

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



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

Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive
Jason Thelwell

To: The Members of the Executive Committee

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS
AND PUBLIC**

Please note the content of
Page 2 of this Agenda Pack

29 January 2024

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held in **MEETING ROOM 1, BLUE LIGHT HUB, 3 THORNBURY, WEST ASHLAND, MILTON KEYNES, MK6 4BB** on **THURSDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2024 at 10.00 AM** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

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

Graham Britten
Director of Legal and Governance

Health and Safety:

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

Chairman: Councillor Rouse

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



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Recording of the meeting

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

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

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

Adjournment and Rights to Speak – Public

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

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

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

- (a) speak for no more than four minutes,
- (b) should only speak once unless the Chairman agrees otherwise.

The Chairman should resume the Meeting as soon as possible, with the agreement of the other Members present. Adjournments do not form part of the Meeting.

Rights to Speak - Members

A Member of the constituent Councils who is not a Member of the Authority may attend Meetings of the Authority or its Committees to make a statement on behalf of the Member's constituents in the case of any item under discussion which directly affects the Member's division, with the prior consent of the Chairman of the Meeting which will not be unreasonably withheld. The Member's statement will not last longer than four minutes. Such attendance will be facilitated if requests are made to enquiries@bucksfire.gov.uk at least two clear working days before the meeting.

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

Where the Chairman of a Committee has agreed to extend an invitation to all Members of the Authority to attend when major matters of policy are being considered, a Member who is not a member of the Committee may attend and speak at such Meetings at the invitation of the Chairman of that Committee.

Questions

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

AGENDA

Item No:

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 November 2023 (Item 2) **(Pages 7 - 14)**

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. Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Contracts

To consider Item 6 **(Pages 15 - 40)**

7. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/25 to 2028/29

To consider Item 7 **(Pages 41 - 56)**

8. 2025 - 2030 Service Planning Update

To consider Item 8 **(Pages 57 - 62)**

9. Response to The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25: Consultation

To consider Item 9 **(Pages 63 - 84)**

10. The Prudential Code, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

To consider Item 10 (Pages 85 - 96)

11. Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 - December 2023

To consider Item 11 (Pages 97 - 110)

12. His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) - Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023 Update

To consider Item 12 (Pages 111 - 122)

13. Performance Management - Q2 2023/24

To consider Item 13 (Pages 123 - 176)

14. 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.

15. Exempt Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 November 2023

16. Date of next meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Wednesday 20 March 2024 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

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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 15 NOVEMBER 2023 at 10.00 AM.

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

Officers: M Osborne (Interim Chief Fire Officer), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), A Hussain (Deputy Director of Finance and Assets), A Carter (Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO), A Stunell (Head of Human Resources), P Mould (Head of Response and Resilience), P Scanes (Head of Prevention and CRMP), S Tuffley (Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience), and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies: Councillor Christensen

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

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

EX30 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX31 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

The Chairman advised on the following matters arising:

EX23 - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – Q1 2023/24

A Member asked if a report explaining over the border mobilisation could be shared with Members – The Deputy Chief Fire Officer had advised that this would be covered in a forthcoming CRMP Members' Workshop.

(Councillor Darlington joined the meeting).

EX24 - UNIT 7 EXIT PROGRAMME

The Vice Chairman asked if increasing the power supply to HQ when the Service moves out of Unit 7 could be placed on the risk register – The Director of Finance and Assets advised that this had been done.

The Interim Chief Fire Officer advised Members there had been a good upturn in appliance availability recently which was a result of the investment the Authority had made into the recruitment campaign and getting people through training, and also the uplift in Crew Commanders and the Safe to Command course. There had been an increase in establishment and a decrease in bank costs of around 50% over the same period as last year.

The Interim Deputy Chief Fire Officer confirmed there had been a 50% reduction in October and consistent reduction over the summer period of between 25-36% month on month and appliance availability had been better than in previous years.

The Interim Chief Fire Officer also advised there were still 18 firefighters at the Fire Service College graduating in December, which would assist and boost recruitment.

A Member felt this was a really good news story and should be shared with the public.

EX32 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of interest.

EX33 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT APRIL 2023 – SEPTEMBER 2023

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised Members that the report in Appendix A set out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 30 September 2023, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year.

The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £36.131m gave a forecast year end underspend of £0.320m. Furthermore, the level of funding was showing a favourable variance of £0.024m which had resulted in an overall net underspend of £0.344m against the expenditure budget.

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

Members were reminded that officers were forecasting an underspend of just over £700k as at the end of the first quarter which had reduced by half in this latest update. The reason for this change was there had been an additional in year bid process submitted in August and all additional bids were approved.

A Member asked if the installation of flag poles at Wholetime Stations was a priority for the Authority to spend £10k on when there were so many other priorities that money should be spent on.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised that there had been a process for bids through the Business Transformation Board and it had been run past senior leaders of the organisation. Some stations already had flag poles, and this was to have a consistent approach across all stations.

A Members said that one of the things discussed with HMICFRS was the lack of spending per head, how could this be increased.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that given the resident population, it would probably be around £10-12m on the budget. The issue was with the way the precept referendum limit worked, it would never catch up, especially when prior to the last two years, it was always on the percentage which was only going to get wider as the Authority's precept was the third lowest of any Authority. There were plans to have a more fundamental look at the way funding was redistributed amongst those services, but those plans had been delayed for a number of years. Whilst the Authority does not want to increase its expenditure for the sake of it, having more funding available to do more with and be closer to the average would be a good position to be in.

The Chairman advised that together with the Interim Chief Fire Officer he had written to Lee Rowley outlining the case for precept flexibility for this year and it was copied to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The Chairman had received a reply confirming it had been noted and that they were going through the process. All the Ministers changed yesterday, so he would resend the letter, to ensure it did not get lost. The Chairman also advised that a number of local Members of Parliament had been lobbying on the Authority's behalf as well.

The Chairman advised that clearly the in year growth bids go through governance and it was right that officers were empowered to get on with doing what they needed to get done. The Chairman felt that setting out a clearer authorisation framework that triggers when in growth bids were of a magnitude and importance that

Chief Fire Officer
and Chairman

Members should have the ability to look at before they go through final sign off, would be beneficial. Could officers look at a process that Members could agree.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that in terms of a revised process, officers would liaise with the Chairman and Lead Member for Finance to agree what the triggers would be for various things to come to Members.

The Chairman asked about the significant increase in the Airwave contract cost and an update on the White Ribbon Accreditation.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Assets advised that in terms of the Airwave contract, Members were familiar with the Emergency Service Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP), which unfortunately had been delayed and had a knock on effect on the Airwave contract. The Service had no control in terms of what the cost of Airwave would be. The Airwave contract was previously funded (about 80%) by the Firelink grant. The Government had reduced this over the last few years, rightly so because the expectation was that the Emergency Services Network (ESN) would be coming in and would come in at a lower cost. The cost was being managed within the MTFP process. The expectation was that as and when ESN starts, the cost would be significantly less and there would be a saving.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that with regard to White Ribbon. The Service was due to kick off with 16 days of action. The accreditation had been approved. The Programme Manager leading on the project, would be presenting an update to the Authority at the next meeting in December.

RESOLVED –

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

EX34 SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM REMUNERATION AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW, AND ANNUAL REPORT ON EMPLOYEE BONUS SCHEME

The Head of Human Resources advised Members that the annual report comprised of the Senior Management Team (SMT) Remuneration and Performance Review and annual report on the Employee Bonus Scheme. This report provided information for Members' consideration in their review of the corporate and individual performance of SMT, and whether a performance related payment would be appropriate. A local pay review was conducted annually, and any changes were normally effective from

Director of
Finance and Assets

the preceding January. The last remuneration review was in November 2022.

The executive summary showed the posts covered, contracts, cost of providing services, background and context to pay and remuneration, national context, legislation, pay and gender pay, the financial position, the services provided, financial performance, budget monitoring and the Council tax precept. SMT do not play a part in the pay review process.

