

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



Director of Legal & Governance, Graham Britten
Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service
Brigade HQ, Stocklake, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 1BD
Tel: 01296 744441

Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
Jason Thelwell

To: The Members of the Executive Committee

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS
AND PUBLIC**

Please note the content of
Page 2 of this Agenda Pack

6 November 2023

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held in **MEETING ROOM 1, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE HEADQUARTERS, STOCKLAKE, AYLESBURY, BUCKS, HP20 1BD** on **WEDNESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2023 at 10.00 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

Health and Safety:

There will be limited facilities for members of the public to observe the meeting in person. A recording of the meeting will be available after the meeting, at the web address provided overleaf.

Chairman: Councillor Rouse

Councillors: Adoh, Christensen, Darlington, Hall, Lambert, McLean and Walsh



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Recording of the meeting

The Authority supports the principles of openness and transparency. To enable members of the press and public to see or hear the meeting, this meeting will be recorded. Please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWmIXPWAscxpL3vIiv7bh1Q>

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 adjourn a Meeting to hear a member 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.

A request to speak on a specified agenda item should be submitted by email to gbritten@bucksfire.gov.uk by 4pm on the Monday prior to the meeting. Please state if you would like the Director of Legal and Governance to read out the statement on your behalf, or if you would like to be sent a 'teams' meeting invitation to join the meeting at the specified agenda item.

If the meeting is then adjourned, prior to inviting a member of the public to speak, the Chairman should advise that they:

- (a) speak for no more than four minutes,
- (b) 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.

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. Such attendance will be facilitated if requests are made to enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk at least two clear working days before the meeting.

Statements can be read out on behalf of the Member by the Director of Legal and Governance, or the Member may request a 'teams' meeting invitation to join the meeting at the specified agenda item.

Where the Chairman of a Committee has agreed to extend an invitation to all Members of the Authority to attend when major matters of policy are being considered, a Member who is not a member of the Committee may attend and speak at such Meetings at the invitation of the Chairman of that 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*, at least two clear working days before the day of the Meeting of the Authority or the Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To make all decisions on behalf of the Authority, except in so far as reserved to the full Authority by law or by these Terms of Reference.
2. To assess performance of the Authority against agreed organisational targets.
3. To determine matters relating to pay and remuneration where required by collective agreements or legislation.
4. To select on behalf of the Authority-the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, and deputy to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, or equivalent, taking advice from suitable advisers and to make recommendations to the Authority as to the terms of appointment or dismissal.
5. To consider and make decisions on behalf of the Authority in respect of the appointment of a statutory finance officer; a statutory monitoring officer; and any post to be contracted to “Gold Book” terms and conditions in whole or in part taking advice from the Chief Fire Officer and suitable advisers.
6. To act as the Employers’ Side of a negotiating and consultation forum for all matters relating to the employment contracts of the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, deputy to the Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive, or equivalent; and where relevant, employees contracted to “Gold Book” terms and conditions in whole or in part.
7. To hear appeals if required to do so in accordance with the Authority’s Policies.
8. To determine any human resources issues arising from the Authority’s budget process and improvement programme.
9. To determine policies, codes or guidance:
 - (a) after considering recommendations from the Overview and Audit Committee in respect of:
 - (i) regulating working relationships between members and co-opted members of the Authority and the employees of the Authority; and
 - (ii) governing the conduct of employees of the Authority
 - (b) relating to grievance, disciplinary, conduct, capability, dismissals and appeals relating to employees contracted to “Gold Book” terms and conditions in whole or in part.
10. To form a Human Resources Sub-Committee as it deems appropriate.

AGENDA

Item No:

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13 September 2023. **(Pages 7 - 16)**

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

The Chairman to invite officers to provide verbal updates on any actions noted in the Minutes from the previous meeting.

4. 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.

5. Questions

To receive questions in accordance with Standing Order SOA7.

6. Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 - September 2023

To consider Item 6 **(Pages 17 - 30)**

7. Senior Management Team Remuneration and Performance Review, and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme

To consider Item 7 **(Pages 31 - 52)**

8. HMICFRS Action Plan

To receive a verbal update.

9. Exclusion of Public and Press

To consider excluding the public and press representatives from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the reports contain information relating to any individual; and Paragraph 3 of Part 1

of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the reports contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the Authority); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10. Succession Planning 1

To consider Item 10

11. Succession Planning 2

To consider Item 11

12. Exempt Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13 September 2023.

13. Date of Next Meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 10am.

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

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Minutes of the Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2023 at 10.00 AM.

Present: Councillors Darlington, Hall, Lambert, McLean Rouse (part) and Walsh

Officers: M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), A Hussain (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), A Carter (Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO), P Mould (Area Commander Industrial Action), D Buchanan (Head of Protection, Assurance and Development), S Tuffley (Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience), S Gowanlock (Corporate Planning Manager), C Newman (Data Intelligence Team Manager), A Collett (Organisational Development Manager) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Christensen

The Chairman advised the Committee that the meeting was being recorded and would be uploaded on to the Authority's YouTube channel after the meeting.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWmIXPWAscxpL3vliv7bh1Q>

EX15 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 July 2023, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX16 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED -

That Councillor McLean be appointed Vice Chairman for the meeting.

The Chairman announced that, by reason of special circumstances, an additional item 'Succession Planning' would be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. It would be taken in exempt session.

EX17 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED –

It was moved and resolved that the public and press representatives be removed from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, as the report and minutes contain information relating to any individual; and Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, as the report and minutes contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person (including the Authority); and on these grounds it is considered the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

EX18 SUCCESSION PLANNING

RESOLVED –

The Committee considered the report and appendices, details of which were noted in the confidential/exempt minutes.

EX19 EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Exempt Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday 12 July 2023, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The Chairman left the meeting, and the Vice Chairman took the Chair. All officers rejoined the meeting.

The Vice Chairman welcomed the Head of Protection, Assurance and Development to his first meeting of the Authority.

EX20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Vice Chairman advised on the following matters arising:

EX06 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – The Director of Finance and Assets had advised Members it was not appropriate for him to disclose information about the legal position regarding the pursuit to recover some of the increased costs incurred during the build of the Blue Light Hub from the professional design team but had updated Members following the meeting.

The Chairman asked that a proposal be brought back to Members on the top floor of West Ashland, the Director of Finance and Assets advised that this would be presented later this year.

The Chairman asked for an update on the business as usual work property spend that was being undertaken on station – this was included as an appendix in the Budget Monitoring report today.

EX08 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE – The Chairman was impressed with the work on the zero carbon electricity contract and felt it would be good for the Authority to promote this and the environmental and climate action plan update. A draft communication to be given to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to approve before publication. Subject to approval, this would be published later this month as part of a mid-year update on the Plan.

The Chairman asked if the business case for Unit 7, setting out the options for exiting the building, could be presented to the Executive Committee in September, this was being presented today.

EX09 FINANCIAL STRATEGY UPDATE (NO2) - The Director of Finance and Assets would circulate the Masterclasses to Members, as well as looking at potential self-assessments. The Director of Finance and Assets was awaiting a response from a third party regarding the self-assessment tool.

EX10 UPDATE FLEET AND PROPERTY STRATEGIES TO 2025 – The Chairman asked if officers could speak to Councillor Hall regarding his knowledge and expertise in the disposal of fleet vehicles. This meeting had now taken place and the Service would utilise existing channels to better publicise when selling vehicles at auction in order to maximise the potential interest and selling price.

EX21 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

EX22 2025-2030 CRMP LISTENING AND ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

The Corporate Planning Manager advised Members that this was the report on the outcomes of the ‘listening and engagement’ CRMP consultation carried out with members of the public in June. Consultation at this very early stage in the CRMP development process was to comply with National Framework and new Fire Standard requirements and also, very importantly, the Gunning Principles.

Officers pay particular attention to these as they set out four legal tests that define what a legitimate consultation looks like, including: that proposals are consulted on when they are still at a formative stage to ensure that decisions had not been subject to pre-determination; and, that there was sufficient information to enable intelligent consideration resulting in an informed response. These requirements tend to favour qualitative methods of consultation and engagement when dealing with complex issues,

hence the use of independently and expertly facilitated focus groups that allow participants to reflect in depth about the issues, and to receive and question relevant information.

