

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



Director of Legal & Governance, Graham Britten  
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Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive  
Jason Thelwell

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To: The Members of the Executive Committee

14 March 2022

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS  
AND PUBLIC**

Please note the content of  
Page 2 of this Agenda Pack

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held at the **BLUE LIGHT HUB, 3 THORNBURY, WEST ASHLAND, MILTON KEYNES, MK6 4BB** on **WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2022 at 11.00 AM** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

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

Graham Britten  
Director of Legal and Governance

**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 Lesley Clarke OBE

Councillors: Christensen, Hall, Hopkins, Lambert, Marland, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 9 February 2022 (Item 2) **(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. Gender Pay Gap 2021**

To consider Item 6 **(Pages 17 - 40)**

**7. Funding Phase 2 Leadership & Management Development Programme**

To consider item 7 **(Pages 41 - 50)**

**8. On-Call Firefighter Update**

To receive a presentation.

**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 minutes contain information relating to any individual; and Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as the 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.

**10. Exempt Minutes**

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 9 February 2022 (Item 10)

**11. Date of the Next Meeting**

To note that the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Wednesday 13 July 2022 at 10 am.

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

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Minutes of the Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2022 at 10.00 AM.

**Present:** Councillors Christensen (part), Clarke OBE, Darlington (substitution for Marland), Hall (part), Hopkins, McLean, and Walsh

**Officers:** J Thelwell (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) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

**Remotely:** M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer) S Tuffley (Head of Covid-19 Preparedness and Response), S Wells (Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience), M Hussey (Principal Accountant)

**Apologies:** Councillors Lambert and Marland

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>

## **EX26 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes and the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 17 November 2021, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## **EX27 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor McLean declared an interest in Item 6 - Great Holm Update as he was a Member of the Development Control Committee for Milton Keynes Council.

## **EX28 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

A Member asked for an update on minute EX16 - Immediate Detriment Framework and was advised by the Deputy Director of Finance and Assets that there were 7 'Category 1' cases and 5 'Category 2' cases being processed.

A Member asked a question regarding EX19 – Exemption from Standing Orders Relating to Contracts: Wide Area and Local Area Network (WAN/LAN) Provision – if the Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO could email Members the details of the cost of contract as advised at the last meeting and was advised that this would be done.

## **EX29**

### **GREAT HOLM UPDATE**

The Director of Finance and Assets gave Members an update on the plans for the Great Holm former fire station and the public consultation that started earlier this year. The plans were for a 75-bed care home on the site, designed to cater for a range of care needs including personal nursing, dementia, and end of life care. The care home would follow very closely the existing footprint of the building. The site would utilise the existing access from Haddon, but it would be widened to ensure better visibility for those coming and going. The landscaping would be improved and much of the existing planting would be retained. There would be 32 parking spaces, including 2 disabled spaces and an area for vehicles to turn to allow vehicles to exit forward. The building would be a mix of three and four stories.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that the public consultation started earlier this month and was still ongoing. The final draft of the planning application would be submitted to the Authority by the end of the month (as stated in the contract). It would then be submitted to the planning authority. It was hoped that planning consent would be received by the end of May 2022, with a view to starting on site in August. Once the site was cleared, building would commence towards the end of 2022, aiming to get practical completion in quarter 1 2024 and looking to open in Summer 2024.

Members discussed residents and the Parish Council's concerns regarding parking and access. The former emergency access roads onto the A5 and Portway would no longer be required and how they would be reinstated to blend into the landscape. Another concern of residents was the operating hours of the build and how the site would be accessed; and the current ongoing graffiti on the hoarding surrounding the site. A Member asked about the provision of electric car charging points in the car park, and access to public to transport for staff and visitors.

The Director of Finance and Assets would update the Committee on the above points at a future meeting.

The Chairman asked that all Councillors in the area be kept up to date.

(Councillor Hall joined the meeting)



**EX30****BUDGET MONITORING REPORT APRIL – NOVEMBER 2021**

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets presented the budget as at 30 November 2021. The Authority was currently projecting an overall underspend of £68k and was not projecting to use any of its reserves. This was predominantly due to an additional rates rebate of £256k, additional funding seen in year of £329k and underspend within employee costs. In terms of underspend seen within direct employee costs, these were predominantly due to pension changes and vacant positions. As part of building the budget for the next financial year, officers had reviewed the establishment and changed all operational staff onto the 2015 pension scheme. Furthermore, the ratio of operational staff that had been budgeted for as competent vs development pay scales and made it more reflective of actual posts in place, had been reviewed. The most current position was that the Authority was looking to use about £95k of reserves.

A Member asked as the Authority had recently undertaken a zero-based budget exercise, when would it be done again and was advised that probably around 2024/25, as it didn't add benefit to do it every year.

A Member asked about inflation and was advised that as Members were aware, inflation had gone up to approximately 5.4% and the target was 2%. Where it had been identified for example utilities, it had been built into the budget. The Procurement Team also did an excellent job renegotiating contracts and getting fixed prices. If any risks materialised, the Authority would look to mitigate it with additional funding or reallocated funding.

A Member asked what the Authority's rate of inflation was and was advised that it was not possible to give an exact amount, but the pay award was factored into the budget planning assumptions at the level of a 2% increase, but in terms of contracts it would vary.

RESOLVED -

1. That the provisional outturn forecast for the Authority as of 30 November 2021 be noted.

**EX31****THE PRUDENTIAL CODE, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION**

The Principal Accountant advised Members that this was a technical paper and was presented annually to this Committee to approve the recommendations, before final approval of the Authority. The Prudential Code was established to ensure the capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions were taken in accordance with good professional practice. The Prudential Indicators presented here

demonstrate that the current plans for capital investment meet those criteria and present an acceptable level of risk to the Authority. Minimum Revenue Provision was a statutory charge to the General Fund (revenue budget), which ensured that the Authority had sufficient cash balances to repay borrowing upon maturity, reducing the refinancing risk. Since 2015/16, there had been sufficient funds set aside to cover the repayment of the long-term borrowing; however, early repayment of those loans was currently not an option due to the prohibitive penalties on early repayment. There were also no plans for additional borrowing according to the medium term financial plan.

A Member noted that level of capital expenditure was reducing significantly, which may be correct financially, but was the Authority able to maintain operational services with the reduction.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that as Members were aware, the Authority had been campaigning for precept flexibility, and one of the points noted by HMI in their report was that the capital reserves were low, so the capital programme had been built on the low level of reserves. The Authority needed to do a certain amount of basic property maintenance and replace a number of vehicles each year. If Councillors approve the additional precept flexibility, the Authority could address the issue raised by HMI and use that money initially to put back into the capital reserves and look to increase expenditure when possible. The Property Strategy would be refreshed this year.

The Chairman advised Members that this was one of the topics that would be discussed at an upcoming Member's planning day, ensuring that the Service was fit for the future and more productive than it was in the past.

The Chief Fire Officer advised Members that what officers didn't want to do was pre-empt the Members' decision on whether they approve the precept flexibility, but they would be bringing forward to Members ideas and thoughts of how they look at the Service moving forward. This would be based on a number of matters including performance, the service and response times. It would also be based on the use of current fire stations and whether they were in the right place etc. There would also be a broader discussion about how the additional money would be spent, if Members approve it, over the next two to three years.

RESOLVED –

That the Executive Committee approve the recommendations below for submission to the Fire Authority.

- 1) the Prudential Indicators for 2022/23
- 2) the Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement

**EX32 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) 2022/23-2026/27**

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets firstly advised Members that there was a line of text missing that should have preceded the recommendations that was erroneously omitted from the paper, which should have read “It is recommended that the Authority be recommended to:” Secondly, Appendix 1 & 2 had been updated following more accurate council tax and rates collection figures provided by the respective billing authorities.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the main report Annex A presented the proposed revenue and capital Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the financial years 2022/23 to 2026/27. The MTFP was closely linked to the Financial Strategy update provided in December 2021, which was the link between the organisation’s long-term service objectives and its financial capacity. The Authority’s long-term Service objectives were set out in the Public Safety Plan (PSP) and Corporate Plan.

The final settlement was published on 7 February 2022 and was due to be debated tomorrow. One key change this year from previous settlements, was that the government had provided the lowest charging quartile of fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) 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. The Authority was included within these eight FRA’s and had the option to increase Council tax precept by £5.

The Service’s most recent report dated December 2021 by HMICFRS, noted in its summary, “that they were encouraged by the service’s work to improve value for money, but still have concerns about the service’s funding model as its limited reserves are being used to supplement funding of its response functions.” If Members were to approve a £5 increase in precept, this would result in approximately £1.1m additional funding compared to a precept increase of 2%. The additional funding would predominantly be utilised to recruit additional firefighters to build its response functions. Furthermore, the Authority would be able to increase the revenue contributions to capital which would build the reserves that were used for funding the capital programme, in the process addressing another concern raised within the HMICFRS report.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the key assumptions were detailed in Section 4 of Annex A and were based on information received to date. An additional £822m unringfenced services grant would be distributed to all tiers of government. This grant was for 2022/23 only and the government would work with the sector on how they distribute this funding from 2023/24 onwards. The

funding was in recognition of the range of vital services delivered by all tiers of government across the country. Indicative figures show that Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service would receive £0.355m, which had been reflected in its projections under the heading Services Grant.

