



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Overview and Audit Committee

Report title: Prevention Improvement Plan – September / December 2023

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse

Report sponsor: Area Commander Paul Scanes

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Action: Noting

Recommendations:

The Prevention Improvement Plan highlight report (September – December 2023) summarising the progress made against the measures required to secure long-term improvements to Prevention delivery in Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (BFRS) is noted.

Executive summary:

The Prevention Improvement Plan was written and presented to the Overview and Audit Committee in November 2021, along with the finalised Phase One Prevention Evaluation Report which had commenced in July 2020 but was paused due to revised priorities during the Covid 19 pandemic.

The Prevention Improvement Plan contains 60 recommendations, drawn from the Prevention Evaluation, the findings of the then Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services and the areas required to meet the Prevention Fire Standard and associated National Operational Guidance.

Whilst the Prevention Improvement Plan was anticipated to run for a three-year period, as of 31 December 2023, 41 of the 60 recommendations have already been completed.

The aim is that the Prevention Improvement Plan will move to be a business plan from April 2024, once the outstanding recommendations relating to the development of the Premises Risk Management System (PRMS) and Firesetter Intervention Scheme (now nationally called Fire Safety Intervention) have been completed.

Work to evidence attainment against the removal of the HMICFRS Prevention cause for concern regarding referrals was awaiting development from the third-party provider of the Premises Risk Management System, which was scheduled for after

the delivery of the test environment for the Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) element.

As reported in the last period, this work commenced with the revised referral and visit forms submitted to the third-party provider to commence system development. Once that development has been completed, eight of the 19 recommendations remaining in the Prevention Improvement Plan will be able to be closed.

Work on the actions linked to the outstanding recommendations relating to Firesetter Intervention has been carried forward into the next period, due to the capacity issues previously identified within the Central Prevention Team.

As detailed in the highlight report (Appendix 1), the overall RAG rating continues to be Amber due to some significant delays in closing the recommendations related to system development and a documented process for triaging referrals in the Firewise scheme. These areas continue to be priorities for action in the next period.

Financial implications:

The National Fire Chiefs Council Central Program Office for Prevention and the digital technologies workstream have developed a number of tools with the associated guidance which will be launched in quarters three and four of the year. These closely align to some of the outstanding recommendation actions and will be delivered at no cost to the Service.

Any requirement for growth will be submitted through the established internal governance arrangements for consideration.

Risk management:

This Prevention Improvement Plan is the most effective way of ensuring continued improvement to ensure the best possible service is provided to the communities we serve.

The provision of regular highlight reports is an assurance tool to ensure that we are ultimately working towards aligning to national best-practice and more effectively reducing risk in our communities.

There remain reputational corporate risks to the organisation should we be judged as inadequate by HMICFRS. The Service had already taken steps to mitigate this through having extensive internal and external audits of a number of areas of the Service, notably, elements of our operational activity have been subject to external independent assurance. The prevention evaluation is another example of applying constructive internal scrutiny to drive improvement and reduce risk.

Key risks are identified in the highlight report, of which the staffing issue has already been seen to impact upon delivery.

Legal implications:

As identified in the Prevention Fire Standard, the key legislation, regulation, and duties linked to a Fire and Rescue Service's prevention function are numerous.

Delivery against the identified areas of improving the Premises Risk Management System and Firesetter Intervention Scheme (FIS) sit within this.

Privacy and security implications:

No privacy or security implications have been identified that are directly associated with this report or its appendices. The respective strands of the improvement plan will ensure Data Protection Impact Screening and full impact assessments are completed and reviewed where appropriate. The report and its appendices are not protectively marked.

Duty to collaborate:

Collaboration with partners to ensure a collective and shared approach to identify and mitigating community risk is critical to ensure Prevention activity is effective. The evaluation identifies a number of areas where collaboration and partnerships can be developed for the benefit of community safety through both the statutory Community Safety Partnerships and other boards as appropriate.

Health and safety implications:

There are no Health, Safety or Wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Environmental implications:

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

Whilst there are no identified implications directly associated with this report or its appendices, elements of work contributing to the progression of individual recommendations have a positive impact upon some groups, specifically those where age is the protected characteristic. The respective strands of the improvement plan will ensure impact screening and full impact assessments are completed and reviewed where appropriate.

Consultation and communication:

The Prevention evaluation involved extensive engagement with stakeholders to ensure an effective and thorough evaluation of all our activity.

Background papers:

23 January 2020 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Findings Report:

https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/03/230120_item_7_hmicfrs_cover_report_23012020_appendix-min.pdf/

10 November 2021 – Prevention Evaluation – Phase One Report

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/10/oa-item-17-17-10-21.pdf/>

12 October 2022 – Fire Authority – Prevention Strategy

[Fire Authority Meeting - 12 October 2022 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk)

15 March 2023 – Overview and Audit Committee – Prevention Improvement Plan Update 2

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/authority/overview-and-audit-committee-15-march-2023/>

8 November 2023 – Overview and Audit Committee – Prevention Improvement Plan Update 3

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/10/overview-and-audit-committee-8-november-2023-item-17-prevention-highlight-report.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Prevention Improvement Plan highlight report September / December 2023	Not protectively marked