Appendix 1 showed comparative data of fire authorities council tax 2022/2023 (source council tax requirement forms) and showed the Authority was one of the lowest Council taxes.

Appendix 2 showed the SMB Performance and Achievements, for example technological workstreams to meet resourcing requirements; the workforce planning group achieving the 300 operational establishment target and the applications for supervisory managers being at their highest level. The Armed Forces Gold Covenant, exceeding national target of apprenticeship starters, SMT qualifications and higher investment returns than originally budgeted.

Appendix 3 showed the Equality Impact Assessment.

A Member felt they should be called merit awards and not bonus awards.

RESOLVED –

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

EX35 HMICFRS ACTION PLAN

The Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO advised Members that on Tuesday 17 October the Service received its 2023-2025 HMICFRS Inspection report. As per requirements set out in the report covering letter to the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer (CFO) on 17 October 2023, a copy of the action plan must be submitted to HMICFRS within 28 days of the report.

The report was presented to the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting on 24 October, with input from His Majesty's Inspector (HMI) Roy Wilsher. One of the recommendations at this meeting was that the Interim CFO be delegated to prepare and publish an Action Plan on behalf of the Authority in consultation with the Chairman and the Vice Chairman.

Following a review of the previous action plan, officers had taken a slightly different approach with the Round 3 action plan, the plan had prioritised on the actions needed to meet the recommendations; the associated actions were clear, measurable and achievable and the plan had been built with feedback from the Chairman and Vice Chairman, NFCC and other partners. Following sign off from the Chairman and the Interim Chief Fire Officer, the action plan would be submitted to HMICFRS and published on the Authority's website in due course.

Ongoing updates would be shared to the Overview and Audit Committee and the Authority to ensure there was ongoing scrutiny. These updates would include progress on the recommendations, impact on KPI's and capture progress on Areas for Improvement.

Officers would continue to have ongoing dialogue with HMICFRS at both a strategic and tactical level to ensure progress was in line with their expectations.

The Interim Chief Fire Officer thanked officers for pulling the Action Plan together so quickly and Members for their input. It had been a very quick turn around with a lot of effort and time gone into it. Officers had met with the Service Liaison Lead for HMICFRS last week to walk through the plan and the feedback was positive.

A Member asked if the Action Plan would be circulated to Members.

The Chairman mentioned that he and the Interim Chief Fire Officer had attended a 'chiefs and chairs' presentation by the HMI at which the importance of 'self-awareness' for fire and rescue services had been emphasised; and advised that he was happy for the Action Plan to be circulated to Members and regular updates would be presented to the Overview and Audit Committee who were delegated to scrutinise the Action Plan.

EX36 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED –

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

need to keep information exempt outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

EX37 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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

EX38 SUCCESSION PLANNING UPDATE

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

EX39 EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Exempt Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023, be approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

EX40 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted that the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at 10am.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 11.00AM

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2024

Report title: Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) Contracts

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse (Chairman)

Report sponsor: Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Simon Tuffley

Author and contact: Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Simon Tuffley

Action: Decision

Recommendations:

1. Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) be authorised to progress a variation of the maintenance and support contract, including the ICCS hardware refresh, between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and SSS Public Safety Ltd in line with the latest estimated value of the new contract value of £1,240,977 (subject to annual inflationary uplifts).
2. RBFA be authorised to extend the contract between RBFA and Securitas Security Services (UK) Ltd for contingency call handling services for one year from 30th April 2024 to 30th April 2025, being the final extension option of the current contract.
3. That the decision by RBFA to extend the contract between RBFA and Whitwam Ltd for the supply and support of a video monitoring solution in the TVFCS control room from 1 September 2023 until 1 September 2028 (with options to extend to 10 April 2030) be ratified.

Executive summary:

The Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) budget for 2024/25, was presented to the TVFCS Joint Committee on 14 December 2023, setting out a range of recommendations, including contract arrangements relating to recommendation one and two of this report, that require respective Authority's approval pursuant to Clause 17 of the TVFCS Inter-Authority Agreement (see background papers).

The full recommendations and supporting report for the 2023/24 budget are attached as Appendix 1, which comprises two reports prepared for the TVFCS Joint Committee meeting on 14 December 2023.

This report also sets out a retrospective matter relating to a TVFCS contract that requires Joint Committee, and respective Fire Authorities approval. Specifically, this report relates to awarding a contract for an ancillary video monitoring system used within the TVFCS control room. This report is attached at Appendix 1, item 9, pages 27-30.

All TVFCS contracts are governed by clause 17 of the TVFCS Inter-Authority Agreement. The stipulations within this clause differ from and are supplementary to standing Fire Authority Contract Regulations. The clause sets out actions to be taken for new contracts or contract variations.

Under normal circumstances, Senior Responsible Owners from each FRS are required to submit a report paper to their respective Authorities seeking approval of the recommendations from the Joint Committee, as per the requirements of the TVFCS inter-authority agreement for the prior consent from each Authority before the extension or renewal of these contracts.

However, due to the timing of TVFCS Joint Committee meetings and the operational imperative to undertake the work, in respect of recommendation three, this paper has been brought to Members after contract award at the next available opportunity.

The 2023/24 capital expenditure (Capex) profile previously approved by Members, included provision for replacement of a video monitoring system; an ancillary system that is an essential element of the safe systems of work employed in the control room that ensures 999 calls and operator responses can be monitored and assured, enabling staff to provide immediate support and advice during call taking and mobilisation. It is also used as a key training aid for recruits and staff in development.

The solution needed to be installed as soon as practicable following completion of the Vision hardware refresh in September 2023 (See background papers), as the old video monitoring system would no longer function with the new hardware. Therefore, the contract would need to be in place from September 2023 onwards to allow for the necessary engagement and planning to deliver the solution in a suitable timeframe and manage the risk associated with not having a video monitoring solution in place.

A tender process was undertaken by RBFRS in Q1/Q2 2023/24, and the contract was awarded to Whitwam Ltd. The process was compliant with Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's contract regulations but did not align to the requirements of Clause 17 of the TVFCS Inter-Authority Agreement. This relates to clause 17.3 which states that "...a new TVFCS contract...shall be a Fire Authority decision..."

To comply with the Inter-Authority Agreement, contract award would have been delayed until the next available Joint Committee meeting in December 2023 and then the next available and appropriate Authority meeting for each partner, circa February 2024. This would have created around a six-month delay in beginning the installation process for the new solution.

In this case, the agreement created a challenge to operational flexibility and management of risk, and it was decided to award the contract to enable delivery of the solution in a reasonably practicable timeframe and therefore bring the decision to the next available Joint Committee meeting (the December meeting) for ratification.

The contract value of £72,351.28 covers delivery, installation and a 12-month warranty. The contract also includes a 'call off' element for technical support which covers the lifespan of the contract. It is expected that, should it be required, the cost any technical support provision, from year two onwards, could be met through re-profiling existing revenue budget.

Financial implications:

The maintenance and support aspects of both contracts are paid from the TVFCS revenue account, and the current contract value will remain the same.

Risk management:

There is a low risk associated with the Whitwam contract as the Joint Committee was not sighted on the final contract pursuant to Clause 17 of the Inter Authority Agreement. However, the Committee were made aware of the intent to enter into a contract via the 2023/24 Capex Profile which was agreed by Members.

The contract is compliant with both Public Contract Regulations 2015 and RBFA (lead Authority) contract regulations.

This highlights the potential for future risk, either of contravening the agreement, due to the constraints of the agreement balanced against operational requirements, or creating delays in achieving objectives, incurring opportunity cost, pending the need for multiple sign off points at the Joint Committee and each Authority.

Legal implications:

TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement (IAA), "Clause 17.5. No material variation shall be made to a TVFCS Contract without the prior agreement of the Fire Authorities (not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) [...]"