Council tax collection funds were adversely impacted since the start of the Pandemic whereby the tax base reduce by 0.65% in 2021/22. However, the latest projections show a recovery in the collection fund with a projected growth of 2.19% in the tax base.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised that uncertainty persisted regarding pensions following the ruling in December 2018 that the transitional arrangements introduced for the firefighters' schemes in 2015 were discriminatory. The Executive Committee had adopted the immediate detriment framework in November 2021 and the officers were currently processing claims from members who want to be treated as if they remained on their original pension scheme. It was expected that this would increase the longer-term costs of the firefighters' schemes, although it was not yet possible to quantify the impact.

The Revenue Support Grant/Business Rates for 2022/23 had been revised downwards from £8.000m to £7.826m (a decrease of £174k). Future year's forecasts had been updated to reflect this movement. Previous figures used were taken from the provisional funding settlement which was an estimate and more accurate figures would be provided when billing authorities confirm them.

The Council Tax surplus figure for 2022/23 has been revised downwards from £257k to £222k (a decrease of £35k) as one of the billing authorities had recently confirmed their deficit which was not available at the time of producing the report. Due to these changes, the Revenue Contribution to Capital budget in Appendix 1(a) and 1(b) for 2022/23 had been revised downwards from £1.825m to £1.616m (a net decrease of £209k). The Net Budget Requirement shown in Appendix 1(a) and 1(b) for 2022/23 had therefore also decreased by £209k (from £33.689m to £33.480m).

RESOLVED –

That the Authority be recommended to:

1(a) Note and have due regard to the report and Statement of the Chief Finance Officer (see section 8 of Annex A).

1(b) Approve a Council Tax precept of £72.16 for a band D equivalent property (equal to an increase of 9.6p per week) and the revenue budget as set out in Appendix 1.

1(c) Approve the capital programme as set out in Appendix 2.

1(d) Transfer the £600k from the referendum reserve to the revenue contribution to capital reserve.

**EX33**

**RESPONSE TO THE PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2022 TO 2023: CONSULTATION**

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that this report was for noting, it sets out the Authority's response to the provisional settlement, which was published in December and the final settlement would be laid before Parliament this week. In general terms, the Authority's response, was that it welcomed the settlement proposal. The Authority still needed to be really careful of what it did, and if approved, needed to show that the additional money was being spent wisely. The position was a lot more positive than it had been, giving the Authority the opportunity to invest in the Service, rather than as previously having to manage with fairly limited funding.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that it also covered some other issues around the Services grant, which was a one off. The Services grant was to recognise that all local authorities were stretched, and they all did vital work, so it was recommended that it was kept within local government as well. In particular, the Authority welcomed the additional flexibility around the £5. As the Chairman had said, a lot of work had gone into securing the flexibility and the group leaders had written a letter of thanks to the Fire Minister as he had been very supportive of it and noting the work he had done. The response to the consultation that had been submitted, mirrored very closely the response from the National Fire Chiefs Council.

A Member asked if the Service would stay in the lowest quartile moving forward and was advised by the Director of Finance and Assets, that yes, at present the precept was £67.16, and the national average at the moment was £80, and even if the Authority did successive increases for a number of years, it would still be in the lowest quartile for the next 2-3 years at least.

RESOLVED –

That the response to the consultation be noted.

**EX34**

**TVFCS ICCS CONTRACT AND INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT**

The Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience advised Members that this particular report focused on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) and the report was in two parts. The first part was the Integrated Communication Control System contract (ICCS). When the TVFCS went live in April 2015, there were two ICCS contracts with Capita Secure Information Solutions Limited, which had been entered into by Oxfordshire County Council and Royal Berkshire Fire Authority respectively. However, the TVFCS steady state transition plan

recommended that these two contracts be brought into one single contract, with the term running from April 2017 to January 2021. Within the inter-authority agreement, under clause 17.3 this particular contract should be brought to the respective authorities to agree should an extension be required. There was an extension to this contract that took it through to March 2022, however this decision was not brought before this Authority or others. This was an oversight, the reason for which are detailed within the report and assurances have been provided this will not be repeated again.

The Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience advised Members that at the Executive Committee meeting on 17 November 2021, this contract was being novated to Capital SSS Limited and the sale went through to NEC Software Solutions UK Limited on 3 January 2022. Members also took the decision at the Executive Committee meeting on 15 September 2021, for the Vision 4 mobilising contract to be extended by one year from April 2022 to March 2023. This report was looking to align both the Vision 4 mobilising contract and the ICCS contract.

The Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience advised Members that contained within the Inter-Authority agreement was a review clause. This allowed for each Authority, after the fifth anniversary of the TVFCS going live, the opportunity to consider whether it wished to exercise its right to withdraw from the agreement. If the decision was taken to withdraw, the Authority would have to consider the options available.

The Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience advised Members that following the collaborative partnership in establishing TVFCS, there was compelling evidence that had ensured the Authority continued to provide an effective control room function, which was an integral part of its emergency response capability. As well as allowing the Authority to maintain financial efficiencies, alongside improving resilience and performance, which had enhanced the service to both the public and its operational firefighters.

A Member asked about the need to constantly be monitoring the efficiency of the contract in terms of cost savings and cost efficiencies and also what other options were out there, how would officers propose to undertake that review moving forward.

The Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience advised that Officers would bring forward recommendations to the TVFCS Joint Committee in July 2022 setting out whether to further extend the Vision 4 mobilising and ICCS contracts in line with the agreement, or seek to commence a full replacement.

RESOLVED –

1. That extending the TVFCS DS3000 Integrated Communication Control System (ICCS) contract for one year, from April 2022 to March 2023 be agreed.
2. That Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (the Authority) remains a member and party to the inter authority agreement (IAA) relating to the steady state operation of Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) be agreed.

(Councillor Christensen left the meeting)

### **EX35 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

The Director of Legal and Governance advised Members that as a standalone fire and rescue authority, the Authority has a wide discretion in adopting an annual Scheme of Allowances. The main proviso was that the Authority must have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panels of its two constituent councils. As set out in the executive summary, the Scheme of Allowances had been linked to the NJC 'grey book' annual pay award for firefighters since 2012/13. The application of this index linking had been endorsed annually by the Authority until 2021/22.

Although there had been a grey book 2% pay award effective from 1 July 2020, the Authority agreed in February 2021 to suspend the indexation for the year 2021/22, resulting in a 0% increase in Members' Allowances. If the link to the grey book were to be reinstated for 22/23 this would result in a recommendation to the Authority of an increase of 1.5%.

A draft proposed Scheme of Allowances for the year 2022 to 2023 was appended at Appendix C and showed in the alternative the effect of a 1.5% increase from the current financial year. Regulations require that the Authority makes a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance to each Member of the Authority, which must be the same for every Member of the Authority. The scheme of allowances reflects the requirements in the regulations that allow Members to elect to forgo entitlements or any part of their entitlement to allowances by giving notice to a specified officer.

RESOLVED –

1. That the Authority be recommended to adopt a Scheme for Members' Allowances for 2022/23 (Appendix c) with either
  - a) 0% increase in allowances; or
  - b) 1.5% increase in allowances.

### **EX36 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED –

It was moved and resolved that 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 report and minutes contains 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, at this moment in time, that the need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Director of Finance and Assets, Deputy Director of Finance and Assets, Head of Covid-19 Preparedness and Response and the Principal Accountant left the meeting.

**EX37 INJURY PENSION OVERPAYMENTS**

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

**EX38 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted that the date of the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 23 March 2022 at 10.00am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11.15 AM.





# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 23 March 2022

**Report title:** Gender Pay Gap 2021

**Lead Member:** Councillor Steven Lambert; People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance

**Report sponsor:** Mick Osborne; Chief Operating Officer / Deputy Chief Fire Officer

**Author and contact:** Faye Mansfield; HR Advisory and Development Manager

**Action:** Noting

**Recommendations:**

The content of the Gender Pay Gap Report 2021 is noted and approved for submission to the Governments website (gov.uk) as per reporting requirements.

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**Executive summary:**

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 that came into effect in 2017 requires public sector organisations employing over 250 staff to carry out gender pay gap reporting. In accordance with the Regulations, the Authority is required to annually publish six pieces of prescribed data about the pay and bonuses of male and female workers within the organisation:

1. Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay
2. Median gender pay gap in hourly pay
3. Mean bonus gender pay gap
4. Median bonus gender pay gap
5. Proportion of males and females receiving a bonus payment
6. Proportion of males and females in each pay quartile

This data must be published 'within the period of 12 months beginning with the snapshot date' (Regulation 2(2)). The snapshot date for public sector employers is 31 March each year.

The gender pay gap report, as detailed in Appendix One, details the Authority's gender pay gap as at 31 March 2021. Both the mean (average) and median (mid-point) gender pay gaps have decreased in 2021, which is positive, and takes the Authority's gender pay gap data below the UK national average for 2021. For 2021, the mean gender pay gap is 13.8 per cent and the median gender pay gap is 9.0 per cent. In comparison to 2020, the mean gender pay gap was 18.8 per cent and the median gender pay gap 15.3 per cent.