Also worth noting was the effort that Opinion Research Services (ORS) go to recruit a diverse and representative sample of the public. Members would see the effects of this from the statistics in the report, and as a result of this, ORS advise that the outcomes of the consultation were broadly indicative of how the public at large would incline if the Service was able to engage with a much larger proportion of the population in this way.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised Members that the consultation was structured into two main parts. Firstly, an exploration of the participants perceptions of risk in their communities and also how they see the Service and their awareness of what it does. As with previous consultations of this type, fire was seldom mentioned spontaneously as something that the participants worry about even though they know that the consultation had been commissioned by the fire and rescue service. However, there was a good exploration of perceptions of some currently topical issues such as wildfire and lithium-ion battery risks.

In the second part, it starts to explore some of the challenges the Service faces and some potential ways it might respond to them. These included key issues raised by the HMICFRS in their Round 2 inspection report such as: the future of on-call service; automatic fire alarms; and workforce diversity.

A Member felt it was important to take note of the views and comments around diversity and how the Service connects with various communities to show that the fire service is a place for them.

A Members asked if the consultation was reaching enough of the population within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised that ORS were reasonably confident it had engaged with a broad selection of the public, which well represented a larger selection of the public. When consulting on the draft plan, the focus groups may be rerun, there would be an online facility for anyone to respond, and a social media campaign, to make everyone aware of the consultation and encourage participation. There had also been a staff consultation.

RESOLVED –

That the report be submitted to 11 October 2023 Fire Authority meeting for information and noting.

EX23 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – Q1 2023/24

The Data Intelligence Team Manager advised Members that he was pleased to present the Key Performance Measures report for Quarter 1 2023/24. There had been a number of changes based on feedback received throughout the last year of reporting. The most notable changes were, the layout of the report, which now included room for commentary for each measure, and more room to provide a better description for each measure. Also included were some new measures, the details of which could be found in the cover report.

It was also worth noting that feedback had already been received regarding the two measures in relation to the Environment and these would be updated prior to the next quarters performance report.

As for the performance detailed within the report, it was encouraging to see that impact of incidents in the home and in the workplace were generally where they were expected to be, based on the targets set. However, It would be remiss not to highlight the area detail response model. This area primarily details the availability of appliances across the wholtime fleet and on-call. As seen in the report, this area had yet to reach its expected position.

In relation to the Wholtime figures, there were a number of reasons that had been attributed to these figures, however, the Service had identified the largest impact on these numbers was a skills gap within the current workforce, primarily in relation to drivers and junior officers. As mentioned within the commentary, a range of initiatives had been agreed by the senior management team to improve the resilience of front-line resources.

A Member asked why over the border mobilisations into Buckinghamshire continued to be red, were there plans to improve this.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the response model was under review and one of the issues was around the on call stations availability and the issues with on call recruitment, which still remains one of the Services priorities. The Service does work closely with neighbouring services, and arrangements were in place and enshrined in law. Figures did increase last year due to the hot summer. Also, through Thames Valley Fire Control, the nearest available pump would always be mobilised, which wasn't the case in the past.

The Data Intelligence Team Manager advised Members that as part of the CRMP, there was a complete review of resources, looking at where resources were placed, the impact of over the border mobilisation and whether it could be mitigated. A lot was due to geography and not cost.

A Member asked if a report explaining this could be shared with Members.

A Member felt that looking at increasing wholetime availability would be useful.

The Data Intelligence Team Manager advised that this was being reviewed as part of the CRMP.

RESOLVED –

That the report and recommendations below be approved for submission to the Authority:

1. It is recommended that the Performance Management – Q1 2023/24 be noted.

EX24 UNIT 7 EXIT PROGRAMME

The Lead Member for Finance and Assets, Information Security and IT introduced the report and advised it had been a huge part of his role that the Service exited out of its one leasehold property, as soon as possible, which had the benefits of not only reducing the day to day costs but would also reduce the environmental impact to the Service. The proposal provided significant funding to improve the estate and to ensure USAR continued to be based at Aylesbury.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the exit from Unit 7 formed a key part of both the recently approved update to the Property Strategy and the Service's Efficiency and Productivity Plan.

The Director of Finance and Assets apologised for an error, the annual charge was understated by £4,000 as the last line before the total was erroneously excluded from that figure, and to reassure Members it would not significantly affect the decision, and if anything the saving was slightly better than quoted.

Unit 7 costs circa £180k per year to run and houses 26 staff, stores, USAR kit, ceremonial uniforms, a host of other miscellaneous items (including a life-sized model of a horse), and meeting rooms. Since the pandemic, the Service had adopted a hybrid working policy. Desk space that was previously fully utilised had capacity freed up, allowing the chance to rationalise the estate and make savings.

Deputy Chief Fire Officer

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members there were four main components of this proposed project, Stores, USAR, HQ works and ICT infrastructure. In terms of legal considerations, the most recent deed of variation allowed notice to be served at the end of any calendar month. Previously, this was restricted to the end of March each year to vacate by the end of the following December.

The Proposal was to serve notice following approval, and to fully vacate the building on 30 September 2024. The reason for proposing the notice was longer than 9 months, was to allow for all the work required to be completed, and to allow time to market the building in its current condition. If a new tenant can be found who would take it 'as is', it would remove the need to pay for dilapidation costs, or at least mitigate some of them. Or, if that was not possible, it would allow time to undertake dilapidation works if the freeholder was unwilling to accept payment in-lieu.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that there were significant financial benefits to this project, although there was a one-off cost of £369k, £500k had provisionally been set aside in the MTFP as part of the approved capital programme so this would free-up £130k of funds. The payback period was just over two years excluding dilapidations or under 3.5 years if these were included.

A Member asked about USAR as the decision to extend USAR funding only went up to 2025 and this would mean moving out six months before any future funding was known and he was concerned about moving out before the decision on USAR had been finalised by the government.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that officers shared his concern, but a review of USAR had been imminent for the last 4-5 years, also whether the comprehensive spending review would happen if there was an election, or if it would roll over again, was not known, but a decision was needed on Unit 7.

A Member asked if USAR was in the correct location in Aylesbury.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised USAR locations were agreed nationally through national resilience and were placed at strategic geographical locations. This was not just a Service decision.

A Member asked if the option of using the additional floor at the Blue Light Hub was considered.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that the Blue Light Hub option had been considered, but it was discounted due to the primary cost, as part of the condition of occupation of the top

floor, under planning conditions, was that a decked car park be built. This would cost approximately £1m. Also, when looking at the desk requirements in HQ and the number of people, no more physical space was required. A lot of the HQ work and fit out was around storage and this would be needed if the Blue Light hub was used too. Also considered was the cost to staff of driving to the Blue Light Hub.

The Vice Chairman suggested that regarding increasing the power supply at HQ, it needed to be requested with the power company sooner rather than later, as the power network could take a long time to be provided.

The Vice Chairman asked that it was put on the risk register.

RESOLVED –

That the Committee approve to serve notice to allow the exit of Unit 7 on 30 September 2024, and undertake the necessary enabling works as detailed in the Appendices.

EX25

**BUDGET MONITORING REPORT APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023
(PROVISIONAL OUTTURN)**

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the report at Appendix A set out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 31 July 2023, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year.

The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £35.749m gave a forecast yearend underspend of £701k. Furthermore, the level of funding was showing a favourable variance of £24k which had resulted in an overall net underspend of £725k against the expenditure budget. The underspend was predominantly due to a favourable variance being reported under employee costs due to the vacant positions. Furthermore, due to the significant increase in the Bank of England base rate since the budget was approved, the investment returns had been revised upwards and currently projected at least £350k additional interest returns than originally budgeted.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that as requested at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 12 July 2023, Appendix B contained details of all property works currently planned across the estate during 2023-24.

A Member asked about Stokenchurch, which was an on call station and difficult to provide continuous cover. Was it value for money to refurbish the drill tower and not to do Princes Risborough first.

Director of Finance
and Assets

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that with regard to the drill towers, the Service went out to tender as a block, and didn't get any responses, so were now trying to engage with local businesses to take them on. On the schedule if they need work doing, it does not mean they can't be used. The refurbished Aylesbury drill tower, may be put in at Princes Risborough, subject to planning consent.

RESOLVED –

That the progress detailed in the Workforce Resourcing and Development Update be noted.

EX26 WORKFORCE RESOURCING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Organisational Development Manager advised Members that this report provided an update on the Authority's progress in relation to workforce resourcing and development, ensuring the right people in the right roles, with the right skills, knowledge, and behaviours. It offers reassurance to Members that the necessary safeguards and contingency plans were in place to future proof the Service, mitigate risk and optimise opportunities during a period of significant change and increasing demands; all to continually provide the best service possible to its communities.