The IAA also states "Clause 17.3. [...] A Fire Authority, on its own account or jointly with another, shall not enter into a new TVFCS Contract without the agreement of the Fire Authorities (not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) [...]."

Privacy and security implications:

None arising directly from this report. The report is not protectively marked.

Duty to collaborate:

The Fire Authorities of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire County Council and Royal Berkshire have collaborated to deliver the TVFCS as a single joint emergency call handling, mobilising, and resource management function for all the Thames Valley.

Health and safety implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Environmental implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Consultation and communication:

Principal consultation was between the TVFCS Joint Coordination Group members and the TVFCS Joint Committee.

Background papers:

- a) <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/09/legal-agreement-relating-to-the-steady-state-operation-of-the-thames-valley-fire-control-service.pdf/>

- b) [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for BMKFA Executive Committee, 14/09/2022 10:00 \(bucksfire.gov.uk\) item 9](#)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1a and 1b	Items 8 and 9 of the Agenda for Thames Valley Fire Control Joint Committee on Thursday, 14 December 2023, 2.00 pm Oxfordshire County Council	Not protectively marked

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	TVFCS CONTRACTS
PRESENTED TO:	TVFCS JOINT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	14 DECEMBER 2023
LEAD OFFICER	AREA MANAGER JIM POWELL
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	FOR DECISION

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) contracts are governed by clause 17 of the Inter-Authority Agreement (the 'agreement'). The stipulations within this clause differ from and are supplementary to standing Fire Authority Contract Regulations. The clause sets out actions to be taken for new contracts or contract variations.
- 1.2 This paper sets out a retrospective matter relating to a TVFCS contract that requires Joint Committee approval pursuant to Clause 17. In particular a contract for an ancillary video monitoring system used in the control room.
- 1.3 The budget requirement for the contract was scheduled and approved by members as part of the 23/24 budget however, due to the timing of Joint Committee meetings the operational imperative to undertake the work this paper has been brought to members after contract award at the next available opportunity.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To **NOTE** the contract between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority (RBFA) and Whitwam Ltd for the supply and support of a video monitoring solution in the control room from 1st September 2023 until 1st September 2028. The contract will run for a minimum period of 5 years, with optional extension periods to 10th April 2030 at a cost of £72,351.28.

3. REPORT

Whitwam Contract

- 3.1 As part of the 23/24 TVFCS budget members agreed the Annual Capital Expenditure (Capex) Profile (the 'profile'). This profile enables expenditure against the renewals account for replacement of hardware and systems in the control room.
- 3.2 The 23/24 profile contained provision for replacement of a video monitoring system; an ancillary system that is an essential element of the safe systems of work employed in the control room that ensures 999 calls and operator responses can be monitored and assured, enabling staff to provide immediate support and advice during call taking and mobilisation. It is also used as a key training aid for recruits and staff in development.
- 3.3 The solution would need to be installed as soon as practicable following completion of the Vision hardware refresh in September 2023 as the old video monitoring system would no longer function with the new hardware. Therefore the contract would need to be in place from September onwards to allow for the necessary engagement and planning to deliver the solution in a suitable timeframe and manage the risk associated with not having a video monitoring solution in place.
- 3.4 A tender process was undertaken in Q1/Q2 23/24 and the contract was awarded to Whitwam Ltd. The process was compliant with RBFA contract regulations but did not align to the requirements of Clause 17 of the Inter-Authority Agreement. This relates to clause 17.3 which states that "...a new TVFCS contract...shall be a Fire Authority decision..."
- 3.5 In order to comply with the agreement, contract award would have been delayed until the next available Joint Committee meeting in December 2023 and then the next available and appropriate Authority meeting for each partner, circa February 2024. This would have created around a six month delay in beginning the installation process for the new solution.

- 3.6 In this case, the agreement created a challenge to operational flexibility and management of risk and it was decided to award the contract to enable delivery of the solution in reasonably practicable timeframe and therefore bring the decision to the next available Joint Committee meeting (the December meeting) for ratification.
- 3.7 The contract spend of £72, 351.28 covers delivery, installation and a 12 month warranty. The contract also includes a 'call off' element for tech support which covers the lifespan of the contract. It is expected that, should it be required, the cost any tech support provision, from year 2 onwards, could be met through re-profiling existing revenue budget.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

- 4.1 This report complies with the TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The maintenance and support aspects of both contracts are paid from the TVFCS Revenue Account and the current contract value will remain the same.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement (IAA), "Clause 17.5. No material variation shall be made to a TVFCS Contract without the prior agreement of the Fire Authorities (not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) [...]"
- 6.2 The IAA also states "Clause 17.3. [...] A Fire Authority, on its own account or jointly with another, shall not enter into a new TVFCS Contract without the agreement of the Fire Authorities (not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed) [...]"

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications identified at this time.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There is a low risk associated with the Whitwam contract as the Joint Committee was not sighted on the final contract pursuant to Clause 17 of the Inter Authority Agreement. However the committee were made aware of the intent to enter into a contract via the 23/24 Capex Profile which was agreed by members. The contract is compliant with both Public Contract Regulations 2015 and RBFA (lead Authority) contract regulations.

- 8.2 This highlights the potential for future risk, either of contravening the agreement, due to the constraints of the agreement balanced against operational requirements, or creating delays in achieving objectives, incurring opportunity cost, pending the need for multiple sign off points at the Joint Committee and each in Authority.

9. CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS

- 9.1 As stated in the TVFCS IAA schedule 2: 'Primary objectives':
- 9.2 To satisfy the core functions of the Fire Authorities as defined in the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- 9.3 To satisfy the statutory duty of all the Fire Authorities as category one responders as defined in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- 9.4 To improve the resilience of the control room function
- 9.5 To ensure TVFCS is integral in delivering the outputs demanded of the Fire Authorities' Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMPs).

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Joint Coordinating Group
- 10.2 Monitoring Officer RBFA/BMKFA

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 [Minutes of the meeting of TVFCS Joint Committee 11 July 2022 \[Minute 12\]](#)
- 11.2 [Minutes of the meeting of TVFCS Joint Committee 15 December 2022 \[Minute 7\]](#)

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 None

13. CONTACT DETAILS

- 13.1 Jim Powell powellj@rbfrs.co.uk 07774215664

THAMES VALLEY FIRE CONTROL SERVICE



SUBJECT	TVFCS BUDGET 2024/25
PRESENTED TO:	JOINT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	14 DECEMBER 2023
LEAD OFFICER	CONOR BYRNE, HEAD OF FINANCE & PROCUREMENT, RBFRS
EXEMPT INFORMATION	NONE
ACTION	AGREE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To provide Joint Committee with the proposed revenue and capital budgets for Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) for the 2024/25 financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **Agree** the proposed TVFCS revenue budget for 2024/25 as detailed in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 **Agree** a contingency budget allocation of £150,000 which would provide an upper limit of expenditure without further Authority approval.
- 2.3 **Agree** to delegate authority to the three CFOs (unanimous decision required) for any unplanned expenditure between £10,000 and £150,000.
- 2.4 **Agree** to set aside £150,000 (£50,000 from each partner) in 2024/25 towards capital replacement costs.
- 2.5 **Agree** the Capital Expenditure Programme for 2024/25 (**Appendix C**)

- 2.6 **Agree** to recommend to partnership Authorities a variation of the maintenance and support contract, including the ICCS hardware refresh, between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and SSS Public Safety Ltd in line with the latest estimated value of the new contract value of £1,240,977 (subject to annual inflationary uplifts).
- 2.7 **Agree** to recommend to partnership Authorities that the contract between Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and Securitas Security Services (UK) Ltd for contingency call handling services be extended for one year from 30th April 2024 to 30th April 2025, being the final extension option of the current contract.
- 2.8 **Note** the Medium Term Financial Plan (**Appendix B**) and Renewals Long Term Forecast (**Appendix D**).
- 2.9 **Recommend** to their respective Authorities the TVFCS revenue and capital budgets for the financial year 2024/25 and the individual Authority contributions to these budgets.