Appendix 1: Prevention Improvement Plan



Lead Member: Project Sponsor: Project Manager:		Cllr Simon Rouse AC Paul Scanes Joanne Cook		Project Objectives: Following the Prevention Evaluation, a three-year plan is in place to develop Prevention within the service: Effective prevention strategy, processes and systems in place facilitating effective delivery of preventative information across the community			Overall RAG 		
Strategy, vision and leadership		Intelligence		Management of processes, systems and planning incl. audit		Coordination & communication of operations		Delivery of operations	

Summary – Period dated: September – December 2023

Key Activities

- Following the redesign of the referral and visit form in PRMS in March, the draft form has been further reviewed, with the next step being the Provider delivering the sandbox test environment for it. In preparation for this, a test set of data has been prepared to ensure all elements of the referral form are robustly tested by all relevant staff groups. A comprehensive testing plan has also been developed for the PRMS referral and visit form delivery.
- The risk stratification scoring previously tested and agreed (version 1, OSG – Feb 2023) has been updated and approved (Version 2, BTB Nov 2023). Training has been delivered to the Admin team by the Admin Support Manager. The commencement of using this is dependent on the changes to the PRMS being rolled out.
- Work on the next phase of risk stratification – use of the Domestic Dwelling Fire Methodology developed by ORH has been commenced by the Data Intelligence Team, with an agreed approach for roll out (including communication) to be developed for its use from April 2024.
- Onboarding of the Online Home Fire Safety Check (OHFSC) has been recommenced for a soft launch with the aim of determining its impact on increasing referrals and providing advice to those at lowest risk of or from fire, prior to it being scaled up after the Premises Risk Management System (PRMS) sandbox testing and rollout period.
- Quality assurance and evaluation of HFSV guidance documents written and submitted to BTB for approval (February 2024).

Priorities for Next Period: January – March 2024

Progress

- Onboarding of OHFSC to soft launch in February 2024. Scale up of publicising it to be timed for after the revised visit and referral forms for PRMS have been delivered and the Admin team are using risk stratification within that system.
- Update of the Fire Sense program to ensure it is consistent to national messaging and aligns to service marketing formats with a COM B evaluation process written to provide information on its effectiveness in effecting change regarding elements of the Person-centred Framework.
- Communication of revised targeted data incorporating another layer of risk stratification in preparation for April 2024

Complete

- Bandings added to local Prevention KPMs in liaison with DIT to ensure consistency in approach. Including the inclusion of an additional data line for the Service KPMs to ensure there is Service oversight of all data eligible for external (Home Office) reporting, specifically virtual or non-cross threshold visits
- Mapping of referrals by quarter to identify who/where they are received from and where Fire Sense delivery should be targeted to address gaps in referral sources where incidents in domestic dwellings is higher.

Project: Prevention Improvement Plan



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Summary – Period dated: September – December 2023		Key Milestones	Forecast/ Actual	RAG
Key Activities (continued)		Effective system for dealing with referrals implemented, prioritising those with highest level of risk	October 2022	
		Approval of revised Prevention Strategy	October 2022	
		An effective system defining levels of risk in the community	October 2022	
		Evidence in place to support removal of Prevention Cause for Concern	May 2023	
Change Request Log:				
		NA	NA	NA

Risk/ Issue	RAG	Description	Mitigating Action	Next Action
Enter top three highest risks to the plan				
Staff capacity		Capacity continues to be an issue. Whilst the Admin team are at full capacity, a maternity leave commences in Q4. The Community Safety delivery team has 2 vacant roles (CSAs) and one long term sickness so is at 50%.	Support to the Admin team had been provided by a member of the PMO, however that person leaves midway through Q4. Changes to the PRMS visit form remove a significant number of questions from the HFSV process which should reduce demand	Determine how to fulfil the statutory requirements of 307 of the Serious Violence Duty to enable CSA recruitment to commence.
Prioritisation of visits by risk level (risk stratification)		Capacity and ability to make development changes to the Prevention side of the Premises Risk Management System (PRMS) due to work on the SSRI element impacted on the progression of several recommend actions.	All preparatory work from the Service is complete (guidance doc, training of Admin Team, preparation of a test data set, time reserved to test data) in anticipation of the 3 rd party provider delivering the sandbox test environment for this to begin to progress	Sandbox testing of inputs and outputs to/from the system prior to being able to roll out.
External workstreams		Areas of work related to the Firesetter Intervention Scheme (FIS) have a different delivery schedule to that of the Prevention Improvement Plan,	Updates sought and awaited from FIS lead on the recommendations linked to this. Assurance has now been received that this will be completed by April 2024.	Review Firewise procedure to ensure areas raised in the recommendation have been considered & are reflect

Prevention Improvement Plan dashboard update – December 2023



Prevention Improvement Plan - Progress Dashboard

	Total recommendations	Complete	On track	On hold/delayed	Not started
Strategy, vision & leadership	7	5	0	2	0
Intelligence	15	12	0	3	0
Management of processes, systems and planning, including audit	15	7	1	7	0
Coordination and communication of operations	13	9	1	3	0
Delivery of operations	10	8	0	2	0
Grand totals	60	41	2	17	0