Appendix A detailed the range of new ways of working being implemented to enhance operational resilience and improve staff training, learning and development. These aim to increase appliance availability; help navigate workforce planning challenges, whilst minimising the potential impact on the workforce. All of these developments promote staff retention, increase levels of engagement, and improves communication. Resulting in a confident workforce that feels valued and invested in.

This report showcased the positive, meaningful change being implemented, informed by staff feedback and organisational needs, that is moving the service forward.

RESOLVED –

That the progress detailed in the Workforce Resourcing and Development Update be noted.

EX27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 10am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 12.45PM

DRAFT



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 15 November 2023

Report title: Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 - September 2023

Lead Member: Councillor Matthew Walsh

Report sponsor: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets

Author and contact: Asif Hussain, ahussain@bucksfire.gov.uk, 01296 744421

Action: Noting

Recommendations:

That the provisional outturn forecast for the Authority as of 30 September 2023 be noted.

Executive summary:

The report in Appendix A sets out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 30 September 2023, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year.

The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £36.131m gives a forecast yearend underspend of £0.320m. Furthermore, the level of funding is showing a favourable variance of £0.024m which has resulted in an overall net underspend of £0.344m against our expenditure budget.

The underspend is predominantly due to a favourable variance being reported under employee costs due to the vacant positions. Furthermore, due to the significant increase in the Bank of England base rate since the budget was approved, the investment returns have been revised upwards and currently projecting at least £0.450m additional interest returns higher than originally budgeted.

As requested at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 12 July 2023, Appendix B contains details of all property works currently planned across our estate during 2023-24.

Financial implications: As set out in the main body of the report.

Risk management: Management of our financial resources is a key risk to the Authority and the performance reports to Committee inform Members of the main financial risks facing the Authority in year.

Legal implications: None.

Privacy and security implications: None.

Duty to collaborate: None.

Health and safety implications: None.

Environmental implications: None.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: None.

Consultation and communication: None.

Background papers: Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27, Fire Authority Meeting 15 February 2023. <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/02/fire-authority-meeting-15-february-2023-item-9b-medium-term-financial-plan-2023-24-2027-28.pdf/> and <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/02/fire-authority-meeting-item-9b-revised-appendices-1-and-2.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
A	Appendix A – Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 – September 2023 – Q2	None
B	Appendix B – Property Works 2023-24	None

1. Revenue Forecasts by Service Area – Table 1

Table 1 shows the budget and forecast outturn for each Directorate as at the end of 2023/24 financial year. The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £36.131m gives a forecast yearend underspend of £0.320m. Furthermore, the level of funding is showing a favourable variance of £0.024m which has resulted in an overall net underspend of £0.344m against our expenditure budget.

Directorate	Total Budget £	Actual Year to Date £	Forecast Outturn £	Projected Year End Variance £
Corporate Core	1,105,850	459,099	630,777	-475,073
Finance & Assets	6,871,860	3,820,105	6,845,734	-26,126
Human Resources	551,100	273,960	570,059	18,959
Delivery, Corp. Dev. Planning	25,617,320	11,506,708	25,784,202	166,882
Statutory Acc. & Contingency	2,303,870	131,200	2,299,870	-4,000
Total Expenditure	36,450,000	16,191,072	36,130,642	-319,358
Total Funding	-36,450,000	-20,932,599	-36,474,386	-24,386
Net Position	0	-4,741,528	-343,744	-343,744

Protection Grant - Table 2

Table 2 shows the ringfenced grants received by the Service. In previous years these funds had been included within Table 1, but for 2023-24 onwards are being shown in a separate table to provide additional clarity of reporting.

Protection Grant	Funding £	Actual Year to Date £	Commitments Full Year £	Forecast Outturn £	Residual Grant Remaining £
Protection Uplift	-430,216	65,122	3,938	133,727	-296,489
Grenfell Uplift	-23,023	0	16,975	23,023	0
Total	-453,239	65,122	20,913	156,750	-296,489

Variance by Directorate

Corporate Core £0.475m under – The underspend mainly relates to higher-than-expected investment income as a direct result of the Bank of England base rate increasing significantly over the past year. Currently we are projecting to overachieve by £0.450m in investment returns which is more than double that we had budgeted. It is expected that the base rate has now either peaked or nearing its peak in the current cycle.

Finance & Assets £0.026m under – The underspend mainly relates to employees not being on top of their pay scales. The utilities have been fixed for 12 months and will cover the period April 2023 to March 2024 which provides a level of certainty in terms of costs in this volatile market.

Human Resources £0.019m over – The overspend mainly relates to higher than budgeted recruitment costs.

Delivery, Corporate Development & Planning £0.167m over – The underspending within the directorate is primarily due to operational establishment being less than budgeted so far this year, and on-call activity being lower than forecast, as seen in table 3. In terms of operational establishment numbers, we have very recently surpassed the 300 budgeted establishment with our operational establishment reaching 314. It is anticipated that this number will fluctuate throughout the year due to anticipated leavers/retirees and establishment numbers are projected to drop closer to 300 by year-end.

As the service has identified underspends in year, the service has taken a proactive approach in re-aligning some of the underspend by giving budget holders the opportunity to submit in-year one-off growth bids to utilise the underspend. Included within this forecast is the expenditure relating to the one-off bids which were approved in May and August. A breakdown of these bids is provided in table 3. Including these bids results in a net overspend position for the directorate (although in practice some of the bids relate to other directorates).

Funding - The level of funding exceeded the budget by £0.024m. We are seeing additional funding of £0.009m relating to services grant and £0.115m relating to precept and NNDR as these figures were revised and increased by Buckinghamshire Council after the Fire Authority had set the annual budget. This will be offset by a reduction in our S31 grants which have been reconciled as part of their latest National Non-Domestic Rates collections and has resulted in a net deficit of £0.100m.

Protection Grant

The Protection grant is being reported separately as this is ring-fenced grant for specific purposes which is only approved and allocated in year. Therefore, it makes it difficult to include in the base budget as this grant information is not available until closer to when the funding allocations will be distributed. The grant is predominantly for the Fire Service to increase their protection capability and delivery, aligning with locally agreed integrated risk management plans and risk-based inspection programmes. The funding is made of carried forward funding and we anticipate additional funding to be received in September 2023 and March 2024.

2. Direct Employee Variances

Table 3 shows the breakdown of all the favourable (-) and adverse (+) variances for each sub-heading within the direct employees subjective as at the 30 September 2023:

Subjective	Salary (Including Training costs)	Allowances	NI	Pension	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Wholetime	56,337	12,180	41,636	-249,204	-139,051
On-Call	127,395	-292,229	31,960	-74,247	-207,121
Support	-167,760	0	-25,348	-75,067	-268,175
Technicians	14,274	0	2,019	2,411	18,704
Sessional	-4,000	3,612	1,217	-274	555
Agency	48,818	0	0	0	48,818
Grand Total	75,064	-276,437	51,484	-396,381	-546,270

Wholetime – The operational establishment is expected to be below budgeted levels until September. As at September, the budgeted establishment has surpassed 300 and reached 314 as illustrated in section 4. Due to projected leavers and retirees, it is anticipated the operational establishment will reduce to 300 by the end of the financial year as per the budgeted establishment.

On Call – Underspends predominantly seen within allowances which is based on activity/training in year.

Support Staff – This relates to vacant in year support roles which will be recruited to throughout the year.

Agency Staff – Agency staff have been used to partly cover interim vacancies within support staff roles and this partially offsets the underspend on support staff.

3. In Year Growth Bids

Table 4 shows the total bids approved in May and August 2023 which total £0.225m and £0.298m and are for one-off projects only. As noted earlier in the report these are included within the forecast expenditure in Table 1 under Delivery, Corporate Development & Planning.