The gender pay gap is the difference between what males typically earn within the workplace, compared to what females earn, irrespective of role or seniority. It examines the difference in the average pay gap, expressed as a percentage of male earnings. A gender pay gap is not unlawful, it is essentially a reflection of a workforce profile.

In comparison, equal pay is a legal obligation and about unequal rewards for male and females carrying out the same job, similar job or work of equal value, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Organisations can have a gender pay gap without breaching equal pay provisions, and the Authority's gender pay gap is not as a result of any equal pay issues. There is a gender-neutral approach to pay across all levels and roles within the Authority.

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### **Financial implications:**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **Risk management:**

The Authority will comply with the Regulations requiring public sector employers with over 250 staff to publish their gender pay gap data before 30 March each year.

The six pieces of prescribed data within the report will be published on the Government's website (gov.uk) and the full report published on the Authority's external website for a period of three years. Annually publishing the data in line with the Regulations will help the Authority monitor the effectiveness of the actions in reducing the gender pay gap over time.

To mitigate the risk associated with publishing improbable data, our data undergoes internal scrutiny and by providing contextual narrative, it supports the information provided within the report and highlights the activities we are engaging in to address gender imbalance.

### **Legal implications:**

Publishing the annual gender pay gap report ensures compliance with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Whilst the Regulations do not contain any provisions imposing a penalty for non-compliance, failure to disclose this data could result in enforcement action by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or challenge by way of judicial review.

### **Privacy and security implications:**

The report does not include any personally identifiable information.

### **Duty to collaborate:**

Each Thames Valley Fire and Rescue Service has a requirement to report their gender pay gap data. Collaborative actions to reduce the gender pay gap will be considered as part of existing Thames Valley collaboration work.

### **Health and safety implications:**

There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

### **Environmental implications:**

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### **Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications**

Whilst both gender pay and equal pay deal with the disparity of pay within the workplace, it is important to note that gender pay is different from equal pay. The presence of a gender pay gap does not mean the Authority is discriminating against groups of individuals. The Authority is confident this gap does not stem from paying male and female employees differently for the same or equivalent work, i.e. an equal pay issue.

The report has identified the Authority continues to have a gender pay gap, however figures are not expected to reduce significantly within the short to medium term, as the issues driving gender pay gaps require a longer-term commitment.

The Authority strives to increase gender diversity in all areas of the organisation. A particular continuing priority is attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce and having better representation of males and females at all levels across the organisation.

### **Consultation and communication**

Additional to the Fire Authority, other employers, job applicants, trade unions, media and the public will continue to pay close attention to annually published gender pay gap data. Due to the high-profile nature of gender pay, it is important that employees are made aware of the gender pay gap report for this organisation before 30 March 2022. Following approval for publication, the gender pay gap report will be communicated to employees in accordance with usual practice.

Engaging with stakeholders is essential to ensure progress is made against the initiatives to lower the gender pay gap. We will increase engagement and buy-in to what we are trying to achieve and will ensure interventions are evaluated as appropriate.

Annual gender pay gap reports will be presented to the Strategic Management Board and Executive Committee.

### **Background papers:**

Report to Fire Authority held 17 February 2021; BMKFA Pay Policy Principles and Statement 2021/22:

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/02/item-9-pay-policy.pdf/>

Link to Fire Authority approved Gender Pay Gap reports for 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017:

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/?s=gender+pay+gap&submit=>

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2017/9780111153277/schedule/1>

Office of National Statistics. Gender pay gap in the UK 2021:

[Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap)

Report your gender pay gap data(gov.uk):

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-your-gender-pay-gap-data>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Gender Pay Gap Report 2021	



## Introduction

Regulations came into effect in 2017 that requires organisations employing over 250 employees to carry out gender pay gap reporting. The two sets of Regulations introduced mandatory gender pay gap reporting on employers; the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 and the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Reporting) Regulations 2017. Both sets of Regulations are similar, however the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 apply to public sector employers, including fire authorities.

Gender pay gap information must be published within 'the period of 12-months beginning with the snapshot date' (Regulation 2(2)). The snapshot date for public sector employers is 31 March each year.

## What is the gender pay gap?

The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average earnings of males and females, expressed as a percentage of male earnings, e.g. females earn 10 per cent less than males. The gender pay gap should not be confused with equal pay and this is explained in the next section. The gender pay gap is reported on both the mean (average) and median (mid-point) basis.

According to the Office of National Statistics (Source: ONS - Gender pay gap in the UK: 2021), the gender pay gap continues to decline and over the last decade has fallen by approximately a quarter. The data has however been affected by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the impact to the economy, and the suspension of mandatory gender pay gap annual reporting for the 2019-20 period.

In 2021 the UK gender pay gap among all full-time employees was 7.9 per cent, up from 7.0 per cent in 2020. The data for 2021 is still below the gap of 9.0 per cent before the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic in 2019. Among all employees, the UK gender pay gap increased to 15.4 per cent from 14.9 per cent in 2020, below the gap of 17.4 per cent in 2019.

Data from the Office of National Statistics (source: ONS - Annual Survey of Hours and Earning (ASHE)), as detailed below, shows the gender pay gap for median gross hourly earnings in the UK, April 2010 to April 2021. When comparing the gap over this period, it is evident that progress on closing the gender pay gap is really slow and therefore likely to take years to eradicate.

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All	19.8	20.2	19.6	19.8	19.2	19.3	18.2	18.4	17.8	17.4	14.9	15.4
Full-time	10.1	10.5	9.5	10.0	9.6	9.6	9.4	9.1	8.6	9.0	7.0	7.9



There are a number of factors contributing to the UK gender pay gap and these include:

- A higher proportion of males working in senior positions
- A higher proportion of females working in part-time roles (therefore normally earning less than their full-time colleagues)
- Skills gap, lack of training and development opportunities
- Occupational segregation
- Lack of role models
- Family, childcare, home-schooling and caring commitments
- Lack of opportunities for flexible working
- Attitude and culture
- Confidence
- Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the impact of furlough, wages and hour worked

This gender pay gap is based on data at the snapshot date of 31 March 2021, which for the Service in 2021 has decreased 5.0 percentage points to 13.8 per cent (18.8 per cent in 2020), and 5.6 percentage points from the first year of reporting (19.4 per cent in 2017). This is positive and takes the Service 1.6 percentage points below the UK average gender pay gap of 15.4 per cent for 2021. For 2021 the Service's median gender pay gap has also decreased to 9.0 per cent (from 15.3 per cent in 2020).

The Service has identified a number of key areas of activity to lower the gender pay gap. The Service's action plan on addressing the gender pay gap is detailed from page 13 of this report. Whilst the foundations for improvement have been laid through these initiatives, it may be several years before there is any significant and sustained impact on gender parity within pay.

## **Different to equal pay**

Whilst both gender pay and equal pay deal with the disparity of pay females receive within the workplace, it is important to note that the gender pay gap is different to equal pay.

The principle of equal pay is that males and females who carry out the same job, similar jobs or work of equal value, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, should receive equal pay. Equal pay is a legal obligation. Whereas the gender pay gap examines the difference in the average pay gap between males and females expressed as a percentage of male earnings and is not unlawful.

Organisations which are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010 can still have a gender pay gap. This is often due to having more males in senior and highly paid positions and females in lower paid and part-time roles. The gender pay gap is a mechanism by which organisations can examine this data and take positive action to reduce the gender pay gap.



## Equal Pay Audit

An equal pay audit is the most effective way of checking the Service is complying with its equal pay obligations, ensuring it delivers a pay system free from bias. An equal pay audit involves comparing pay of employees doing equal work and has three main purposes:

- to identify any differences in pay between those doing equal work
- to investigate the causes of any differences in pay between those doing equal work, and
- to eliminate instances of unequal pay that cannot be justified

In 2020 an equal pay audit was undertaken within the Service. The snapshot date for the equal pay audit was 1 January 2020. The meaningful comparator data included base salary and 12-months' worth of allowance data for protected characteristics of gender, age, disability and ethnicity. For 2020, in addition to gender, analysis was also undertaken for additional protected characteristics of age, disability and ethnicity.

The equal pay audit confirmed the Service is achieving equitable pay between gender, and the other protected characteristics of age and race, however there was insufficient data on disability to be able to analyse effectively.

## The reality of the gender pay gap

A workforce, which better reflects the diversity of the public, that is flexible, diverse and inclusive, will create a stronger, more enriched and well-informed organisation, able to meet the expectations for a modern Fire and Rescue Service. The Service will attract, retain, develop and motivate talented people from all parts of the community.

The current limited gender diversity within the Fire Service is a national challenge. This is partly due to a lack of understanding about the role and skills required to be a firefighter by potential applicants. By embracing the need for change and consciously recognising this is a historically male-dominated organisation, and by actively seeking to dispel these myths, it will help to break some of the barriers for females considering a career within the Fire Service.