3. REPORT

- 3.1 The proposed TVFCS Revenue Budget for 2024/25 is detailed in **Appendix A** and shows a total budget of £2,874,023, which is an increase of £234,717 or 8.9%.
- 3.2 The main factor for the increase in the budget requirement for 2024/25 relates to the level of pay awards agreed for the current year and last year as well as the estimate for next year. The current year's budget is based on a pay award of 4% whereas the actual pay award agreed is 5%. Similarly, we made provision of 5% for the 2022 pay award but this turned out to be 7%. For 2024/25, we are budgeting for a 5% pay award. There has also been an increase in employer contributions to Local Government Pension Fund.
- 3.3 The staffing budget allocation for 2024/25 is based on one more post than 2023/24, when an additional post was included in-year to provide additional resilience and capacity to reflect Maternity cover. For 2024/25, budgeting for the additional post has been deemed necessary.
- 3.4 Recharges are set each year for TVFCS to cover corporate costs. The level of recharges has been reviewed and updated to reflect the cost to provide the corporate functions in 2024/25.
- 3.5 ICT Recharge – The above inflation increases in software include the costs of individual users' devices/licences, which have been consolidated under MS365 licensing. Additional staffing recharge costs have been identified following a review by the new Head of Business and Information Systems of support provided to TVFCS. The TVFCS element of this charge has increased by 14%, to £116,000 for 2024/25.
- 3.6 Facilities recharge – The main driver for the increase in the Facilities recharge has been the lag in gas and electricity price increases. Much of the gas and electricity was advanced purchased at lower costs and the uplift is based on

latest price information from the supplier. The TVFCS element of this charge has increased by 7.8% or £11,000.

- 3.7 HR recharges have increased due to a restructure of L&D to enhance training capacity and capability.
- 3.8 The recharges in other areas are largely driven by staffing support provided by each function to TVFCS, they have also been increased to reflect the pay award agreed for green book staff in 2023/24, and the estimated award of 4% for 2024/25. The secondary control recharge from Oxfordshire FRS has increased by £4,636.
- 3.9 The contract for contingency call handling was for two years with two extensions each of one year. Services intend to take the final extension from April 2024 – April 2025 at a cost of £6,390. All three partners will be reviewing the approach to this contract as part of a wider review of business continuity arrangements for industrial action. (See Recommendation 2.7)
- 3.10 Technology costs have increased in total by 4%. Each respective contract has its own inflation mechanisms, mainly linked to built-in CPI uplifts. Contracts such as DS3000 also have built in framework fees when they are extended. Costs are being closely monitored and increases minimised wherever possible but are largely outside of direct control.
- 3.11 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) has been produced and included in **Appendix B**. This reflects potential budget pressures or cost reductions in the medium term and future year salary awards, which for 2025/26 have been included at 3% and for 2026/27 at 2%.
- 3.12 It is proposed in paragraph 2.4 that each partner continues to set aside £50,000 each financial year towards capital replacement costs. The fund stood at £1.91m at 31 March 2023. Currently it is anticipated that the annual partner contribution of £50,000 into the Renewals Fund will continue until 2030.
- 3.13 The proposed capital expenditure programme for 2024/25 is detailed in **Appendix C**. The expenditure identified totals £665,000, including project management and contingency, which will be paid for from the TVFCS Renewals Account. The longer-term forecast of payments into and out of the Renewals Fund, as shown in **Appendix D**, assumes the commencement of system replacement in 2027, for completion by 2030.
- 3.14 The budget papers presented have been produced and developed in collaboration with the lead contact for each respective partner.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH THE TVFCS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

- 4.1 This report complies with the TVFCS Steady State Legal Agreement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 With employment costs accounting for 73% of the total proposed budget, financial performance and budget requirements are largely controlled by factors not directly determined locally such as pay awards and LGPS pension contributions.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 In accordance with Schedule 7, clause 12.1 of the legal agreement, any underspend will be reimbursed to partners in accordance with the cost apportionment model.
- 6.2 The 2024/25 budget complies with statutory regulations.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Other than the issues identified above, there are no additional risk implications arising from this report.

9. CONTRIBUTION TO SERVICE AIMS

- 9.1 The Committee provides oversight on behalf of the three Authorities of the performance of TVFCS fulfilling their statutory duty to make arrangements for dealing with calls for help and summoning personnel (Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004).

10. PRINCIPAL CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Simon Harris, TVFCS Group Manager
- 10.2 Joint Co-ordination Group
- 10.3 Senior Leadership Team, Royal Berkshire FRS
- 10.4 Lead Finance contacts at each respective partner

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix A: TVFCS Revenue Budget 2024/25
- 12.2 Appendix B: TVFCS Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2026/27
- 12.3 Appendix C: Capital Expenditure Programme 2024/25
- 12.4 Appendix D: Renewals Account Long Term Forecast

13. CONTACT DETAILS

13.1 Conor Byrne, Head of Finance and Procurement, RBFRS

Appendix A			
TVFCS Budget			
	2023/24	2024/25	Movement
	£	£	£
Staff			
Employment Costs	1,915,360	2,099,936	184,576
Mileage and Subsistence	5,572	5,850	278
Training	1,000	1,000	0
Recruitment	1,400	1,000	-400
Sub Total	1,923,332	2,107,786	184,454
Corporate			
Facilities	138,147	148,960	10,813
Finance & Procurement	25,336	26,595	1,259
HR and Learning and Development	95,070	102,074	7,004

ICT	101,734	116,141	14,407
Liability Insurance	11,880	12,964	1,084
Management	21,562	22,546	984
Sub Total	393,729	429,280	35,551
Other			
Equipment purchases & Maintenance	4,800	4,600	-200
OFRS Costs (Includes Secondary Control Airwave Rental)	48,634	53,270	4,636
Contingency call handling provision	6,210	6,390	180
Sub Total	59,644	64,260	4,616
Technology			
Capita Mobs System (maint)	83,506	83,506	0
DS3000 (for primary and secondary) ICCS	101,775	106,668	4,893
Charges for Unicorn network and telephony rental	46,454	46,454	0
Software Maintenance	834	901	67
EISEC Calcot (999 caller location)	9,000	9,000	0
Smart services to switch 999 lines to secondary control / elsewhere	17,000	17,000	0
Airwave rental (SAN I ,B) (Primary Only)	16,317	22,889	6,572

Sub Total	274,886	286,418	11,532
Total Budgeted Expenditure	2,651,591	2,887,744	236,153
Income			
Alarm Receiving Centre Income	-12,285	-13,721	-1,436
Total Budgeted Income	-12,285	-13,721	-1,436
Total Budget	2,639,306	2,874,023	234,717

Contingency	150,000	150,000
Upper limit of TVFCS expenditure without further FA approval	2,789,306	3,024,023

Authority:	2023/24	2024/25	Difference
RBFRS (37.0%)	976,544	1,063,389	86,845
OXFRS (28.2%)	744,284	810,474	66,190
BFRS (34.8%)	918,478	1,000,160	81,682
TOTAL	2,639,306	2,874,023	234,717

Appendix B

TVFCS Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	£	£	£
Staff			
Employment Costs	2,099,936	2,162,934	2,206,193
Mileage and Subsistence	5,850	6,026	6,146
Training	1,000	1,030	1,051
Recruitment	1,000	1,030	1,051
Sub Total	2,107,786	2,171,020	2,214,441
Corporate			
Facilities	148,960	153,429	156,497
Finance & Procurement	26,595	27,393	27,941
HR and Learning and Development	102,074	105,136	107,239
ICT	116,141	119,625	122,018
Liability Insurance	12,964	13,353	13,620

