tower incident.</p> <p>Head of Service Development Julian Parsons represents Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) on the Executive Committee of the National Fire Sprinkler Network. He also has a key role supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in developing policy. This ensures officers remain updated on progress and innovative means of water</p>

	<p>suppression technologies, ensuring that this Authority can influence the national strategic direction.</p> <p>In their article released 25 April 2018, the NFCC responds to news articles about cladding tests 'failing to properly assess risk'</p> <p>The NFCC stated that 'An effective part of an overall fire safety solution to improve fire safety in a range of new and existing buildings are the inclusion of sprinkler systems.</p> <p>The NFCC supports the concept of risk assessed retrofitting of sprinklers in existing buildings and welcomes the prioritisation of a review of the Building Regulations (Approved Document B) to ensure fire safety requirements keep pace with new building developments.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Noting
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the content of the update be noted.
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>The promotion of sprinkler installations is detailed within the Corporate Plan. Sprinklers mitigate fires developing and so improve public and firefighter safety.</p> <p>Sprinklers are a part of the suite of fire safety tools used by the Fire and Rescue Service and should be seen as part of that wider approach. Education is the primary source of prevention, with fire safety taught as part of the national curriculum to all school children. This helps people to identify the best ways to stop fire happening and also gives them the information required to create their own escape plans. Smoke detectors do not prevent fires from happening but give an early warning to occupants that there is a fire and they need to escape. Where people are unable to respond to a smoke alarm, sprinklers may be the most suitable means of fire safety. The installation of mobile or fixed sprinkler systems should always be part of a wider risk assessment.</p>
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>In total £500,000 has been allocated to this initiative, comprising of £250,000 in 2016-17 and £250,000 in 2017-18.</p> <p>To date, £10,000 has been utilised to support the continued use of portable domestic sprinklers. £120,000 has been earmarked for the provision of sprinklers throughout the MK Blue Light Hub.</p> <p>This therefore leaves £370,000 in a reserve that can be used to provide match funding to promote sprinkler installation.</p>
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	None identified at this stage.

<p><b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b></p>	<p>The Prevention and Protection Strategies employed by all Thames Valley Fire &amp; Rescue Services are continuously reviewed, and opportunities to collaborate are sought. The approach adopted by this Service towards sprinkler promotion does not preclude future collaboration.</p>
<p><b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b></p>	<p>Sprinkler system installation supports public safety as well as firefighter safety. Fires which start in premises with sprinklers are far less likely to develop and so the risk to firefighters will be reduced when dealing with such incidents.</p>
<p><b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>None identified at this stage.</p>
<p><b>USE OF RESOURCES</b></p>	<p>The installation of sprinklers has the potential to reduce Service resource requirements at operational incidents. Fires within sprinklered-buildings are far less likely to develop and will require fewer resources to fully extinguish.</p> <p>This will have a beneficial effect on the environment as there will be less impact from the fire and the potentially damaging products of combustion.</p> <p>The Service has invested staff time to promote the installation of sprinkler systems in a variety of ways. Fire Authority Members have been kept informed on progress with regular papers.</p>
<p><b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b></p>	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Prevention Strategy 2014/15 to 2019/20  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5014/0292/6321/PreventionStrategy201415.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/5014/0292/6321/PreventionStrategy201415.pdf</a></p> <p>Fire Authority Paper – Update on Sprinklers  <a href="http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/2615/0816/2983/ITEM_1_1_Update_on_Sprinklers.pdf">http://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/2615/0816/2983/ITEM_1_1_Update_on_Sprinklers.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>APPENDICES</b></p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Obstacles to Sprinkler Installation  Appendix 2 – Sprinkler Initiatives</p>
<p><b>TIME REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>10 minutes</p>
<p><b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b></p>	<p>Phillip Mould, Community and Business Safety Policy  <a href="mailto:pmould@bucksfire.gov.uk">pmould@bucksfire.gov.uk</a>  07786 747712</p>

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## **Obstacles to Sprinkler Installation**

### **1. Myths around sprinklers**

*Water damage* -There is a perception that sprinklers can cause high levels of costly water damage should there be a false activation. Officers explain how sprinklers operate and how each sprinkler head is designed and calibrated to activate only during the heat from a fire. They do not operate in response to smoke, burned toast, cooking vapours, steam, or an activating smoke alarm. Sprinkler systems are evolving all the time and many sprinklers are now able to cease once a temperature drop has been noted; they will not necessarily operate continuously until manually stopped. Officers also explain that any water damage from sprinklers in controlling a fire, will be far less than the amount of water used by the Fire & Rescue Service in extinguishing a developed fire.

*Sprinklers are unsightly* – Some people believe that sprinkler heads are unsightly and are not aesthetically pleasing for the occupier. In fact sprinkler heads can be recessed and housed within the ceiling, and are not readily identifiable.

*Sprinklers are for property protection, not life safety* – According to statistics from the American Fire Sprinklers Association, where domestic sprinklers are far more common than in the UK, sprinklers provide a high level of life safety. Statistics reveal that there has never been any multiple loss of life in a fully sprinklered building. Property losses are 85% less in residences with fire sprinklers compared to those without sprinklers. The combination of automatic sprinklers and early warning systems in all buildings could reduce overall injuries, loss of life and property damage by at least 50%.

*Smoke detectors provide sufficient protection* - Smoke detectors save lives by providing an early warning to a smoke or fire incident, but can do nothing to extinguish a growing fire or protect those physically unable to escape on their own, such as the elderly or small children. Too often, battery-operated smoke detectors fail to function because the batteries are dead or have been removed.