Since 2020 the economic impact of the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has contributed to widening the UK national average gender pay gap and has impacted on working arrangements within many organisations. Whilst the short-term impact of the pandemic has been to increase the UK average gender pay gap, in the longer term it may have helped. For many, the pandemic has been a catalyst to positive changes within the workplace due to the requirements to embrace alternative ways of working.





During the pandemic the Service has faced many challenges in continuing to support and protect the communities of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, in addition to maximising the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees. The Service is committed to harnessing the benefits of flexible working, which has been largely created by the requirement for alternative working arrangements due to the pandemic. By embracing more flexible and responsive ways of working, it is hoped this will lead to greater equality and encourage a more diverse workforce.

The gender pay gap is generally caused by underrepresentation of female employees in higher paid or senior roles. In order to lower the gap attention must be paid to the recruitment, retention and development of females into these areas, and a range of strategies adopted to support this. It is positive to note, that 2021 has seen an increased representation of females in senior roles, with this year seeing the highest representation since first reporting in 2017.

By demonstrating an understanding of the factors contributing to the gender pay gap and committing activity to address the gap, it will ensure over time the gap is reduced and eventually eliminated. In addition, the workforce will better reflect the diversity of the community. Meaningful embedded change takes time, and we recognise this. The Service's ultimate aim is to achieve gender pay parity.

Many of the issues driving pay gaps requires a longer-term view. It has been recognised nationally that the gender pay gap is not going to be fully eliminated within the short to medium term.

## **Importance of recruitment and development**

Job applicants may look at an organisation's gender pay gap as part of their pre-selection process before choosing to work for an employer. To improve the Service's gender pay gap we need to address the attraction and retention of females within the Service and the career progression routes to the higher paid senior Operational and Support Service roles.

The Service has taken positive action to attract and recruit more females into Operational roles. In the longer term, this will assist with lowering the gender pay gap. As the Service nurtures these individuals and supports them through their development and for some, promotions through the ranks to more senior roles, the Service will start to see the impact of this positive action and further reduce and eventually eliminate the gender pay gap.





## Terms and conditions

The Service’s Pay Policy statement is reviewed and updated annually. Its purpose is to provide transparency to the pay policy adopted. The 2021/22 Pay Policy (approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 17 February 2021) sets out levels of and elements of remuneration for 2021/22 to which this report relates.

The majority of employees are employed under contracts with either the terms and conditions of the NJC for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service, 2004 “the Grey Book” incorporated, or with the provisions of the local terms and conditions of Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Scheme of Conditions of Service for Support Services employees.

Pay and allowances differ under each set of terms and conditions. A number of allowances and additional payments are available for Operational employees, for example with the different duty systems, specialist roles, temporary promotions, opportunity to undertake additional hours through the bank system. Whilst some allowances are paid to Support Services employees, the majority are paid to Operational employees, which is the largest group of employees, with the majority being males. This directly influences the gender pay gap.

## What information must be reported

The gender pay gap calculations are drawn from specific data each year and based on full-pay relevant employees. To be included as a full-pay relevant employee, the employee must be:

- Employed on the snapshot date; 31 March each year
- Paid their usual full-pay in the pay period ending on the snapshot date

The table below details the total number of employees in scope for 2021 compared to 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017:

Year	Total number of employees in scope	Males	Females	Total
2021	Full-pay relevant employees	371	92	463
	Relevant employees	404	100	504
2020	Full-pay relevant employees	340	82	422
	Relevant employees	384	93	477
2019	Full-pay relevant employees	353	87	440
	Relevant employees	365	90	455
2018	Full-pay relevant employees	377	78	455
	Relevant employees	392	81	473
2017	Full-pay relevant employees	392	80	472
	Relevant employees	407	81	488

**Full-Pay Relevant Employees** - This is the number of employees who received their normal full-pay within the snapshot date. This informs the mean and



median hourly pay gap calculations and the proportion of employees within the Quartile Pay Bands.

For 2021, the number of full-pay employees increased by 31 males and 10 females. In comparison, for 2020, the number of full-time employees reduced by 13 fewer males and five fewer females.

**Relevant Employees** - This is the number of employees employed by the Service on the snapshot date. This informs the mean and median bonus pay gap calculations. The difference in numbers between relevant and full-pay relevant employees is due to 41 employees not receiving their usual full-pay within the pay period (for 2020 this was 55 employees).

For 2021, the number of relevant employees has increased by 20 males and increased by seven females. In comparison to 2020, the number increased by 19 males and three females.

Since 2017 the number of full-pay relevant employees has increased by 15 per cent for females and decreased by 5.0 per cent for male, and for relevant employees has increased by 23 per cent for females and decreased by 1.0 per cent for males. The change in employee numbers will directly influence the reportable data and the gender pay gap.

Whilst the Service continues to increase the percentage of females employed, for 2021 the gender split for employees shows that overall females continue to be under-represented within the Service. This is due to the under-representation of females in Operational roles rather than in Support Service roles.

Below details the standard information to be disclosed by organisations as part of the gender pay gap reporting as detailed in Schedule 1 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

**Pay:** This refers to the ordinary pay received by each full-pay relevant employee in the pay period at the snapshot date. Ordinary pay includes basic pay, allowances, paid leave and shift premium pay and calculated before deductions are made at source. This data examines:

- The difference in the mean hourly pay between male and female relevant employees as a percentage of male pay
- The difference in the median hourly pay between male and female relevant employees as a percentage of male pay
- The proportion of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands
- Ordinary pay does not include overtime, expenses, benefits in kind, arrears of pay, salary sacrifice schemes (such as childcare), tax credits or redundancy pay.



Ordinary pay, expressed as hourly pay, is used to calculate the mean and median gender pay gaps and the pay period informs the calculation for ordinary pay. For those employees who do not work a consistent working pattern, e.g. 37-hour week, our calculation has been averaged over a 12-week period as per Local Government Association, ACAS and Government Equalities Office guidance.

**Bonus:** Bonuses paid to full-pay relevant employees in the 12-month period ending on the snapshot date (31 March). Year on year bonuses will vary and a small movement could have a big impact on the data. This data examines:

- The difference in the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees in the 12-months before the snapshot date
- The difference in the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees in the 12-months before the snapshot date
- The proportion of male relevant employees who were paid bonus pay and that paid to female relevant employees in the 12-months before the snapshot date



## Reportable data

In accordance with the Regulations, the Service is required to annually publish six pieces of prescribed data about the pay and bonuses of males and females employed by the Service:

### 1. Mean hourly gender pay gap

The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay for male and female full-pay relevant employees, as a percentage.

The mean gap provides an overall indication of the size of the gap. A high mean indicates that the remuneration structure disadvantages female.

The mean (average) gender pay gap for 2021 is 13.8 per cent, this is 5.0 percentage points lower than 2020. Male hourly pay has decreased by 2.8 percentage points (54 pence) and female hourly pay has increased by 3.2 percentage points (50 pence). This is the first year that female hourly pay has increased whilst male hourly pay has decreased. Whilst 2021 has the highest hourly pay for females since reporting, it is still lower than the hourly rate of pay males have received over the same reporting period.

Year	Male hourly pay £	Female hourly pay £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %
2021	18.87	16.27	2.60	13.8
2020	19.41	15.77	3.64	18.8
2019	18.18	15.43	2.75	15.1
2018	17.36	14.47	2.89	16.6
2017	18.10	14.59	3.51	19.4

In comparison, for 2020 the mean (average) gender pay gap was 18.8 per cent. This meant that male employees earned £3.64 per hour more than females.

### 2. Median hourly gender pay gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay for male and female full-pay relevant employees.

The median gender pay gap for 2021 is 9.0 per cent or £1.53 per hour. As with the mean gender pay gap, female median hourly pay has increased by 2.0 percentage points and male hourly pay has decreased by 5.0 percentage points in the same period. This resulted in an overall decrease of 6.3 percentage points for the median gender pay gap for 2021.



Year	Male hourly pay £	Female hourly pay £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %
2021	16.93	15.40	1.53	9.0
2020	17.83	15.10	2.73	15.3
2019	16.55	14.83	1.72	10.4
2018	16.16	14.26	1.90	11.8
2017	15.74	14.07	1.67	10.6

In comparison, for 2020 the median gender pay gap was 15.3 per cent. This meant that male employees earned £2.73 per hour more than females.

### 3. Mean bonus gap

The difference between the mean bonus paid to male relevant employees and female relevant employees.

For 2021, the mean bonus gap is 100 per cent. This has meant that only males received a bonus payment during this reporting period.

Year	Male bonus pay £	Female bonus pay £	Pay gap £	Pay gap % *
2021	0.93	0	0.93	100
2020	13.29	1.29	12.00	90.2
2019	83.81	167.89	-84.08	-100.3
2018	235.71	327.16	-91.45	-38.8
2017	230.04	354.01	-123.97	-53.9

*\* Negative pay gaps occur when females earn more on average, positive pay gaps are used when males earn more on average*

In comparison, for 2020 the mean bonus gap was 90.2 per cent. This meant that male employees received on average a bonus of £12.00 more than females on bonus payments.

### 4. Median bonus gap

The difference between the median bonus paid to male relevant employees and female relevant employees.

For 2021 the median bonus gap is 100 per cent, which equates to £125.00. This translates as males only receiving a bonus payment during this reporting period.