Management	22,546	23,222	23,687
Sub Total	429,280	442,158	451,002
Other			
Equipment purchases & Maintenance	4,600	4,738	4,833
OFRS Costs (Includes Secondary Control Airwave Rental)	53,270	54,868	55,965
Contingency call handling provision	6,390	6,582	6,713
Sub Total	64,260	66,188	67,511
Technology			
Capita Mobs System (maint)	83,506	83,506	83,506
DS3000 (for primary and secondary) ICCS	106,668	109,868	112,065
Charges for Unicorn network and telephony rental	46,454	47,848	48,805
Software Maintenance	901	928	947
EISEC Calcot (999 caller location)	9,000	9,000	9,000
Smart services to switch 999 lines elsewhere	17,000	17,000	17,000
Airwave rental (SAN I ,B) (Primary,secondary) (7+8)	22,889	23,576	24,047
Sub Total	286,418	291,726	295,370

Total Budgeted Expenditure	2,887,74 4	2,971,09 2	3,028,32 4
Income			
Alarm Receiving Contract Centre	-13,721	-14,133	-14,415
Total Budgeted Income	-13,721	-14,133	-14,415
Total Budget	2,874,02 3	2,956,95 9	3,013,90 9
Contingency	150,000	150,000	150,000
Upper limit of TVFCS expenditure	3,024,02 3	3,106,95 9	3,163,90 9

Appendix C

Thames Valley Capital Expenditure Programme 2024/25

Proposed Annual Capex Programme - 2024/25	
Item	£
Annual Profiled Capex:	
ICCS hardware and installation (SSS Public Safety Ltd)	550,000
Project management and FRS delivery	60,000
Contingency	55,000
Total	665,000

There is one area of identified spend required from the renewals account in 2024/25.

In [July 2022](#), members agreed to a five-year maintenance and support contract for the DS3000 Integrated Command and Control System (ICCS). Included in the contract is provision for a technical refresh of all ICCS associated hardware. This provision had been identified in the Renewals Account Long-Term Forecast agreed in both the [2022/23 budget](#) and [2023/24 budget](#) papers and was originally earmarked for the 2025/26 financial year with an indicative figure of £300,000.

Following contract award and a review of the ICCS hardware, to enable services to gain the most benefit both operationally and financially, it would be prudent to accelerate the ICCS technical refresh to 2024/25. This decision minimises the impact of ever-increasing hardware costs, replaces equipment that has already reached the end of its service life and ensures value for money for use of the new equipment over the remaining life of the contract (up to 2030).

The cost of the refresh reflects the updated contract quote (and per the contract terms) provided by SSS Public Safety Ltd. A quote of £539,280 was provided to TVFCS in November to inform the budget setting process. Given that delivery and installation will be in 2024/25, an uplift of 2% for inflation has been added, resulting in an expected cost of £550,000. The additional cost will require a contract variation and as per Clause 17 of the TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement, members are being asked to agree this variation as part of the budget approval.

As with the [Vision 4](#) hardware refresh, whereby a level of project resourcing was built into the Capex profile, it is necessary to ensure a similar level of provision in the

Capex profile for 2024/25 to support delivery of the ICCS refresh. Using the learning from the Vision refresh it is recommended that money is earmarked for a customer side project manager and additional funding for ICT practitioners to support supplementary FRS integration work that does not fall within the remit of SSS Public Safety Ltd.

The TVFCS Inter Authority Agreement also makes provision for a separate contingency allocation from the renewals account. It is recommended that a figure of 10% of the RWCS is used to allocate to this fund.

Appendix D

Thames Valley Renewal Account Long Term Forecast (LTF)

The Inter Authority Agreement (the agreement) Schedule 7, Part B, 2.1 sets out that RBFA shall provide a forecast of capital expenditure for each year over the life of the Agreement. The Agreement in its current form terminates in 2030.

The table below provides details of Capex spending to date as per the agreed profiles for 2022/23 and 2023/24 (there was no Capex profiled prior to 2022/23). It provides a forecast based on the current Capex contribution of £50k per Authority.

Funding will be required for a full system replacement by April 2030 due to the expiry of the Agreement and all current system contracts. It is likely that the Authorities will need to consider whether future systems are 'cloud' based, reducing the demand on capital spending but increasing the impact on revenue spending. Some capital outlay will be necessary and the prudent approach to maintaining the Renewals Account is recommended. However, further clarity is required to fully understand the likely funding profile and, over the next 12-24 months, Officers will work with colleagues from across the sector who are procuring system replacements to refine the TVFCS forecast expenditure on systems.

Renewal account Long Term Forecast	
Balance as at 31 March 2022	£1,912k
Contribution 2022/23	£150k
Interest 2022/23	£55k
2022/23 Capex Programme ⁱ	-£265k ⁱ
Balance as at 31 March 2023	£1,852k
Contribution 2023/24	£150k
Interest 2023/24	£113k
2023/24 Vision Hardware replacement – final payment]	-£284k ⁱⁱ
Balance as at 31 March 2024	£1,831k
Contribution 2024/25	£150k
Interest 2024/25	£59.5k
2024/25 Capex programme spend (Video Monitoring system)	- £72k ⁱⁱⁱ
2024/25 Capex Programme [See appendix C - ICCS hardware refresh]	-£665k ^{iv}
Balance as at 31 March 2025	£1,303.5k

Contribution 2025/26	£150k
Interest 2025/26	£29k
Balance as at 31 March 2026	£1,482.5k
Contribution 2026/27	£150k
Interest 2026/27	£32.6k
Balance as at 31 March 2027	£1,665.1k
[Commission replacement project]	
Contribution 2027/28	£150k
Interest 2027/28	£36.3k
Balance as at 31 March 2028	£1,851.4k
Contribution 2028/29	£150k
Interest 2028/29	£40k
Balance as at 31 March 2029	£2,041.4k
Contribution 2029/30	£150k
Interest 2029/30	£44k
Projected total at end of current agreement (April 2030)	£2,235.4k

i) The 2022/23 Capex programme included the following - £248k milestone payment for the Vision hardware refresh and associated £8k project management costs. A payment of £9k was also made for a replacement Uninterrupted Power Supply for Secondary Control.

The 2022/23 Capex budget contingency of £88k was not utilised.

ii) As agreed at TVFCS Joint Committee July 2023 the final payments for the Vision Hardware refresh were to be paid in 2023/24 and amount to £248k. In addition, there are also the remaining project management costs of £36k.

iii) The total Capex Profile for 2023/24 was £181,500, including an inflationary uplift. This included provision for replacement of the voice recording system at circa £90k. This was not delivered in 2023/24 as it will be included in the ICCS hardware replacement due to be delivered in 2024/25 instead.

Furthermore, the 2023/24 profile set aside an estimated figure of £50k for replacement of a video monitoring system. The actual cost of the contract was £72,351.28.

The 2023/24 Capex budget contingency of £16.5k was not utilised.

iv) The 24/25 Capex is set out in appendix C of the 24/25 TVFCS budget papers.

GREEN SECTION - Inter Authority Agreement clause 30.1 states that three years prior to the Expiry Date the Fire Authorities shall discuss whether each Fire Authority (or the Remaining Fire Authorities, as appropriate) wish to continue to participate in TVFCS following the expiry of this Agreement, with a view to reaching a decision by two years prior to the Expiry Date.

Interest accrued

The agreement also sets out that OCC will hold the Renewals Account balance and invests it in line with its treasury management policies. The average interest rate earned on all of its investments will be applied to the Renewals Account balance and the corresponding amount of interest shall be added to the Renewals Account balance.

RBFA shall be responsible for accounting and budgeting in relation to the Renewals Account. OCC shall inform RBFA of the interest earned in each Financial Year.