May 2023

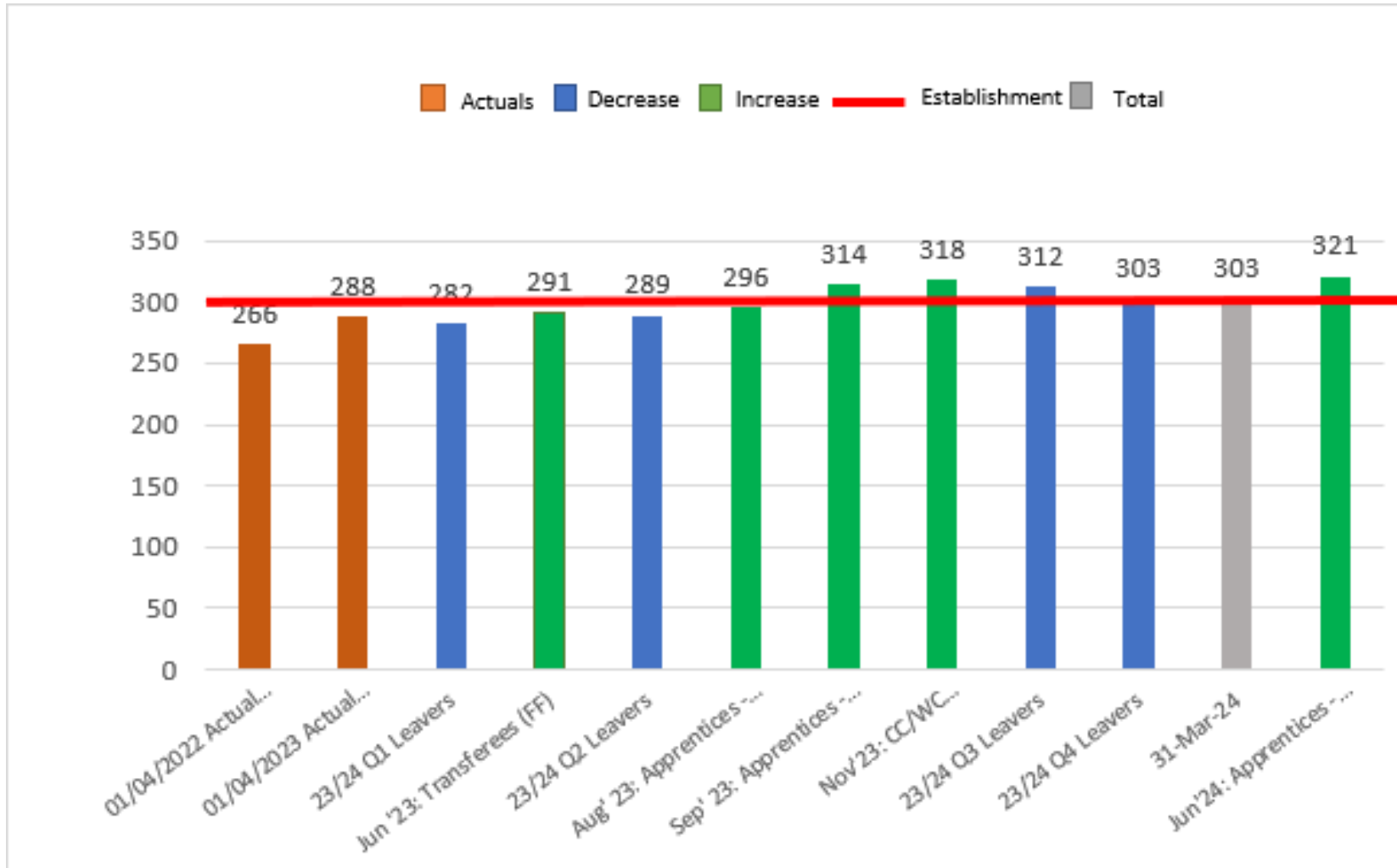
Project	Total Bid £	Comments
Installation of a brake roll tester	36,500	Order placed with delivery due in October.
Airwave Device Refresh	12,100	Orders placed.
Airwave Contract	70,000	This budget relates to the significant increase in contract cost which will be paid throughout the year.
Resource to support the delivery of BFRS' Staff Development Pathway project	53,500	Individual commenced role in July.
White Ribbon Accreditation	2,000	Application approved for White Ribbon accreditation. Purchase of merchandise.
Marketing and Communications equipment	5,100	50% of the spend has been spent or committed on marketing equipment, predominantly camera equipment.
Prevention Events equipment	5,750	Orders to be placed.
NILO Ballistic PPE	8,000	Orders to be placed.
Operational Support Unit Refresh	32,000	Orders to be placed.
Total	224,950	

August 2023

Project	Total Bid £	Comments
Purchase of two white fleet vehicles	55,200	Order placed with estimated delivery in April.
Purchase protective base layer PPE.	7,200	Order placed in September.
Purchase multi-purpose PPE, RPE and personal hygiene bags for all operational members of staff	16,200	Specification to be agreed and an order will be placed.
Installation of flagpoles at whole time firestations	10,000	The lead is working closely with property to plan the installation of the flagpoles.
Cleaning provision for BA sets	72,000	Procurement process in place with order to take place in October.
Finance system upgrade	48,600	Order placed.
Speak-up campaign marketing material	3,500	Orders to be placed.
Introduction of welfare packs	4,000	Orders to be placed.
Email management software	9,500	Order placed.
Purchase 13 tablets to support Prevention home fire safety visits	4,200	Orders placed and tablets received in service.
To purchase 9 stations ends to replace windows 7 devices at our on call stations	67,400	Order placed.
Total	297,800	

4. Wholetime Establishment Roadmap

The following graph illustrates the wholetime operational establishment as at 1 April 2022 through to 30 June 2024 taking into consideration projected retirees, leavers, transfers and recruitment of apprentices.



5. Funding

Table 5 details the budget and forecast outturn for each category of funding.

Funding	Total Budget £	Actual Year to Date £	Provisional Year End Forecast £	Projected Year End Variance £
Government Funding	-3,861,790	-2,574,485	-3,861,790	0
Specific Grants	-1,188,000	-685,247	-1,197,000	-9,000
NNDR	-7,174,055	-4,492,883	-7,111,251	62,804
Top-up / Pooling Receipts	-1,510,155	-543,653	-1,510,155	0
Precept	-25,194,000	-12,636,331	-25,272,190	-78,190
Transfer to Reserve	2,478,000	0	2,478,000	0
Grand Total	-36,450,000	-20,932,599	-36,474,386	-24,386

The level of funding forecast is exceeding the budget by £0.024m. We are seeing additional funding of £0.009m relating to services grant. We are also forecasting an additional £0.115m relating to precept and business rates as these figures were revised and increased by Buckinghamshire Council after the Fire Authority had set the annual budget. Furthermore, following reconciliations of business rates grants by central government, they have revised the funding allocation and identified a deficit of £0.100m which will be deducted from our NNDR funding.

6. Capital Monitoring

Capital Forecast

The capital programme for 2023/24 is £3.392m, including £1.100m from 2022/23 carry forward capital projects and in year approval of £0.055m.

Project Name	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Carry Forwards 2022/23 £	In Year Funding	Revised Budget 2023/24 £	Actuals Year to Date £	Slippage £	Provisional Outturn £	Projected Year End Variance £
Property	1,139,000	249,000	0	1,388,000	220,954	128,239	1,129,121	-130,640
Total Property Portfolio	1,139,000	249,000	0	1,388,000	220,954	128,239	1,129,121	-130,640
Hydraulic Equipment	65,000	18,915	0	83,915	0	0	83,915	0
Operational Equipment	90,000	0	0	90,000	44,536	0	90,000	0
Operational Red Fleet Vehicles	750,000	560,148	0	1,310,148	572,850	0	1,385,901	75,753
Operational White Fleet Vehicles	37,000	0	55,000	92,000	0	55,000	37,000	0
BA and Associated Equipment	0	65,460	0	65,460	2,750	0	65,460	0
Fireground Radios	0	115,000	0	115,000	0	0	115,000	0
Total Fire Appliances & Equipment	942,000	759,523	55,000	1,756,523	620,135	55,000	1,777,276	75,753
ICT	156,000	91,656	0	247,656	117,604	0	247,656	0
Total Support	156,000	91,656	0	247,656	117,604	0	247,656	0
Grand Total	2,237,000	1,100,179	55,000	3,392,179	958,693	183,239	3,154,053	-54,887

Capital Funding

The capital programme will be funded as follows:

Funding	Balance at 1 April 2023 £000	Estimated Transfers (in) £000	Estimates Transfers Out £000	Estimate Balance at 31 March 2024 £000
Revenue Contribution to Capital	-3,359	-1,925	-398	-5,682
Other Capital Contributions	0	-3,552	3,552	0
Total Capital Funding	-3,359	-5,477	3,154	-5,682

Property Portfolio

Property has a capital budget of £1.388m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.249m. The capital expenditure is being utilised to carry out planned capital projects as agreed at Business Transformation Board. This includes capital works across several sites following a conditions survey carried out during 2022/23. Furthermore, a business case was presented to the Executive Committee in September setting out the plan to exit Unit 7 and relocation of the services provided from this site. This resulted in the approval of vacating this site and relocating services by September 2024. The vacating and relocating costs associated with Unit 7 have been revised and will cost significantly less than originally planned which has been reflected in the outturn. Capital works have been completed at Aylesbury, Gerrards Cross, High Wycombe, Marlow, Olney, West Ashland and Winslow. Further works are to be completed at Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Broughton, Buckingham, Marlow and West Ashland. These works are expected to be completed during 2023/24. Drill towers at Broughton, Buckingham and Newport Pagnell have been upgraded, with works on the remaining drill towers being put on hold. This is due to the focus being the departure and relocation of the Unit 7 site and capital works on other stations. This has resulted in a slippage of £0.128m. A further breakdown of property works has been provided in Appendix B.