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2021



Year	Male bonus pay £	Female bonus pay £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %
2021	125	0	125	100
2020	125	120	5	4.0
2019	750	675	75	10
2018	1000	750	250	25
2017	500	1000	-500	-100

In comparison, for 2020 the median bonus gap was 4.0 per cent or £5.00. This meant that male employees received a bonus equating to £5.00 more than female employees.

## 5. Bonus Proportions

The proportion of male and female employees who were paid a bonus during the relevant 12-month pay period:

Year	Gender	Number of employees	%
2021	Males	3	0.74
	Females	0	0
2020	Males	7	1.82
	Females	1	1.08
2019	Males	32	8.8
	Females	18	20.0
2018	Males	38	9.7
	Female	22	27.2
2017	Male	44	10.8
	Female	20	24.7

In the 2021 reporting period no bonus/merit award payments were made to employees, however Long Service Award payments are included in the bonus payment calculations and were paid to three males within this reporting period.

## 6. Quartile Pay Bands

The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower (L), lower middle (LM), upper middle (UM) and upper (U) quartiles and the equally distributed pay bands.

To determine quartiles, employees are ranked in order of their hourly rate of pay; from lowest to highest, and divided into four equal groups, according to the guidelines.

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2021



For the fifth consecutive year, the highest proportion of females is within in the lower quartile, representing 42.4 per cent of the total female workforce. In comparison, the percentage of the total male workforce in the lower quartile is 20.5 per cent.

For the first year, the highest proportion of males is no longer within the upper quartile, but rather the upper middle quartile, representing 27 per cent of the total male workforce. In comparison to females, the upper middle quartile has the lowest representation of females, at 17.4 per cent.

In 2021 there has been an increased representation of females in senior roles, with this year seeing the highest representation since reporting, at 18.5 per cent.

For 2021

Quartile	Male	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Female	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Total quartile
Upper (U)	99	26.7	85.3	17	18.5	14.7	116
Upper Middle (UM)	100	27.0	86.2	16	17.4	13.8	116
Lower Middle (LM)	96	25.9	82.8	20	21.7	17.2	116
Lower (L)	76	20.5	66.1	39	42.4	33.9	115
Total	371	-	-	92	-	-	463

For 2020:

Quartile	Male	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Female	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Total quartile
Upper (U)	94	27.6	88.7	12	14.6	11.3	106
Upper Middle (UM)	90	26.5	85.7	15	18.3	14.3	105
Lower Middle (LM)	90	26.5	85.7	15	18.3	14.3	105
Lower (L)	66	19.4	62.3	40	48.8	37.7	106
Total	340	-	-	82	-	-	422

# Gender Pay Gap Report 2021



For 2019:

Quartile	Male	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Female	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Total quartile
Upper (U)	92	27.1	86.0	15	17.6	14.0	107
Upper Middle (UM)	92	27.1	86.8	14	16.5	13.2	106
Lower Middle (LM)	85	25.0	80.2	21	24.7	19.8	106
Lower (L)	71	20.8	67.0	35	41.2	33.0	106
Total	340	-	-	85	-	-	425

For 2018:

Quartile	Male	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Female	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Total quartile
Upper (U)	99	26.3	87.6	14	17.9	12.4	113
Upper Middle (UM)	104	27.6	91.2	10	12.8	8.8	114
Lower Middle (LM)	95	25.2	83.3	19	24.4	16.7	114
Lower (L)	79	21.0	69.3	35	44.9	30.7	114
Total	377	-	-	78	-	-	455

For 2017:

Quartile	Male	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Female	% of total gender	% of total quartile	Total quartile
Upper (U)	107	27.3	90.7	11	13.8	9.3	118
Upper Middle (UM)	105	26.8	89.0	13	16.3	11.0	118
Lower Middle (LM)	100	25.5	84.7	18	22.5	15.3	118
Lower (L)	80	20.4	67.8	38	47.5	32.2	118
Total	392	-	-	80	-	-	472





## Action plan: Addressing our gender pay gap

This is the fifth year of reporting the Service's gender pay gap. As already detailed within this report, many of the issues driving the gender pay gap requires a longer-term commitment and will be dependent upon the Service working together to drive change. The Service is committed to addressing the gender pay gap. Through the three key areas, the Service will strive to achieve a more representative workforce:

### Leading transformation

The Service will ensure that all employees are aware of the vision, values and behaviours expected within the workplace, improve the Service's performance through building a diverse workforce and ensuring employees understand how the Service operates, in order to be as effective as possible within their role

- The Service has a transparent approach to pay. On an annual basis the Pay policy is updated and following consideration and approval by the Fire Authority, published on the intranet and external website. This policy sets out the Service's approach to pay for all roles, including the approach to senior pay and bonus payments
- The Service's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy demonstrates the Service's commitment to EDI, by ensuring that EDI is embedded in its culture and reflected in its people and behaviours, all of which will help to better serve the public:
  - By embracing equality, we promote the policy in both employment opportunities and in the delivery of its services
  - By embracing diversity, we acknowledge the full breadth of people within the community and seeks to reflect that variety within the workforce
  - By embracing inclusion, we recognise that everyone that works for the Service has a valuable contribution to make
- The Service's Code of Conduct provides individuals with an understanding of the standards expected of employee and guides behaviour, placing an obligation on all to take responsibility for their own conduct. The Code states the Service will:
  - Ensure all employees are aware of the vision, values and behaviours expected within the workplace
  - Improve the Service's performance through building a diverse workforce
  - Ensure employees understand how the Service operates, in order to be as effective as possible within their role
- The Code of Ethics Fire Standard for England, published May 2021, complements and supports the Service's vision and values which forms part of everything the Service does. The principles in the Core Code are based on the Seven Principles for Public



Life, known as the Nolan Principles, tailored to suit the Fire and Rescue Service's context. The Code of Ethics Fire Standard specifically requires Fire Services to embed and show their commitment to the five ethical principles and professional behaviours contained in the Core Code

- The Service strives to be a family friendly workplace, which recognises and supports employees in balancing their responsibilities of work and home. The Service's Maternity, Adoption and Parental Entitlements procedure helps to demonstrate our commitment and support to employees and being an attractive, family friendly employer. The Service offers enhanced benefits, by going over and above statutory entitlements, and includes offering the same enhanced pay for shared parental leave, therefore encouraging individuals to share childcare more equally
- The Service recognises family friendly and flexible working practices are good, as they help to attract and retain valuable talent and skills from a wider and more diverse talent pool. We are continuing to develop and update a suite of procedures within this area to help increase gender equality within the workplace. At the end of 2021 we started consultation on an updated Flexible Working procedure. A positive step within the updated procedure is that flexible working can be requested from day one of employment, rather than once an employee has attained 26 weeks employment. This demonstrates the Service's commitment to harnessing the benefits of flexible working and assisting employees to maintain an effective balance between their work and home life
- From Spring 2020 the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic resulted in a significant amount of change within the Service. During the height of the pandemic this was often as a result of balancing work with other caring responsibilities. As control measures have been established and restrictions changed, many employees have opted to continue to work more flexibly in terms of hours or days they work and where they work. The Service is committed with continuing to harness the benefits of flexible working arrangements and adopting a flexible approach to an employee's work location where practicable. At the end of 2021 we started consultation on a new Hybrid Working procedure, which sets out key requirements and considerations to enable employees to undertake hybrid working
- The Service actively encourages employees to consider using flexible working arrangements where appropriate. We appreciate that having a better work-life balance and by promoting flexible working options, the Service can support inclusion, improve employee motivation, performance and productivity, thereby improving employee wellbeing. In addition, we will attract and retain a diverse workforce of talented individuals, thereby helping to reduce the gender pay gap
- Structured groups have been created to drive forward equality initiatives, such as the EDI group, which includes managers, employees, trade union and employee representatives. The group supports and promotes inclusion and engagement and



increases dialogue about topical issues. The group review progress against the Service's EDI objectives which are reported to the Fire Authority. In June 2021 an EDI objectives update report was presented to the Fire Authority, along with progress to date and EDI workforce data

- An equal pay audit is the most effective way of checking the Service is complying with its statutory equal pay obligations and ensuring we deliver a pay system free from gender bias. During 2020 an audit was undertaken which confirmed the Service is achieving equitable pay between genders
- An external benchmarking exercise was carried out using the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) self-assessment evaluation and benchmarking tool, and in 2021 the bronze award has been maintained for the second year running
- We continue to strive for an inclusive culture, helping to ensure employees will want to remain with us and progress through the Service:
  - The 2017 Culture Survey results formed an action plan that managers and employees were tasked with addressing
  - In January/February 2020, the Service invited employees to complete a follow up Culture Survey, the results of which continue to help the Service in achieving its objectives
  - The results of the 2019 HMICFRS Staff Survey were compared against the 2017 and 2020 Culture Survey results. This will be an additional data source to help the Service develop a more inclusive culture
  - The 2022 culture was launched in January 2022, which will provide a further benchmark for continued improvement. A working group, made up of employees from across the Service agreed on a new marketing and communications strategy and improved ways of measuring results, including a new culture 'road map'
- We continue to make greater and more targeted use of social media to effectively promote the positive work of the Service and of our recruitment campaigns
- The Service's People Strategy 2020 to 2025 was updated and published following approval by the Fire Authority in October 2020. The People Strategy provides the framework for engaging and developing employees to enable the cultural changes, which will help the Service better deliver its vision and strategic priorities, whilst ensuring behaviours, values and standards are adhered to. A year one update on the People Strategy 2020 to 2025, including a 'raising the profile' roadshow was approved by the Fire Authority in October 2021. A six-month plan includes station and departmental visits to engage and consult on the People Strategy. Roadshows include a presentation to employees on the strategy and will highlight through discussion how the Service will meet any challenges and identify risks and opportunities. This is with the intention of raising the profile of the



strategy, encourage engagement and ensure employees from across the Service are made aware of how their work contributes and supports the five key areas