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2024

Report title: Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/25 to 2028/29

Lead Member: Councillor Matthew Walsh

Report sponsor: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets

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

Action: Decision

Recommendations:

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

1. It is recommended that:
 - (a) the report and Statement of the Chief Finance Officer (see section 8 of Annex A) be noted.
 - (b) a Council Tax precept of £79.46 for a band D equivalent property (equal to an increase of approximately 4p per week) and the revenue budget as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
 - (c) the capital programme as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

Executive summary:

The main report (Annex A) presents the proposed revenue and capital Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the financial years 2024/25 to 2028/29. The MTFP is closely linked to the Financial Strategy which is the link between the organisation's long-term service objectives and its financial capacity. Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) long-term service objectives are set out in the Public Safety Plan (PSP) and Corporate Plan.

On 5 December 2023, the Government published the local government finance policy statement 2024-25, which sets out the intentions for the local government finance settlement for the upcoming year. The provisional settlement was announced on 18 December 2023, which detailed the funding allocations that have been incorporated into the MTFP. Final confirmation of the settlement is expected in February 2024 and any changes in the provisional to final settlement will be presented in a revised Appendix 1 at the meeting.

In the previous two years, the government has allowed additional precept flexibilities for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs) to increase the precept by £5. This year, the referendum threshold has reverted back to 3% for FRAs. The Authority had lobbied alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council for £5 precept flexibility in 2024/25 to deal with the continuous inflationary pressures being faced by FRA's. Unfortunately, this was not successful, and the referendum threshold remains at 3%.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will increase in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI) as at September 2023 whilst the Firelink grant will reduce by 20%. The pension grant funding of £1.206m has been rolled into the RSG on a flat-cash basis but will be uplifted with CPI from 2025/26 onwards. The service has seen a significant reduction in Services Grant which reduced by 84%. The reduction is significantly higher than anticipated. The service had provisionally assumed a 50% reduction only. The revised grant has been updated in the MTFP workings. The 2023/24 allocation was £0.208m and this will reduce to £0.033m, a reduction of £0.175m in funding.

With the introduction of the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023, this has given ministers the power to set the small and standard business rating multipliers separately from one another. Until 2023-24, these two multipliers had to be increased (or frozen) by the same percentage. Local authorities will continue to be compensated for the freeze in the Business Rates Multipliers in 2024/25, seeing the sum of Baseline Funding Levels (BFLs) and an increase in compensation grant for under indexation of the Business Rates Multiplier rise in line with CPI.

The Service has previously been notified that the grant funding for the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability hosted at Aylesbury will end on 31 March 2025. This will reduce the amount of fire specific grant funding from 2025/26 onward by a further £817k per annum, meaning no fire specific grant funding will be received from 2026/27 onwards. With the support of the local MPs, the Fire Authority continue to challenge this decision to reinstate the funding for USAR to ensure this capability beyond 2024/25.

Key assumptions are detailed in Section 4 of Annex A and are based on information received to date.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had previously committed to carry out a review of the distribution of formulas and a reset of accumulated business rates growth but have now confirmed that these will not be implemented in this Spending Review period.

The Services grant which is an unringfenced grant will continue to be distributed to all tiers of the government, however it has reduced from £483m to £77m. The distribution methodology will remain the same and the reduction in grant funding relates to the government's decision to reallocate funds to other settlement grants and equalisation of the adult social care precept. This grant will be unringfenced with local authorities best placed to understand local priorities. Provisional figures published 18 December 2023 show that Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will receive £0.033m, which has been reflected within the projections under the heading Services Grant. The longer-term future of this grant remains uncertain so the current assumption is that this grant will remain in place for 2024/25 only.

Council tax collection funds have been improving since the start of the pandemic where they were adversely impacted, and the tax base reduced. Last year the council tax base increased by 2.15% and council tax base figures for 2024/25 show another year of continued growth averaging at 1.6%.

This year the budget setting process involved the Executive Members who were provided with the overview of the budget and assumptions. The budget setting process was

scrutinised by Officers and Executive Members to ensure only proposals which added value for money and in line with the Corporate Plan and PSP priorities were approved.

The revenue budget for 2024/25 and indicative figures for future years are shown in Appendix 1.

It should also be noted that the figures for council tax and business rates are provisional. The statutory deadline for the billing authorities to provide this information to the Authority is 31 January 2024. Any changes to the figures will be presented in a revised Appendix 1 at the meeting.

Appendix 2 shows the latest summary of the capital programme for 2024/25 and approved schemes for the following years.

Appendix 3 provides further detail on the level of council tax chargeable for each band if the Authority accepts the recommendation to increase the band D by 2.98%.

Financial implications: All financial implications are shown in the main body of the report.

Risk management: Management of Financial resources is a key risk to the Authority. By projecting forward and monitoring the financial plans, we are in a better position to avoid and mitigate the risk of adverse financial consequences.

Legal implications: The Local Government Act 2003 gives the responsible finance officer, namely the Chief Finance Officer of the Combined Fire Authority under s112 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the responsibility to report to Members of the Authority on their assessment of the robustness of the estimates used within the budget and on the adequacy of reserves.

Members must have regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer in respect of the above and the highlighted associated risks before considering the recommendations as set out in the report.

Privacy and security implications: No direct impact.

Duty to collaborate: No direct impact.

Health and safety implications: No direct impact.

Environmental implications: No direct impact.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: No direct impact.

Consultation and communication: None.

Background papers:

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2022/23 to 2026/27 and Revised Appendices, Fire Authority, 16 February 2022:

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/02/fa-item-9b-16022022.pdf/>

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/09/fa-160222-item-9b-revised-appendices-1-and-2.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
Annex A	Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2027/28	None
Appendix 1-4	Appendix 1 – MTFP Budget Model and Reserves Position Appendix 2 – Capital Programme Summary Appendix 3 – Council Tax Rates Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment of the Adequacy of General Reserves	

Annex A – Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/25 to 2028/29

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the proposed revenue and capital Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/25 to 2028/29.
- 1.2. The MTFP is closely linked to the Financial Strategy which is the link between the organisation's long-term service objectives and its financial capacity. BFRS long-term service objectives are set out in the Public Safety Plan (PSP) and Corporate Plan. The PSP sets out the strategic approach to the management of risk in the communities the service serves. The Corporate Plan sets out how the service intend to equip and develop the organisation and its people to meet the challenges faced by the service. The MTFP details the resources available to facilitate these plans.
- 1.3. As part of the Fire Authority's Terms of Reference and MTFP, the Authority reviews and sets a balanced budget each year in line with corporate priorities. The MTFP is expressed as a detailed annual budget for the first year, with outline indicative budgets for the following four years.
- 1.4. Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 the Chief Finance Officer (as S.112 Chief Finance Officer of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) is required to report to Members on:
 - The robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget
 - The adequacy of the proposed financial reserves
- 1.5. The Local Government Act 2003 requires that Members have regard to the report in making their decisions (see section 8).
- 1.6. Section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 also requires the Authority to have regard to the level of reserves for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the net budget requirement.