Fire Appliances & Equipment

Fire Appliances & Equipment has a capital budget of £1.702m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.760m. The capital funds will be utilised to purchase three red fleet appliances (orders placed) and to purchase operational equipment for these appliances in line with the fleet strategy. This will also include the purchase of a white fleet vehicle. £0.055m in year funding has been allocated to purchased two additional white fleet vehicles. The carry forward budget of £0.760m relates to delays in the delivery of the two fire appliances and equipment which were due to be delivered in 2022/23, additional equipment for BA and purchase of fire ground radios. The two delayed fire appliances from 2022/23 will be delivered in October 2023. There has been an identified price increase in the fire appliances build costs from the manufacturer, and an increase to the cost of equipment resulting in a projected overspend of £0.075m.

Support

ICT has a capital budget of £0.248m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.92m. This budget will be utilised for the purchase of ICT hardware equipment, as per the ICT replacement strategy along with replacement of On-Call MDTs, purchase of servers and replacement of station end turnout system. The carry forward budget of £0.91m relates to an agreed change to the ICT capital spend plan, which includes the carried forward capital works of station end turnout system upgrade from 2022/23 into 2023/24. Year to date spend on ICT capital equipment includes the purchase of laptops, surfaces and equipment for station end turnout system.

7. Reserves

The table below shows the provisional movement in reserves during 2023/24.

Reserves	Balance at Start of year £000	Projected Movement £000	Balance at End of Year £000
General Fund	-1,625	0	-1,625
Earmarked Reserves (Revenue)*	-1,937	-2,530	-4,467
Earmarked Reserves (Capital)	-3,359	-2,323	-5,682
Total Reserves	-6,921	-4,853	-11,774

* This figure includes £0.669m, which represents this Authority's share of the joint control room renewals fund (which is held by Oxfordshire).

Appendix B

Progress:

- Completed
- On track
- Delayed
- Not started / on hold

Property Capital Progress Report 2023/24																					
Ref	Station / Department	Capital works to be completed	Complete	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	Jul	Aug	Update
P.0.1 Carried forward Capital works from 2022/23																					
0.1.6	Aylesbury	Refurb old drill tower, with option to be installed at another station		●	●	●	●	●	●	●											Exploring installation at Princess Risborough with Supplier
1.2.2a	High Wycombe	Various works including: Redecoration, fitting and replacement of flooring in multiple areas, blinds and furniture	Yes	●	●	●	●														Complete
E1.10	Aylesbury	Installation of motorised front door at Brigade HQ	Yes	●	●	●	●														Complete
E1.16	West Ashland	Installation of external stair case (from first to second floor)	Yes	●	●	●	●														Complete
PF.03	Broughton	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Install new road surface adequate for HGVs in car park, repair brick boundary wall, replace dehumidifier/heater in line with replacement schedule.		●	●	●	●														Not started - To be completed later in 2023/24
PF.05	Gerrards Cross	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Road resurfacing, replace flat roofing in line with life cycle and upgrade rainwater pipes	Yes	●	●	●	●														Complete
PF.08	Olney	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including Brickwork repairs / replacement	Yes	●	●	●	●														Complete
P 1.1 Implement Priority Capital Repair- Works Drill Towers																					
1.1.1	High Wycombe	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●												- 2022/23 - Went out for tender for all drill towers but received zero responses. - 2022/23 - Agreed with operational managers to repair prioritised drill towers based on operational need. - 2023/24 - Remainder of drill towers on hold pending further work linked to relocation of Aylesbury's old drill tower
1.1.2	Gerrards Cross	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.3	Beaconsfield	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.4	Broughton	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●																
1.1.5	Buckingham	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●																
1.1.6	Newport Pagnell	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●																
1.1.7	Princess Risborough	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.8	Haddenham	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.10	Stokenchurch	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.14a	Brill	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.14b	Great Missenden	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.14c	Amersham	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.14d	Olney	Drill tower works		●																	
1.1.14e	Winslow	Drill tower works		●																	
U7 Unit 7 Departure (Dilapidations) and Facilities Relocation																					
U7.1.01	Unit 7	Unit 7 Departure Costs (Dilapidations)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Work in progress - Approval from Executive Committee to vacate Unit 7 by September 2024
U7.2.01	Unit 7	Unit 7 Facilities Relocation Costs		●	●	●	●	●	●	●											Work in progress - Approval from Executive Committee to vacate Unit 7 by September 2024
W Implementation of MTFP capital works																					
W.1.0	Aylesbury	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Internal upgrades to flooring, ceiling, walls and windows								●	●	●									
W.2.0	Beaconsfield	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: resurfacing of drill yard and car park, and internal ground works								●	●	●	●	●							
W.3.0	Buckingham	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Replace Ideal concord gas fired boiler in line with replacement schedule. Along with resurfacing of front yard and internal ground works & door replacements		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								All yard work completed, other works still in progress (Going out to market for quotations looking at various options (Ground source, Air source heating etc) which will provide value for money with a view to award a contract in Q3.)
W.4.0	Marlow	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Roof upgrades and internal flooring replacement							●	●	●	●									Work in progress for Roofing upgrade, internal flooring replacement work to be done.
OW Other Workstreams																					
OW.1.0	Winslow	Window replacement	Yes	●	●	●															Completed
OW.2.0	Gerrards Cross	Kitchen replacement	Yes	●	●	●															Completed
OW.3.0	Workshops	Replacement of Bay Lighting	Yes	●	●	●															Completed
OW.4.0	Aylesbury	Fuel Tank repairs and upgrades	Yes	●	●	●															Completed
EW Emergency Unplanned Capital Works																					
EW.02	Marlow	Replacement of Extraction System	Complete					●													Completed
EDI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Capital Works																					
EDI.02	Blue Light Hub	Installation of motorised front door at Blue Light Hub	Complete						●	●											Work in progress

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 15 November 2023

Report title: Senior Management Team Remuneration and Performance Review, and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme

Lead Member: Councillor Shade Adoh, Lead Member - People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne, Interim Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

Author and contact: Anne Stunell, Head of Human Resources,
astunell@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Decision

Recommendations: As per paragraph four of Annex A, it is recommended that:

- 1 Performance related pay and bonus payments are not paid to the Senior Management Team (SMT) in the current financial year.
- 2 The SMT methodology is reviewed once the Chief Fire Officer recruitment process is complete.

Executive summary:

Senior Management Team (SMT) members are contracted under the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service, known as the “Gold Book” for pay purposes. This involves a two-track approach for determining levels of pay:

- National Pay - At national level, the NJC annually reviews the level of pay increase applicable to Principal Officers
- Local Pay - The NJC agreement also requires Fire and Rescue Authorities to review Principal Officers’ salary levels on an annual basis.

SMT members on local terms and conditions are not covered by this review.

In determining any proposed changes to local pay, the Pay Review methodology requires Members to consider various types of qualitative and quantitative data, including public sector comparisons and organisations geographically relevant.

In line with the methodology, a review considering performance and relevant benchmarking data has been undertaken and is attached at **Annex A** for consideration by Members.

Overall, there has been continued demonstration of success across all directorates including operational delivery, prudent financial and asset management, innovative

and progressive workforce reform, and increased partnership working to deliver a range of services to the community.