- During 2021 the corporate website, which incorporates the Service's new People Strategy 2020 to 2025 continued to be updated
- We will continue to collaborate with other Fire Services and will increasingly collaborate with organisations who are in a position to help us reach and influence our target audience. In addition, we will collaborate more widely and with those organisations who have developed inspiring initiatives and best practice that we may learn from
- The Service signed the Armed Forces Covenant to promise to actively support the armed forces community and in August 2021 was awarded the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award. The covenant acknowledges that we recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families can bring to our Service. At the end of 2021 a youth engagement initiative was launched in the local community, where members of the Armed Forces Cadet associations undertake a programme of activities with the aim of helping cadets gain an understanding of what being a firefighter is about and hopefully encouraging a career within the Service
- Regular systematic and rigorous strategic workforce and succession planning processes are in place, which incorporate current Public Safety Plan requirements and horizon scanning of likely future external and internal challenges. Outcomes from these processes are subsequently translated into timely interventions to ensure the Service continues to meet workforce capacity requirements and build capability. In addition, it provides opportunity to refresh the workforce through the identification of people; internally and where required externally to fill identified key positions



## Attracting talent

The Service is committed to ensuring its resourcing attracts, selects, and recruits the right calibre of people to deliver its corporate priorities, aligned to workforce planning requirements. The Service will ensure it retains the skills and capability needed and employs them productively to support its corporate objectives. It is committed to establishing the right working arrangements and conditions of employment for all its employees.

- The Service's Recruitment and Selection procedure places emphasis on ensuring the right skills, attitudes and behaviours are available to deliver the Service's priorities throughout its recruitment and selection and promotion processes and includes the Service's pledge to all candidates:
  - Recruitment and selection will be fair, transparent and consistent
  - Commitment to providing processes that offer equal opportunity and avoids unlawful discrimination
  - Equal and reasonable access to information about the role, its requirements and the selection processes to be used
  - Support will be provided throughout the process, which can be tailored to individual requirements
  - Selection will be based on relevant and consistently applied criteria, using methods which are reliable, objective and guard against bias. All those involved in the recruitment and selection process will be appropriately trained
  - Selection will be based on merit and focus on candidates meeting the essential criteria and required behaviours
  - Individuals will be encouraged to develop their skills and have the opportunity to learn and develop
- We continue to support and be members of the Networking Women in the Fire Service programme and in 2021 funded places on their "have a go weekend" and virtual Choose to Challenge event
- The Service's talent management programme continues to ensure replenished development pools at each level, resulting in employees with the required skills to fulfil the roles when needed. All elements/modules of our promotional process have been reviewed, consulted on, and brought together in one Operational Promotional procedure to provide clarity and consistency to employees on the requirements and route for promotion
- Following the successful pilot of a scheme used to identify and develop future leaders, the Service has embedded this into refreshed appointment and promotion procedures and progressing a new Leadership and Management Development Framework to support and assist with the development of newly recruited or promoted managers
- Wholetime recruitment is structured with the aim of attracting a diverse pool of applicants, reflective of the community



- A review of recruitment within the Service has been commissioned to understand what went well and establish any learns, with the aim of improving future processes, and creating a toolkit to support managers with future recruitment
- To ensure recruitment could continue during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, whilst adhering to the strict guidelines, the Service optimised virtual recruitment awareness evenings and introduced online psychometric testing to remove the need for physical attendance. This has increased the number of applicants due to its accessibility and flexibility and will continue going forwards
- A structured interview process is used in all recruitment and promotion activity. Structuring interviews so the same questions are asked to all candidates, in the same order, format and responses assessed using a standardised criterion to reduce unconscious bias in processes
- We continually review and update our recruitment processes, using fair and transparent processes, ensuring any learns are fed into future recruitment activity
- We ensure through the applicant sifting processes that information on protected characteristics is removed to eliminate the possibility of unconscious bias
- To reduce potential prejudice and bias in recruitment and selection, training is delivered to those who undertake interviewing
- The three Thames Valley Fire Services are progressing common approaches to operational On-call firefighter recruitment. This joint working initiative is an opportunity to promote careers within the Fire Service and raise awareness across community groups with the aim of improving employee diversity
- Collaboration with Thames Valley Police on apprenticeships and promoting careers for young people is well established
- The Service has pledged to support the Armed Forces Covenant within its recruitment strategy, including Career Transition Partnership's, establishing a tailored employment pathway for veterans, service leavers and supporting the employment of armed forces spouses and partners. Advertising job opportunities through armed forces friendly recruitment agencies and charities and recognising relevant military qualifications in our recruitment/application processes





## Supporting development

The Service strives to create a sustainable workforce through medium to long term strategic planning, treating employees as assets enabling the Service to plan for the future with regards to the workforce requirements. By creating and maintaining a sustainable workforce requires the Service to take appropriate action to:

- Recruit and retain the right workforce
- Address key future and occupational skill shortages
- Promote jobs, careers and the concept of employability
- Identify, develop and motivate talent
- Address diversity and inclusion issues

- Workforce diversity data is collated, reviewed and reported, which ensures the Service is focused and able to make decisions to improve results. The data details:
  - The numbers of males and females within the Service
  - The numbers of males and females at each level of the Service
  - The proportion of males and females applying for roles and being recruited
  - The proportion of males and females applying for assessment processes and being promoted
- There is a commitment to improve the breadth of diversity-related data available about the workforce. Submitting sensitive personal information is optional, however is encouraged, as this data is an important component to identifying inequality, initiating activity and evaluating progress to meet legislation under the Equality Act (2010)
- Our aim is to continue to improve diversity data and the utilisation of the data across all parts of the existing workforce. For example, at various stages of the employee lifecycle and during recruitment processes to see individuals are de-selected from the process. This data will be used to inform decisions
- We will extend our evidence gathering to include data on the following additional areas:
  - Analysis of fall-out rates during recruitment processes and exploration of alternate recruitment practices, which will include direct entry recruitment
  - The proportion of males and females leaving the Service and the reasons why
  - Analysis on training spend broken down by males and females



- Determine any structural barriers to promotion opportunities
- Leadership training and opportunities for development are available to all employees, such as job shadowing and acting up/temporary promotion, so that individuals can experience the variety of roles within the Service, providing wider organisational awareness and benefiting both the individual and the Service
- We support the Service and its employees, promoting high performance and continuous improvement. Working collaboratively and inclusively, we ensure employees perform the best they can by supporting them to acquire, maintain and continuously develop the appropriate technical and professional skills and underpinning knowledge specific to their role
- An update on Workforce Development was presented to the Executive Committee in September 2021. The report provided an update on the Service's progress in relation to workforce development and set out the outcomes of the 2021 Workforce and Succession Planning review. It offered reassurance to the Executive Committee that necessary safeguards and contingency plans are 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 our communities. The report allowed us to showcase the excellent work being undertaken by the Service to mitigate the risks identified and investing in developing its existing workforce to meet the anticipated challenges
- Excellent work is being undertaken by the Service to mitigate future workforce risks by investing in developing its existing workforce to meet the anticipated challenges. An example of this investment is during the 2021/22 Medium Term Finance Planning process, Members approved a £50,000 growth bid to fund a pilot leadership development programme, with an invite to bid for further funding to roll this programme out across the Service, subject to evaluating the upcoming pilot programme. This will help to accelerate the development of employees to ensure the Service has the right people, with the right skills, ready to perform the roles required
- All employees have an annual appraisal, where their commitment to their behaviours, linked to the Service's values, is an essential element. Quality assurance of appraisal returns is undertaken to identify themes, and to assist with any training requirements





# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 23 March 2022

**Report title:** Funding Phase 2 Leadership & Management Development Programme

**Lead Member:** Councillor Steven Lambert; People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance

**Report sponsor:** Calum Bell, Head of Protection, Assurance & Development

**Author and contact:** Anna Collett, Organisational Development Manager

**Action:** Noting and Decision

**Recommendations:** That the Committee:

1. Note the positive evaluation of Phase 1 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme
2. Approve the transfer of the £51k underspend from the 2021/22 Training Needs Analysis budget, into a future funding reserve, to be used in 2022/23 to procure phase 2 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme and fund a delegate onto the Executive Leadership Programme.