2. Local Government Finance Settlement 2024 to 2025

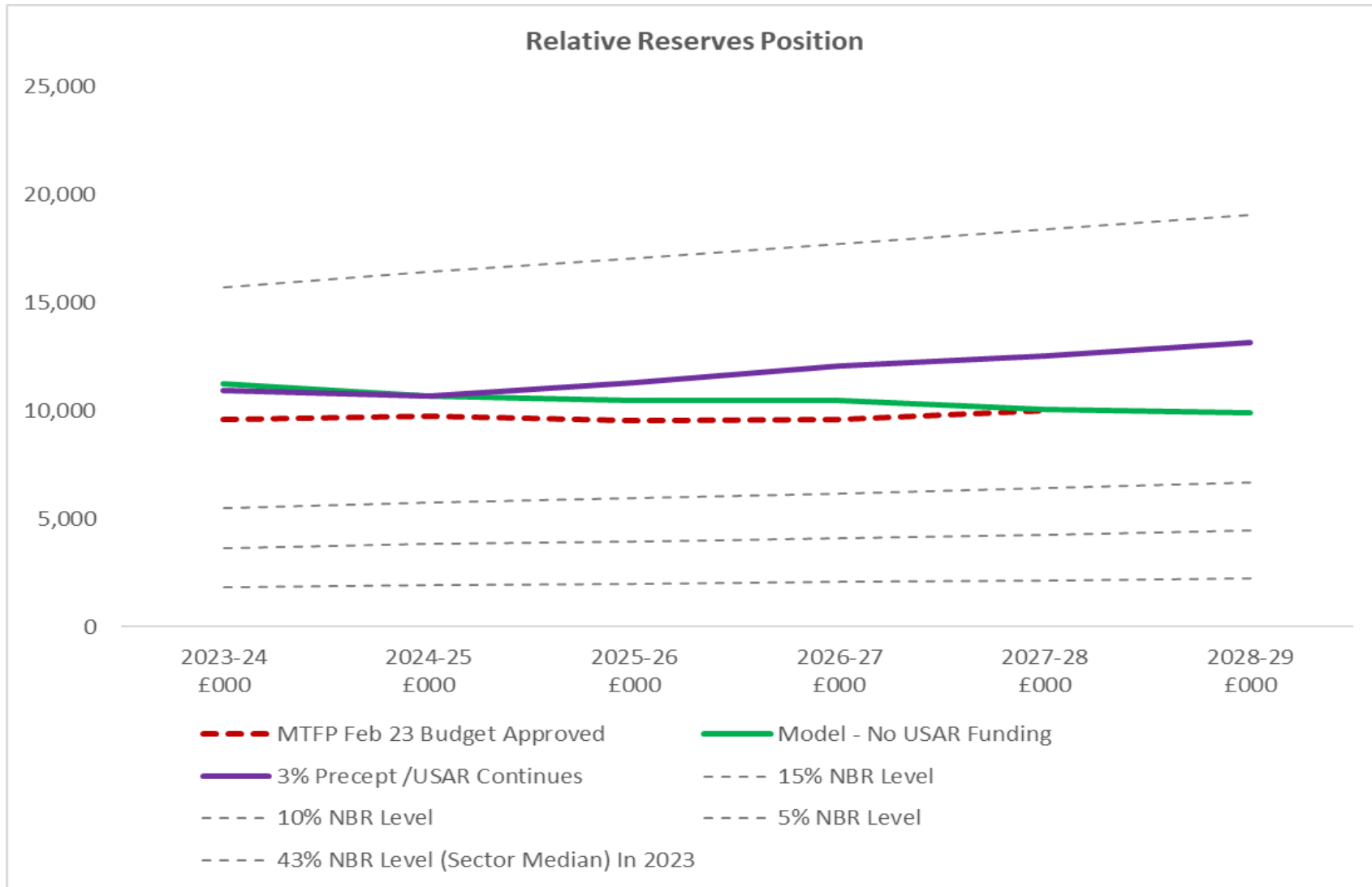
- 2.1. The Revenue support grant will increase in line with the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) between September 2022 and September 2023 which is 6.7%. The pension grant will be incorporated into the RSG on a flat cash basis for 2024/25 but will be increased in line with CPI in future years.
- 2.2. With the introduction of the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023, this has given ministers the power to set the small and standard business rating multipliers separately from one another. Until 2023-24, these two multipliers had to be increased (or frozen) by the same percentage. Local authorities will continue to be compensated the difference between the freeze and the increase expected in line with CPI. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had previously committed to carry out a review of the distribution of formulas and a reset of accumulated business rates growth but have now confirmed that these will not be implemented in this Spending Review period.
- 2.3. The Services grant which is a unringfenced grant will continue to be distributed to all tiers of the government, however it has reduced from £481m to £77m. The distribution methodology will remain the same and the reduction relates to the

government's decision to reallocate funds to other settlement grants and equalisation of the adult social care precept. This grant will be unringfenced with local authorities best placed to understand local priorities. Provisional figures published 18 December 2023 show that Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service will receive £0.033m, which has been reflected in the projections under the heading Services Grant. The longer-term future of this grant remains uncertain so the current assumption is that this grant will remain in place for 2024/24 only.

- 2.4. With these reductions in grants, it results in the service's core spending power increase being less than 3% before any decisions are made on Council Tax. To offset this, the Service will now receive additional funding guarantee grant, which ensures the services' core spending power increases by at least 3%. 31 out of 44 FRAs will receive this funding in 2024-25. This grant has been factored within the settlement funding assessment line.
- 2.5. 2020 Valuation – Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) - On 21 December 2023 the Government announced that the Government Actuary Department had completed its valuation of Firefighters' Pension Scheme (England) and published the results of the 2020 Valuation. The actuarial report shows that the employer contribution rate will rise to 37.6% of pensionable pay from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2027. The Treasury have confirmed the increase in cost will be fully funded in 2024/25 with future years allocation still to be confirmed. The costings and funding for this is yet to be published and therefore will be included in the revised appendix 1.
- 2.6. As part of this year's announcement, the Government published headline changes in core spending power between 2023/24 and 2024/25 for every authority. The headline change published for Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service was an increase of 5.0% in cash terms.
- 2.7. This is based on the assumption that the Authority will increase its Band D council tax in 2024/25 by 2.98%.

3. Council Tax and Business Rates

- 3.1. In publicly declaring core spending power figures, the Government has clearly set an expectation that local authorities will continue to increase council tax every year by the maximum amount permissible.
- 3.2. The chart below illustrates the different reserves positions at the end of the MTFP depending on receiving the USAR grant or not beyond 2024/25 (both scenarios assuming council tax is increased by 2.99% every year).



- 3.3. The Council tax was increased by £5 in 2022/23 and 2023/24. For 2024/25, the referendum threshold has reverted back to 3%. The Authority had lobbied with the National Fire Chiefs Council for £5 precept flexibility in 2024/25 to deal with the continuous inflationary pressures being faced by FRA's which was not successful.
- 3.4. The Authority currently sets a band D equivalent precept of £77.16 per annum (approx. £1.48 per week). This is significantly below the national average and one of the lowest precepts of any combined fire authority.
- 3.5. Council tax chargeable for each band should the Authority resolve to increase the band D by 2.98% is shown in Appendix 3.

4. Risk Factors in Budget Assumptions

- 4.1. The budget proposed for 2024/25 at Appendix 1 has been compiled by looking in detail at current spending and future plans.
- 4.2. This year the budget setting process involved the Executive Members who were provided with the detailed budget and assumptions. The budget setting process was scrutinised by Officers and Members to ensure only proposals which added value for money and in line with the Corporate Plan and Public Safety Plan priorities were approved.
- 4.3. Included within the budget is the increase in revenue contribution to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) which is a joint control room operated by the three Thames Valley FRS. Buckinghamshire FRS contribution towards the revenue expenditure for the TVFCS has increased by £82k per annum (£1.000m for 2024/25) which has been included in the MTFP.
- 4.4. The Service has previously been notified that the grant funding for the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) capability hosted at Aylesbury will end on 31 March 2025. This will reduce the amount of fire specific grant funding from 2025/26 onward by a further £817k per annum, meaning no fire specific grant funding will be from 2026/27 onwards. With the support of the local MPs, the Fire Authority will be challenging this decision to reinstate the funding for USAR to ensure this capability beyond 2024/25.
- 4.5. Uncertainty continues to persist regarding the level of inflation that the Service will be subject to over the coming years. Given that almost three-quarters of the budget relates to direct employee costs, pay inflation has a hugely significant impact on the Services budget.
- 4.6. Areas where budgets have changed significantly from previous years have been subject to a series of challenges by Officers and Members. Risks which have been identified are to be covered from the reserves.