Performance is scrutinised by the Overview and Audit Committee, which monitors the Authority's progress in delivering the Strategic Objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Authority's Pay Policy Statement requires that the Executive Committee receives an annual report summarising the awards which have been made under the Employee Bonus Scheme to employees throughout the Service.

Financial implications:

If Members are minded not to pay performance related pay as per the recommendations, there is no financial impact in 2023/2024.

If Members are minded to pay performance related pay, they would have to be covered by underspends as this has not been budgeted for.

Adherence to the pay policy principles and statement is controlled via strict establishment and pay change approval process controls.

Risk management:

On the 15 September 2021, the Succession Planning – Business Continuity and Resilience report was presented to the Executive Committee. It outlined the potential risks faced, measures undertaken and in place to mitigate them.

Succession reports have been presented to Members in July, September and October 2023.

Legal implications:

SMT members are collectively and individually responsible for delivering the Corporate Plan and the Authority's objectives.

Performance of SMT members is regularly appraised either by the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (CFO/CE) or by the Chairman, supported by Lead Members where appropriate.

The Authority's current Pay Policy, Part 9 – Pay Progression, states "For SMB members, pay progression is performance based, with scope to increase the salary after completion of the annual SMB remuneration and performance review process. Any increase or additions to remuneration will require approval of the appropriate committee of the Authority."

Whilst SMT members have been invited to contribute with evidence to demonstrate performance improvements, officers have not been - and will not be - party to any decision-making in relation to their own remuneration.

Managers are invited to make applications for merit/bonus awards for non SMT employees in line with the criteria. The outcome of managers' recommendations with supporting evidence (e.g., performance rating, attendance levels, amounts

applied for) are considered by a panel of SMT members. These have not taken place for a number of years.

The proposal is that the methodology is reviewed for SMT performance related pay and merit awards for staff once the Chief Fire Officer recruitment is complete. The pay policy may need to be reviewed, depending on the recommendations.

In determining any changes to local pay, the methodology requires members to consider various types of qualitative and quantitative data, including:

1. Information about the extent to which corporate objectives have been met.
2. CFO/CE appraisal data as provided by the Chairman.
3. SMT appraisal data as provided by the CFO/CE.
4. Progress on any specific projects that Members identified as high priority.
5. Performance data provided by the CFO/CE relating to SMT.
6. Comparative performance data with other Fire and Rescue Services.
7. Salary benchmarking data in relation to senior manager teams, (Population Band 2), Combined South East Region Fire Services.
8. Financial data about budget provision for pay/reward costs arising from this review.
9. Data about national pay settlements awarded to Gold, Green and Grey Book employees.

For the previous SMT Remuneration and Performance Review, and Annual Report on Employees Bonus Scheme, presented to the Fire Authority in November 2020, legal advice was presented in relation to non-payment of performance related pay for SMT.

Bonus payments have not been paid to SMT members or Merit awards to employees, in the previous four years, as a result of financial constraints.

Privacy and security implications:

The Authority's Standing Orders provide, at D16, that "If any question arises at a Meeting of the Authority as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation, or conditions of service or as to the conduct of a particular person employed or formerly employed by the Authority, the Chairman shall move a motion that shall immediately be put without debate to exclude the public under Section 100A(4) and Schedule 12A paragraph 1 of the Local Government Act 1972." **Duty to collaborate:**

Relevant market rates across the Thames Valley and Nationally are reviewed as part of the process. Senior management processes, such as collaborative succession planning, are under consideration.

There may be an opportunity in future to use one external independent consultant to review senior remuneration across the Thames Valley Services, particularly if we are able to align pay policy statements.

Health and safety implications: There are no Health and Safety impacts.

Environmental implications: There are no Environmental impacts.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

Decisions relating to senior management pay are set out in the annual Pay policy statement which is equality impact assessed.

As part of gender pay reporting requirements, pay which includes performance related pay and bonuses are reported. Any anomalies in pay and performance related pay/bonuses are reviewed and acted upon. Gender pay action plans are in place to ensure male and female employees are treated equally and fairly. Ethnicity pay is not a statutory reporting requirement, work is being undertaken in this area.

Since the Director of People and Organisational Development left the Service in August 2019, there have been no female members on Strategic Management Board. SMT include three posts, not included in this review; they are covered under local terms and conditions - the Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO, Head of Human Resources and Deputy Director of Finance and Assets. This increased the diversity of SMT. Protected characteristics for SMT and across the Service are monitored and plans are in place to improve the diversity of the service.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group reviews progress against EDI objectives on a regular basis, and these are reported to the Fire Authority. The 2020 – 2025 EDI objectives were approved at the June 2020 Fire Authority meeting. An annual update of progress against the objectives is presented to the Fire Authority, the last of which was in June 2023.

The People Strategy 2020 – 2025, was approved at the October 2020 Fire Authority; EDI forms part of the strategy. The annual update was presented to the October 2023 Fire Authority.

The results of the biennial Culture survey, which took place in January 2022 have been cascaded through the Service to inform improvements. The next survey is due in January 2024. It will take place annually thereafter.

An Equal Pay audit was undertaken by an external organisation. It was presented to the 21 July 2021 Overview and Audit Committee. A pay and allowances review is due to be undertaken.

An equality impact assessment (Appendix 3) has been written which shows neutral impacts across SMT and employees. Those on lower salaries could be impacted by not receiving a merit award, however these have not been paid for many years and are not contractual. Wellbeing support is in place for all employees.

Consultation and communication:

To ensure transparency, remuneration including performance related payments are published on the BMKFA website. This is in line with statutory requirements.

The Pay policy is updated, presented to the Fire Authority for approval and published on an annual basis.

Members of SMT do not play a part in the pay review process and are not present at the meeting where payments are discussed. Previously, following the Executive Committee meeting, the CFO reviews each SMT member's performance and makes an informed decision as to whether to award a performance related payment. This is communicated in writing to the SMT member.

Previously and in line with procedure, the Executive Committee makes the decision as to whether the CFO should receive a performance related payment, based on performance during the previous year.

Background papers:

Background: The members of SMT included in the review are:

- Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
- Chief Operating Officer/Deputy Chief Fire Officer
- Director of Finance and Assets
- Director of Legal and Governance
- Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience
- Head of Protection, Assurance and Development

The SMT methodology recognises that there are a range of monetary and non-monetary options for Members to consider, which include attending development opportunities, incorporated salary rises, non-incorporated performance related pay/bonuses, pay agreements that span a number of years and no change to existing reward packages.

Remuneration principles are part of the Authority's current Pay Policy Statement. The principle of self-funding linked to efficiencies and performance is central to the Authority's reward and remuneration philosophy.

Senior Staff Salary Information (published on BMKFA website)

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/fire-authority/financial-information/senior-staff-salary-information/>

Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-and-rescue-national-framework-for-england--2>

Gender Pay Gap report

[Gender Pay Gap Report - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap-report/)

Pay policy

Executive Committee, 15 November 2023 | Item 7 – Senior Management Team Remuneration and Performance Review, and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme

[Pay Policy Statement - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk)

[South East Employers pay information](https://seemp.co.uk/free-resources/latest-on-pay/)

<https://seemp.co.uk/free-resources/latest-on-pay/>

Workforce Development Update – Succession Planning, Executive Committee 15 September 2021

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/09/item-9-workforce-development-ec-150921.pdf/>

Standing Orders for the Authority and its Committee, June 2021

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/01/fire-authority-standing-orders-updated-june-2021.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
Annex A	SMT Remuneration and Performance Review and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme	TBC
Appendix 1	Comparative Data of Fire Authorities Council Tax 2022/2023 (source Council Tax Requirement Forms)	
Appendix 2	SMT Performance and Achievements	
Appendix 3	Equality Impact Assessment	

Senior Management Team Remuneration and Performance Review, and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA)

Report to the Executive Committee 15 November 2023

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information for Members' consideration in their review of the corporate and individual performance of the Senior Management Team (SMT), and whether a performance related payment would be appropriate. A local pay review is conducted annually, and any changes are normally effective from the preceding January. The last remuneration review was in November 2022.
- 1.2 The senior management posts under consideration in this review are:
- Chief Fire Officer / Chief Executive
 - Chief Operating Officer / Deputy Chief Fire Officer
 - Director of Finance and Assets
 - Director of Legal and Governance
 - Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience
 - Head of Protection, Assurance and Development
- 1.3 SMT members are contracted under the National Joint Council (NJC) for Brigade Managers of Fire and Rescue Services Constitution and Scheme of Conditions of Service, known as the "Gold Book" for pay purposes. This involves a two-track approach for determining levels of pay:
- National Pay - At national level, the NJC annually reviews the level of pay increase applicable to Principal Officers
 - Local Pay - The NJC agreement also requires Fire and Rescue Authorities to review Principal Officers' salary levels on an annual basis
- 1.4 To support Members in their considerations, account has been taken of the pay context in which the fire service operates, conditions of employment, local methodology for conducting a pay review, pay policy, financial position, performance data compared with other Fire Authorities (Council Tax precept), and salary benchmarking.