### **2. Cost of installation / maintenance**

Whilst promoting sprinklers to housing providers, it is evident that there is a belief that fitting sprinklers in new builds or retro-fitting them into existing buildings is financially prohibitive. Much time has been spent by officers explaining that to fit sprinklers in new buildings costs approximately the same as installing the central heating system into the same premises. Whilst retro-fitting is more expensive and disruptive, it is possible to achieve this aligned with ongoing building maintenance. Officers also explain that sprinkler installation can be in specific areas or rooms to mitigate against the risk of fire; if those at highest risk from fire only occupy certain rooms, there would be no necessity to install sprinklers throughout the premises.

### **3. Implications of the Grenfell Tower fire incident**

Officers had reached a point where a number of housing providers were strongly considering requesting financial support for sprinkler installation. This changed following the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017. There is an anticipation that the tragic and significant fire will result in fundamental changes to building regulations and the subsequent requirements for sprinkler systems. Many providers are now waiting for the review to be finalised so that any regulatory requirements are fully understood before installing sprinklers.



## **Sprinkler Initiatives**

### **Strategic**

#### *- National support*

Officers work closely with national bodies such as the British Automatic Sprinkler Association (of which BFRS is a member) and the Head of Service Development represents this Service on the Executive Committee of the National Fire Sprinkler Network. This allows officers to remain updated on progress and innovative means of water suppression technologies and ensures this Authority can influence the national strategic direction. This Service is also active in supporting research used to evidence the effectiveness of sprinklers. This organisation has previously organised demonstrations to prove the effectiveness of sprinklers and to dispel some common myths and misunderstandings relating to sprinklers.

The Head of Service Development also has a key role supporting the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in developing policy. He authored the NFCC's [position statements](#) on [sprinklers](#) and specifically [sprinklers in schools](#).

He also led on a project to commission independent research into the efficiency and effectiveness of sprinklers in the United Kingdom. This report was published in April 2017. The full report can be read [here](#).

The research discovered that sprinklers are operationally reliable on 94% of occasions and 99% effective when they operate. As well as being submitted as evidence to the Dame Judith Hackett review, this research is now being reported globally. The Head of Service Development has been invited, and funded by them, to present the research to the International Fire Sprinkler Association global conference in Stockholm on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

#### *- Briefings to MPs and local politicians*

Following the Grenfell Tower incident, briefings were held with MPs and local politicians to outline this Service's response to that tragic fire. During these briefings, the match-funding initiative was discussed to communicate this approach as widely as possible.

### **Tactical**

#### *- Conferences*

This Service has hosted two national conferences to support fire safety, with a focus on sprinklers. The first conference was in January 2017 at the Waterside Theatre where a number of private and public sector housing providers attended to discuss sprinkler installation within domestic premises. This resulted in many ongoing discussions following the event and helped officers understand the obstacles to overcome.

The second conference was held in Aylesbury in May 2017, where BFRS provided the venue for a national Passive Fire Safety Conference. Whilst most

of the conference speakers discussed different types of fire safety technology, the Deputy Chief Fire Officer opened the event and addressed the advantages of sprinkler installation, and the Authority's stance on potential match-funding.

Following the conference, an officer attended the Butler & Young national conference to discuss fire safety, with a national company which designs buildings and ensures their legislative compliance. Since building control arrangements became a more competitive market some years ago, a number of approved inspectors undertake this function for their clients. This was an opportunity to explain to that influential group how sprinkler installation can be an attractive option, in domestic and commercial premises.

- *Building consultations*

Whenever officers are consulted on new and amended building designs, the opportunity is taken to discuss the potential advantages of sprinkler installation. In the past, this was discussed at every single consultation. However, officers now assess the risk and benefits of each proposal to see if sprinklers could provide increased safety in terms of the overall fire safety arrangements.

- *Mobile sprinkler installation*

Officers appreciate that sprinkler installation is balanced against risk; often the person, or people, at most risk would benefit from sprinklers, whilst they would add limited safety value to the remainder of the building. It is therefore appropriate for mobile sprinklers to be used where it would be cost prohibitive for sprinklers to be installed. Mobile sprinklers can be installed to address a high level of risk, usually where the person is non-ambulant and would not be able to respond to a smoke detector activation.

- *Social housing providers*

Much time has been spent in discussions with a number of social housing providers, especially in terms of specialised housing, such as sheltered housing, where occupants are non-ambulant and would not be able to escape unaided. Progress was being made, with costs being sought for those premises where occupants were at highest risk from fire. Following the Grenfell Tower incident, the providers decided to wait for the outcomes of any regulatory review before committing funding to sprinkler projects.

## **Operational**

- *Ongoing awareness*

All Service staff are aware of the importance of domestic sprinklers to support life safety. Whether crews are conducting a Safe & Well visit, or are discussing fire safety with housing providers at incidents, those opportunities are used to promote the installation of sprinklers.

Fire Authority Members have been encouraged to support sprinkler installation and information on sprinklers is regularly requested and recommended for new Members at Fire Authority meetings.

- *Blue Light Hub*

#### Update on the Fire Authority's financial support for sprinkler installation

The Blue Light Hub will be innovative in a number of ways. One such innovation will be that this will be the first building in the Service which is completely covered by sprinklers. This demonstrates this Service's commitment to sprinklers and is intended to act as a 'beacon'; an example of how this Service is at the forefront of delivering exemplary fire safety systems in its premises.

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