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## Executive summary:

During the 2021/22 Medium-Term Financial Planning (MTFP) process, a growth bid was presented to Members, requesting a £75k investment to deliver a leadership and management development programme (LMDP) which would improve the effectiveness of existing managers as well as provide development opportunities and pathways for future managers and leaders of the organisation.

The programme has initially been delivered by an external provider and the content built upon the foundations contained within the NFCC Leadership Framework, the priority areas identified via the HMICFRS inspection.

Members approved a partial bid of £50k with an invite to present a further bid for the remaining funds the next year, with an evaluation of the programme.

There have been a number of workforce development challenges presented this year, which has meant additional development centres, more frequent appointments boards and substantive processes – all requiring the time and focus of the Learning and Development Team. Therefore the scope, design, procurement and subsequent implementation of phase 1 was delayed until Autumn 2021. However, it is pleasing to report that cohort 1 and 2's programmes have completed, with a further 2 cohorts starting in February. In total 50 delegates will have attended.

To ensure the programme content is fit for purpose and that both facilitators and delegates are engaged and finding value in attending, initial feedback – in the form  
Executive Committee, 23 March 2022 | Item 7 Funding Phase 2 Leadership & Management Development Programme

of a survey - was sought from the attendees of cohorts 1 and 2. A summary of the feedback is contained within Appendix 2 and will be used to develop the content for the remaining cohorts of phase 1, phase 2 and adapt the facilitators approach where necessary.

A more in-depth evaluation will be undertaken as part of the project, which will include re-visiting the initial audit undertaken as part of this project, reviewing of appraisal performance ratings and any change in culture survey outcomes.

The next phase (phase 2) of the programme is to roll it out to the remaining established managers, this includes operational Watch Commanders.

It has become apparent through reviewing the allocated budget for the Training Needs Analysis (TNA), that there will no longer be a need for a growth bid, and that a forecasted underspend could be used to fund phase 2 instead.

Currently the staff development cost centre which holds the budget line for the TNA is forecasting an underspend. When cross referenced with the organisation's TNA (Appendix 1) and following a comprehensive review with department managers of the training that had been approved by the Training Strategy Group, against what they will realistically be able to procure this financial year, there is an accurate forecasted underspend of £51k.

An underspend within this budget and against the TNA hadn't occurred until 2020/21 and we are seeing the same again with this year. The potential reasoning for the underspend could include;

- We continue to see an impact from covid on the amount of external training being procured/available
- Training is being delivered differently – less travelling/residential costs, more being delivered virtually
- The TNA being produced by managers are for role critical training only
- Not all the training approved by the TNA gets procured for various reasons

The final phase for the LMDP, once all existing managers have completed the programme, is for it to become acquisition training for all new managers/leaders and development for any potential future managers/leaders. This will be delivered internally via the Learning and Development team, therefore no longer requiring additional funding to procure delivery by the external provider.

In addition to the LMDP, two senior managers within the service have been successful in securing places on the Executive Leadership Programme (ELP), one in 2022 and for which the funding has been factored into Appendix 1 and one place in 2023. The identified underspend from 2021/22 TNA will also be used to fund the ELP place in 2023.

This paper is seeking approval to transfer the £51k underspend identified above, into a future funding reserve, to be used to procure phase 2 of the LMDP and fund one delegate onto the Executive Leadership Programme in 2022/23.

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**Financial implications:** This proposal has been developed in consultation with the Director of Finance and Assets, Deputy Director of Finance and Assets, Procurement Manager and Principal Accountants (budget monitoring and member of TSG).

The Director of Finance and Assets has approved a procurement waiver in accordance with Contract Standing Order 4.3, for delivery of phase 2 of the LMDP, to allow the continued use of the current supplier, without the need to re-tender. This enables continuity between phase 1 and phase 2 of the programmes and to ensure all managers/leaders are getting the same message/input/development.

**Risk management:** Staff Availability is an identified corporate risk which is reviewed regularly by SMT and the Overview and Audit Committee.

The delegates for phase 2 of this programme will include operational Watch Commanders and potentially Crew Commanders. This will require advanced planning with the Resource Management Team to enable the programmes to be run when resourcing numbers allow, and for delegates to attend on their duty days, to remove any need to pay overtime. We are planning to run these programmes from September 2022, once the 18 new Firefighters return from the Fire Service College and are available as operational assets to the organisation.

The organisational performance benefits to Leadership and Management Development are to enable current and future managers and leaders to be more effective at decision making and to role model leadership behaviours and this will result in improved staff performance.

There is a significant risk of high staff turnover at middle and senior management level over the next two years, therefore being pro-active in developing these skills now will help react to this level of change.

**Legal implications:** To maintain continuity of the quality of training, Phase 2 of the Leadership & Management Development Programme will be awarded to Mary Foster Consulting Ltd up to a value of £50,000, in accordance with Contract Standing Order 4.3.

“ 4.3 If an Officer requires an exemption from one or more Orders where there is no emergency and the estimated value is below the European threshold, this requires the prior approval of the Chief Finance Officer if the value is up to £50,000”

**Privacy and security implications:** There are no concerns on privacy issues with this project. An Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the project management process and is continually reviewed.

**Duty to collaborate:** We continue to work with other local councils and fire and emergency service partners on continuous improvement and reform, through sharing best practice.

**Health and safety implications:** Considered, none identified at this stage.

**Environmental implications:** Considered, none identified at this stage.

**Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:** The Leadership & Management Development Programme supports and endorses delivery of BFRS' Equality and Diversity Objectives 2020-2025.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the LMDP project.

**Consultation and communication:** Regular communication is undertaken across BFRS, delivered via:

- Monthly project updates to the Business Transformation Board (BTB)
- Intranet articles
- Regular engagement with staff / face to face briefings

**Background papers:** None identified at this time.

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	TNA Overview	
2	Initial Evaluation of Phase 1	

<b>Training Needs Analysis Summary</b>		
<b>Department</b>	<b>Total Approved through TNA April 2021</b>	<b>Total Funds Committed to be Spent in 2021/22*</b>
Finance & Assets	£12,932.00	£5,494.00
Human Resources	£9,600.00	£10,100.00
Health and Safety	£22,380.00	£20,545.00
ICT	£8,051.00	£8,051.00
IFE Exams	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Leadership	£7,247.00	£2,943.00
Legal & Governance	£69.00	£179.00
Operational Training	£80,460.00	£79,324.00
Prevention	£974.00	£1,130.00
Protection	£9,070.00	£5,060.00
Senior Management Team	£18,423.00	£16,263.00
Technical	£2,520.00	£2,520.00
Workshops	£10,605.00	£10,605.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£192,331.00</b>	<b>£172,214.00</b>

**To be spent in year      £172,214.00**  
**Approved Budget          £223,300.00**  
**Net Underspend            £51,086.00**

\*NB Figures are correct as of February 2022

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Initial Evaluation of Phase 1 of Leadership & Management Development Programme

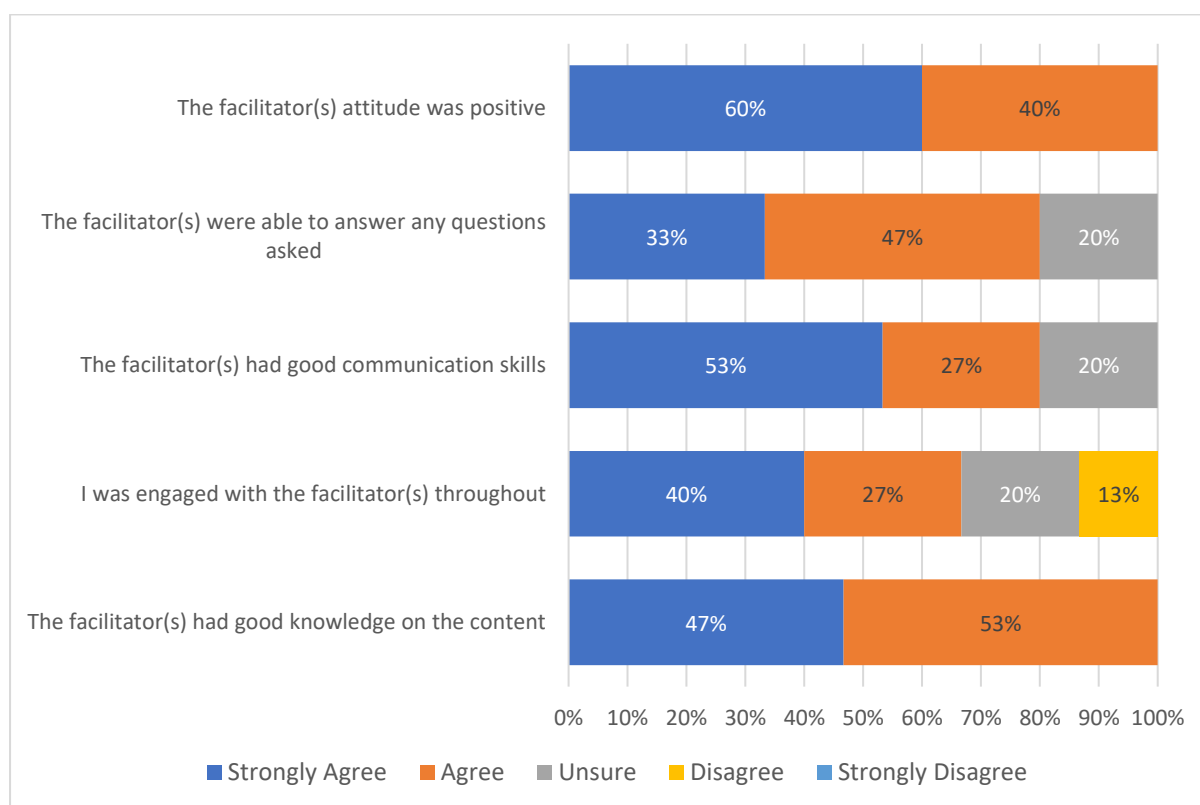
To ensure the programme content is fit for purpose and that facilitators and delegates are engaged and finding value in attending, initial feedback – in the form of a survey - was sought from the attendees of cohorts 1 and 2.