- 1.5 Context and Service performance data has been drawn from management reports to the Fire Authority (FA) and from published Council Tax Requirement Forms. SMT Performance and Achievements can be seen in **Appendix 2**.
- 1.6 Overall, the data presented continues to reflect a strong and effective leadership team that ensures efficient deployment of assets and operational outputs. There is a wide provision of services to the community and proactive engagement with external partners.
- 1.7 This is against a challenging year in 2022/2023 with numerous financial pressures faced by the Authority. Inflation peaked at over 11% and pay awards agreed by the National Joint Council were higher than budgeted. The Authority was able to cover this additional cost in-year through existing one-off business rates funding and reversal of provisions which were no longer needed. The Fire sector was also given precept flexibility to raise precepts by £5 which was approved in February 2023 which will contribute towards these pressures in future years.
- 1.8 The cost of providing the BMKFA compared to other Fire Services in 2022/2023 is currently one of the lowest in the country in Band D equivalent Council Tax. (**Appendix 1**).
- 1.9 Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) saw an increase in the number of incidents they attend during 2022/2023, when compared to the average of the previous five-year period (April 2017 to March 2022). The average number of incidents attended (excluding co-responder incidents) was 7028, compared with 7567 in 2022/2023, an increase of 7.7 per cent. BFRS also attended 596 co-responder incidents during 2022/2023. Notable improvements included; a reduction of accidental dwelling fires by 11 per cent and a reduction of chimney fires by 9 per cent.

2 Background and context to pay and remuneration

- 2.1 The NJC for Brigade Managers Salaries and Numbers Survey 2019 was published by the LGA on 29 October 2019. This covered pay, gender, ethnic origin, age and use of Gold Book rates by Fire Authorities that do not employ Brigade Managers on Gold Book terms and conditions. A link to this report is on the South East Employers (SEE) website <https://seemp.co.uk/free-resources/latest-on-pay/>

- 2.2 The Local Government Transparency Code 2015, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, seeks to ensure local people can access data including salary levels for senior employees. A link to this published data is available on the BMKFA website with a list of responsibilities, details of bonuses and 'benefits in kind' for all employees earning over £50k.
- 2.3 The Localism Act, 2011 requires authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement showing the dispersion of pay (including variable pay, use of performance related pay, bonuses, allowances and cash value of benefits in kind) and the ratio of pay showing the relationship between the remuneration of Chief Officers and other employees, known as a 'pay multiple'. A maximum pay multiple of 20:1 was proposed in the Hutton Report Review of Fair Pay in the public sector, 2011.
- 2.4 Government guidance regarding expectations was published in May 2018, 'Fire and Rescue National Framework for England'. This outlined high level expectations to promote public safety and the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Fire and Rescue Authorities.
- 2.5 There are ongoing discussions with the Home Office and devolved administrations about additional funding across UK Fire Services.
- 2.6 At the 22 March 2023 Executive Committee, Members agreed a 7 per cent increase effective 1 January 2022 and 5 per cent increase effective 1 January 2023 for Gold Book employees.
- 2.7 The National Living Wage (NLW) may present a challenge for local authorities in planning for future pay policies as it may impact on established pay structures and pay differentials. However, Firefighter pay is established at a national level and is not affected by the NLW levels.
- 2.8 Gender Pay gap reports and action plans have been presented to the FA, in line with legislation. The Authority is committed to working towards attracting, developing and retaining a more diverse workforce and to reduce the gender pay gap further.

3 Financial Position

- 3.1 A number of initiatives and services are being provided to the local community, which have been delivered with one of the lowest Council Tax

Band D levels for Fire Services in the country. This is shown in the Council Tax Requirement Form statistics relating to 2022/2023 in **Appendix 1**.

- 3.2 BMKFA provides more services without passing the cost to the taxpayer. Collaboration with partners across the region has increased. Examples are:
- attending medical emergencies as co-responders
 - a record number of Fire and Wellness visits have been completed
 - increased flexibility and modernisation of working arrangements maximising the use of resources
 - youth engagement
 - continuing to support the wider health agenda
 - reinforcing fire safety awareness and training in light of the tragic Grenfell Tower fire
 - collaborative procurement
- 3.3 The financial performance for 2022/2023 was reported to the Executive Committee on 12 July 2023. The net revenue budget 2022/2023 was £33.480m. Managers had proactively developed resilient models to meet known risk and demand levels, whilst maintaining response standards. The £5 precept flexibility approved in 2022/2023 has been utilised to increase the operational establishment from 280 to 300. HR have been proactively carrying out recruitment drives to attract and recruit to our operational establishment. The provisional outturn figure for the year was a net underspend of £0.607m.
- 3.4 The most recent Budget Monitoring Performance April – July 2023 report dated 13 September 2023 has included within its budget the 5 per cent pay award in January and July 2023.
- 3.5 The Council Tax precept must be considered in regard to the Services financial position. As part of the 2022/23 financial settlement, the government provided the lowest charging quartile of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) with the flexibility to increase their band D precepts by £5 in 2022/23 without the need to hold a referendum. This was to assist those FRAs in addressing immediate pressures and to maintain a sustainable income baseline for future years. Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service were included within these 8 FRA's and the Fire Authority approved the increase in Council tax precept by £5.

4 Proposal

- 4.1 There has been a continued demonstration of success in workforce reform, operational delivery, prudential financial and asset management, and growing partnership working to deliver a range of services to the community.
- 4.2 Engagement year on year from the rest of the workforce to demonstrate higher levels of performance, and which is recognised by senior management, is good.
- 4.3 However, due to continued financial constraints it is recommended that:
- 1 Performance related pay and bonus payments are not paid to the Senior Management Team in the current financial year.
 - 2 The SMT methodology is reviewed once the Chief Fire Officer recruitment process is complete.

Comparative data of Fire Authorities Council Tax Precept 2022/2023 (source Council Tax Requirement Forms)

	Average Band D Equivalent Council Tax Precept 2022/2023 (£)
Fire and Rescue Authorities	
West Midlands	68.03
Northamptonshire PCC-FRA	68.20
Buckinghamshire Fire Authority	72.16
West Yorkshire	72.18
Berkshire	73.95
Leicestershire	74.29
Cambridgeshire	74.97
Essex PCC-Fire	75.33
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	75.43
North Yorkshire PCC-FRA	75.61
Lancashire	77.27
South Yorkshire	77.58
Avon	77.95
Dorset and Wiltshire	79.43
Staffordshire PCC-FRA	80.35
Derbyshire	80.84
Cleveland	81.86
Kent	82.35
Cheshire	82.48
Merseyside	83.61
Nottinghamshire	84.57
Tyne and Wear	87.35
Hereford and Worcester	89.40
Humberside	90.11
Devon and Somerset	91.79
East Sussex	99.37
Bedfordshire	104.45
Shropshire	106.27
Durham	109.69

SMT Performance and Achievements

The Corporate Plan was presented to and approved at the June 2020 FA meeting, it included recommendations from the 2020 – 2025 Public Safety Plan and the January 2020 Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Inspection. Further updates have since been presented to the FA on the Corporate Plan, HMICFRS.

The Corporate Plan outlines the strategic objectives and enablers and scheduled key work programmes arising from the Public Safety Plan. The focus is to equip the Service to meet future challenges, respond to changes in demand and risk to the community, and reduce operating costs in line with planned reductions in government funding.

Objectives focus on:

- Preventing incidents
- Protecting homes, buildings and businesses
- Allocating assets and resources according to risk and demand
- Providing value for money and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and good practice

Enabled by:

- People
- Information management systems and processes
- Assets and equipment

Successful implementation is critical to the achievement of the savings required by the 2022/2023 to 2026/2027 Medium Term Financial Plan. The plan will be underpinned by more detailed Directorate Plans.

The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/2023 to 2026/2027 identifies the financial resources required to deliver the specific aims and objectives as set out in the Public Safety Plan.

Directorates review performance against action plans and monitor progress against agreed performance indicators. Overall performance is scrutinised by FA Members at the Overview and Audit Committee.

Particular achievements include:

- Development of technological work streams to meet resourcing requirements, the Workforce planning group has achieved the target in excess of 300 Firefighters and the applications for Supervisory managers are at their highest level

Annex A

- Exceeding the national public sector target of 2.3 per cent Apprenticeship new starts annually
- Armed Forces Gold Covenant achieved
- Developed and embedding flexible, resilient and innovative resourcing models
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives refreshed to continue strong focus on embedding EDI values across the service
- The pay multiples in the 2023/2024 Pay Policy shows the continuing trend of pay restraint between the highest and lowest paid employees
- SMT members continue to be developed in a range of different ways, for example high level external qualifications, demonstrating that remuneration is being considered in ways other than pay.
- With the Bank of England interest rates rising a number of times during 2022/23, the Finance team were able to invest and achieve higher investment returns than originally budgeted. The budget was £0.030m at the start of the financial year, however the actual return on investment achieved by the Finance team was £0.328m

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Linked documents: Equality Impact Assessment Guidance note



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1: Overview information

Name of activity / change / project:	Senior Management Team Remuneration and Performance Review and Annual Report on Employee Bonus Scheme
Directorate/department:	Human Resources
Name(s) of person(s) completing the assessment	Anne Stunell, Head of Human Resources
Date of commencement of assessment:	18/09/2023

2: What is the aim and purpose of the activity / change / project you are assessing?

Please refer to the terms of reference, pay policy and report and appendices for the senior management team remuneration and performance review and annual report on employee bonus scheme report.

3: Who will be affected by the activity / change / project, and how? Consider members of the public, employees, partner organisations etc.

- Members of Senior Management Team (SMT) covered under NJC for Brigade Manager and "Gold Book" - Chief Fire Officer, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Director of Finance and Assets, Director of Legal and Governance, Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience, and Head of Protection, Assurance and Development
- Current employees not covered by the above criteria, eligible for an employee bonus under the pay policy
- Future applicants

4: What information is already available that tells you what impact the activity / change / project has/will have on people? (*please reference*) Consider quantitative and qualitative data, consultation, research, complaints etc. What does this information tell you?

- Senior Staff Salary information published on BMKFA website, refreshed annually
- Fire and Rescue National Framework for England, 2018
- SMT succession report, Fire Authority, June 2020
- Gender Pay Gap reports, Executive Committees
- Annual Pay Policy Fire Authority meetings
- Equal Pay audit, Overview and Audit, July 2021
- Workforce Development Update, Executive Committee, September 2021
- Fire Authority Minutes, September 2021
- Future SMT succession plan report, Fire Authority, June 2022

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- EDI Objectives, Fire Authority, June 2023
- SMT succession reports, Executive Committee, July and September and October Fire Authority 2023

Bonuses have not been paid to SMT for a number of years, this has been approved by the Executive Committee in each respective year.

Merit awards have not been paid to employees for four years, this is due to financial constraints.

The impact on SMT contract wording was reviewed as part of the process.

The pay policy includes procedures on SMT remuneration, bonuses and employee merit awards. It is approved by the Fire Authority on an annual basis (February).

Gender pay report is presented to the Executive Committee in March every year, it shows progress and actions for the future.

The Equal Pay audit showed no pay issues.

The Head of Human Resources, Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO and Deputy Director of Finance and Assets are not included in the SMT remuneration review as they are covered by local terms and conditions; their protected characteristics mean SMT is more diverse, than it was in the past.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Objectives 2020 – 2025 are presented to the Fire Authority on an annual basis, they include workforce demographics data

5: Does the activity/change have the potential to impact differently on individuals in different groups? Complete the table below by ✓ the likely impact.

Assessment of impact on groups in **bold** is a legal requirement. Assessment of impacts on groups in *italics* is not a legal requirement, however it will help to ensure that your activity does not have unintended consequences.

The impacts listed below relate solely to potential applicants to the roles, there will be a neutral impact of the proposals on our communities in terms of protected characteristics. There will be a positive impact on our communities in terms of public safety.

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Protected characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Rationale for decision (Use action plan if negative)
Individuals of different ages			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Disabled individuals			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individuals transitioning from one gender to another			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individuals who are married or in civil partnerships			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Pregnancy, maternity and new parents			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individuals of different race			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will

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				have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individuals of different religions or beliefs			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individual's gender identity			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
Individual's sexual orientation			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
<i>Individuals living in different family circumstances</i>			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
<i>Individuals in different social circumstances</i>			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.

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<i>Different employee groups</i>			X	The recommendations, should they be approved by the Executive Committee will have the same impact on all members of SMT and employees.
<i>Other, please specify</i>		X		Employees on a lower salary may be impacted more by not receiving a merit award, due to the cost of living, energy process etc increasing. The merit awards have not been paid for a number of years and are not contractual. A set process is followed (see Pay Policy 2023) The majority of employees did not receive a merit award, when they were taking place. SMT oversee the process for consistency.

6: What further research or consultation is needed to check the impact/potential impact of the activity/change/project on different groups? If needed, how will you gather additional information and from whom?

A report is presented to the Executive Committee on an annual basis, research is undertaken as part of the report, against background and context, financial position, comparative data of Fire Authorities Council Tax precept, SMT performance and achievements.

One of the recommendations is to review the SMT methodology once the Chief Fire Officer recruitment process is complete.

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7: Following your research, considering all the information that you now have, is there any evidence that the activity/change/project is impacting/will impact differently or disproportionately on some group of people?

All SMT employees are treated the same, they have not been awarded bonuses for a number of years. In the past bonuses were awarded based on achievements.

Merit awards have not been paid to employees for a number of years, in the past they have been paid, following a set procedure (in the Pay policy) and overseen by SMT.

Employees on lower salaries may be impacted by the cost of living increases and not receiving a merit award. They are not contractual and have not been paid for a number of years. Disabled individuals, those on maternity, paternity or new parents or carers may have higher living costs less disposable income / associated with their circumstances

8: What amendments will you make/have been made to the activity/change/project as a result of the information you have? If a negative effect has been identified, how could it/has it been lessened, does the original plan need changing?

The report will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval.

Wellbeing arrangements are in place for all employees, for example, Employee Relations Team, Welfare Officer, Occupational Health, The Firefighters Charity, Employee Assistance Programme and Mental Wellbeing Support Officers.

Articles are published on the intranet and on noticeboards at stations and Headquarters on mental wellbeing support that is in place.

Financial Wellbeing articles are published on the intranet and meetings undertaken with external organisations on further support and collaboration.

Support Services employees can request flexible/hybrid working to support their own/family circumstances.

Employees are encouraged to speak to their manager or Human Resources about any concerns they have, so the right support can be sourced.

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9: After these amendments (if any) have been made, is/will there still be a negative impact on any groups?

Yes – please explain below

No – go to section 11

All employees are treated the same regardless of their protected characteristics, a negative impact may affect some individuals, support is in place for them, please see above

10: Can continuing or implementing the proposed activity/change/project, without further amendment, be justified legally? If so, how?

Yes, the Executive Committee considers the report, before approving it.

11: How can you ensure that any positive or neutral impact is maintained?

The position is reviewed on an annual basis by the Executive Committee as per the Pay policy.

Support is in place for employees throughout the year.

12: How will you monitor and review the impact of the activity/change/project once it has been implemented?

The position is reviewed on an annual basis by the Executive Committee as per the Pay policy.

13: Sign off

Name of department head / project lead	Anne Stunell, Head of Human Resources
Date of EIA sign off:	TBC
Date(s) of review of assessment:	Pending Executive Committee 15 November 2023 approval of recommendations

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14. Action Plan - the table below should be completed to produce an action plan for the implementation of proposals to:

- Lower negative impacts
- Ensure the negative impacts are legal under anti-discriminatory law
- Provide an opportunity to promote equality, equal opportunity and improve relations within equality target groups i.e., increase
- the positive impact

Area of impact	Changes proposed	Timescales	Resource implications	Comments
Those on lower salaries	Ensure ongoing support is in place for individuals. Continue to promote support in place	Ongoing	Human Resources Mental Wellbeing Support Officers Employees Managers	Monitor ongoing

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