A summary of the feedback is below and will be used to develop the content for the remaining cohorts of phase 1, phase 2 and adapt the facilitators approach where necessary.

The 24 delegates of cohorts 1 and 2 were invited to provide feedback on the first programme, of these delegates, 15 responded.

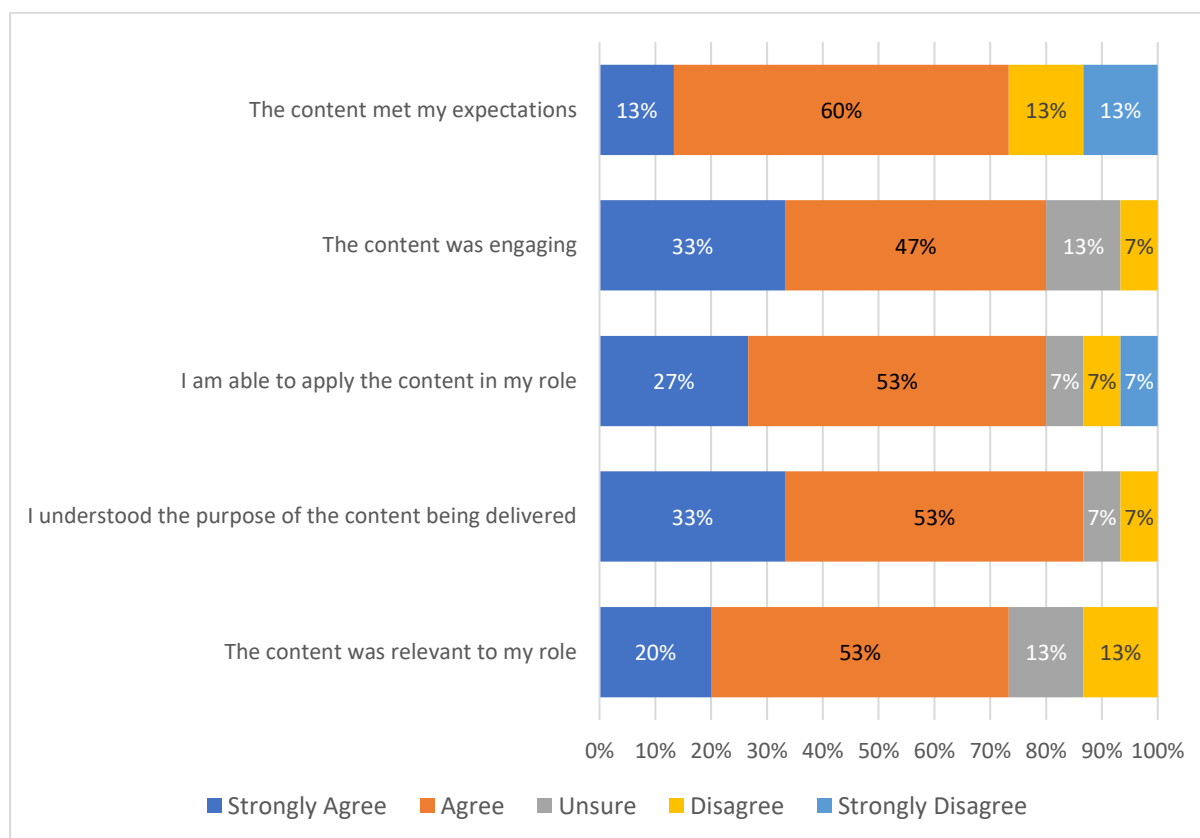
The survey was broken down into sub-headings: Facilitator, Content, Overall Programme and Future LMDPs.

Facilitator:



The majority of responses were positive in relation to the facilitator and their style of delivery, however there was some constructive feedback provided in some of the free text answers, that we will be able to use, to work with them on improving.

Content:



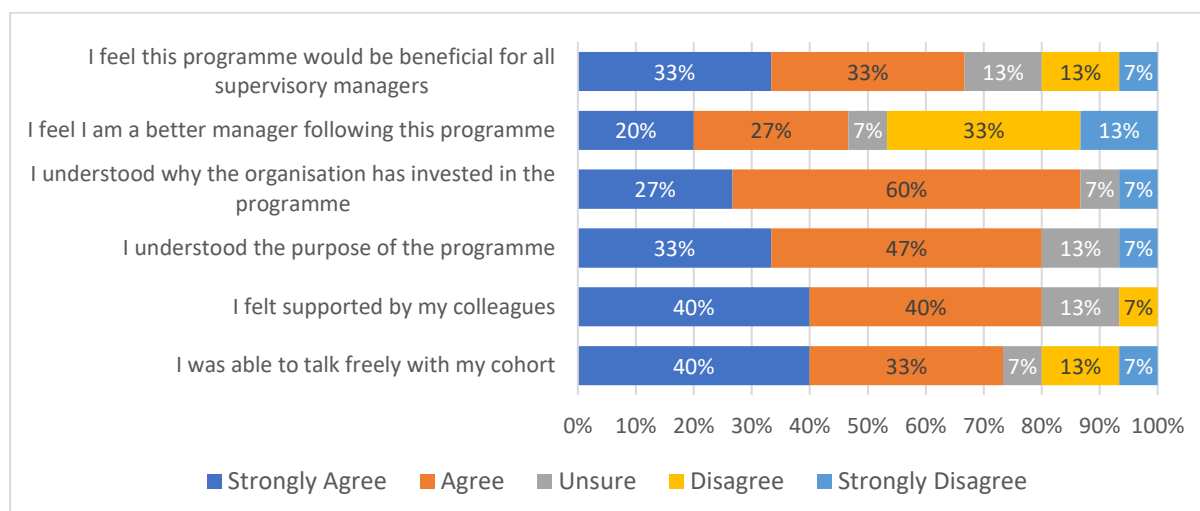
Again, the majority of responses were positive in relation to the content of the programme, however it has been noted that for a number of managers who have been working at this level for a period of time, that the content served more as a refresher than anything new. Therefore this programme may be more beneficial for managers new to the role, including supervisory managers as acquisition.

In addition, mixed feedback was received on the action learning part of the programme and the benefits to this were not felt by all. It is being considered whether the action learning remains in place for phase 2 of the programme or whether this could be replaced with launching the organisation coaching scheme and individuals could volunteer for coaching should they wish to.

A number of respondents to the survey commented that they felt they would benefit from case studies being presented, either of our own organisation or others and this would enhance the learning. This is something that will be recommended to the Senior Management Team for future Leadership events/forums.



Overall Programme:



This section of the survey, again highlighted that some felt that the content served more as a refresher than anything new and therefore this programme may be more beneficial for managers new to the role, including supervisory managers as acquisition.

It was also commented that there were additional benefits to attending the programme, over and above the structured content. These were meeting with and sharing learns and experiences with colleagues and learning challenges other departments face.

Future LMDPs:

Below is a direct uplift of the free text responses provided during this section of the survey. This level of detail has been provided, as this constructive feedback will be used to develop the programme, inform the 2022/23 Training Needs Analysis and demonstrate what staff members would like to see/need to move the organisation forward.

- Commitment to attend throughout from all levels of management including SMT should happen
- The Leadership group should meet collectively to take the next steps following the programme
- The programme should be rolled out to all managers in the organisation
- Time should be allocated to reflect and apply the learnings
- Use BFRS specific material regarding decision making & governance e.g., management structure and Fire Authority
- High level practical case studies giving examples of where theory, practice, policy and experience intersect and cause conflict

- Difficult conversations
- Dealing with poor performance
- How to develop staff
- How to conduct an effective appraisal
- Performance management
- Wellbeing, supporting employees within BFRS – not just generalisations
- Case studies from other FRS rated excellent by HMICFRS

Next Steps:

The facilitator will be met with to discuss the feedback and any required changes to the programme made.

The survey will be circulated to the remaining cohorts of phase 1 once they complete their programme, to enable us to analyse the feedback from all attendees of phase 1.

This feedback will then be used to meet with the provider and develop the content ready for the commencement of phase 2 in September 2022.

A more in-depth evaluation will be undertaken as part of the project, which will include re-visiting the initial audit previously carried out as part of this project, reviewing of appraisal performance ratings and any change in culture survey outcomes.