- 4.7. The detailed costs and funding are based on the updated budget requirement including the annual uplift assumptions below:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Council tax increase	6.94%	2.98%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%
Council tax base	2.15%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
Settlement Funding Assessment	10.1%	6.7%	4%	3%	2%	2%

5. Capital

- 5.1. The revenue impact of the capital programme has been factored into the base revenue budget requirement. This includes an annual revenue contribution to capital (RCCO), details of which are shown in Appendix 1.
- 5.2. The table at Appendix 2 details the approved capital programme for 2023/24, the estimated provisional outturn position and any proposed slippage to the programme. Any slippage is then added to the new budget requests for 2024/25 to give a total capital budget requirement of £2.8m for 2024/25.
- 5.3. The Authority should also take cognisance of the prudential indicators when approving the capital programme (submitted as a separate paper at this meeting).

6. Scrutiny and Challenge Process

- 6.1. All budget changes have been determined based on a series of challenge panels held by officers and then Members during the MTFP process.
- 6.2. As part of the scrutiny process, the service has been able reallocate resources and use the additional precept flexibility/funding to invest in the following areas;
- EDI
 - Operational Training
 - Operational Resourcing
 - ICT Training
 - Workwear
 - Marketing and Communications
 - Development of the Learning Management System.

7. Adequacy of Reserves

- 7.1. The Reserves Strategy is now incorporated within the Financial Strategy which was approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 9 December 2020 (<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/11/item-7c-fire-authority-9-december-2020.pdf/>). Given the significant uncertainty that persists around inflation and other subsequent events that have occurred, the level of the General Fund has been reviewed. The current calculation of the risk assessed amount can be seen in Appendix 4.

7.2. The latest forecast balances and reserves at year-end 2023/24 are:

- General Fund Balance - £1.6m
- Earmarked Reserves - £3.8m*
- Capital Reserves - £5.5m

* The earmarked reserves balance excludes the amount held by Oxfordshire County Council relating to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service.

8. Statement of the Chief Finance Officer

8.1. The purpose of this statement is to comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003 whereby the Chief Finance Officer, in the Fire Authority's case the Director of Finance and Assets and Chief Finance Officer, must report on:

- The robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget and;
- The adequacy of the proposed financial reserves;
- In recommending the budget to the Authority, Members must have regard to this report when making decisions in connection with which it is made.

8.2. Given the level of the General Fund Balance and earmarked reserves available, the prudent approach to the budget setting process for the next financial year and the controls for budget management, it is my conclusion as Chief Finance Officer for the Authority that, subject to approval of recommendation 1(b), there is sufficient capacity in the reserves to cope with the financial risks the Authority faces for 2024/25 and future years and that the methodology applied provides the necessary assurance to the Authority about the robustness of the estimates used in constructing the budget.

Appendix 1 – MTFP Model

The model below is based on the assumptions detailed in Sections 3 and 4 and all significant budget movements have been subjected to Officer and Member scrutiny as noted in Section 6.1. The statutory deadline for the billing authorities to provide Council Tax and business rates information to the Authority is 31 January 2024. Any changes to these figures will be presented in a revised Appendix 1 at the meeting.

Directorate	2023/24 Approved Budget £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Base Budget	0	36,450	38,194	39,627	41,164	42,712
Inflation Adjustment	0	1,021	1,622	1,239	1,284	1,328
Corporate Core	1,063	-269	255	245	0	0
Statutory Accounting	1,459	-1,007	0	0	0	0
Delivery, Corporate Development & Planning	24,751	1,802	403	25	25	8
Human Resources	540	72	0	0	0	0
Finance & Assets	6,767	381	-120	-55	0	0
RCCO	1,870	-256	-728	83	238	276
Net Budget Requirement	36,450	38,194	39,627	41,164	42,712	44,324
Settlement Funding Assessment	-11,338	-10,500	-10,913	-11,243	-11,470	-11,697
Services Grant	-199	-33	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Receipts Surplus/Deficit	-335	-94	-150	-150	-150	-150
Fire Specific Grants	-989	-933	-57	0	0	0
Council Tax Receipts	-24,859	-26,091	-27,299	-28,563	-29,884	-31,269
Pension Grant Funding	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208	-1,208
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	2,478	665	0	0	0	0
Total Funding Available	-36,450	-38,194	-39,627	-41,164	-42,712	-44,324
Shortfall/(Surplus) for Year	0	0	0	0	0	0

Appendix 1a – Reserves Position

Reserves Position	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
General Fund Balance	-1,625	-1,625	-1,625	-1,625	-1,625	-1,625
Other Earmarked Reserves (excluding Control Room Res.)	-3,798	-4,463	-4,463	-4,463	-4,463	-4,463
Earmarked Capital Reserves	-5,796	-4,573	-4,381	-4,358	-3,971	-3,797
Total	-11,219	-10,661	-10,469	-10,446	-10,059	-9,885

Appendix 2 – Capital Programme

The table below summarises the capital programme from 2023/24 through to 2028/29 and is based on the revenue contribution to capital levels shown in Appendix 1:

Capital Programme	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000
Property	1,139	701	469	407	219	250
Hydraulic Equipment	65	70	75	80	85	90
Operational Equipment	90	95	100	105	110	115
Operational Red Fleet Vehicles (Fire Appliances)	750	887	0	311	326	343
Operational Red Fleet Vehicles (Specials)	0	440	350	0	760	760
Operational White Fleet Vehicles	37	0	0	0	0	0
BA and Associated Equipment	0	90	0	0	0	0
ICT	156	160	85	90	95	100
Slippage (Approved July 2022 Executive Committee)	1,100					
In-year Movements	270					
Current Year Slippage Forecast	-394	394				
Forecast Overspend	33					
Total Expenditure	3,246	2,837	1,079	993	1,595	1,658
Funding b/fwd	-3,359	-5,521	-4,298	-4,106	-4,083	-3,696
In Year Funding	-5,683	-1,614	-887	-970	-1,208	-1,484
Funding (Available)/Deficit	-5,796	-4,573	-4,381	-4,358	-3,971	-3,797

Note 1 – Figures highlighted in BLUE are currently only indicative and are not being considered at this stage of the process.

Note 2 – Figures highlighted in GREEN indicate capital bids submitted for this stage of the process.

Note 3 – Figures highlighted in GOLD contain amounts that have been previously approved, plus capital bids submitted for this stage of the process

Appendix 3 – Council Tax Rates

If the band D equivalent council tax were increased by 2.98% for 2024/25, the following rates would apply to properties in each band:

Bands	Proportion of Band D Charge	Per Week (£)	Per Month (£)	Per Year (£)
A	6/9	£1.02	£4.41	£52.97
B	7/9	£1.19	£5.15	£61.80
C	8/9	£1.35	£5.89	£70.63
D	9/9	£1.52	£6.62	£79.46
E	11/9	£1.86	£8.09	£97.12
F	13/9	£2.20	£9.57	£114.78
G	15/9	£2.54	£11.04	£132.43
H	18/9	£3.05	£13.24	£158.92

This would represent an annual increase of £1.53 per annum on a band A, £2.30 per annum on a band D and £4.60 per annum on a band H property.

The following table shows the increase in each band (rounded to the nearest pence).

Bands	Per Week (£)	Per Month (£)	Per Year (£)
A	0.03	0.12	1.53
B	0.04	0.15	1.79
C	0.03	0.17	2.04
D	0.04	0.19	2.30
E	0.05	0.23	2.81
F	0.06	0.28	3.33
G	0.07	0.32	3.83
H	0.09	0.38	4.60

Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment of the Adequacy of General Reserves

The table below shows the calculation of the amount required to be held in the General Fund:

Budget Assumptions	Financial standing and management assessment/impact	Comments	Amount Required £000
The treatment of inflation and interest rates	The overall financial standing of the authority (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, council tax collection rates etc.). Rises in the prices of some commodities, e.g. fuel, highlight the relevance of using a number of inflation rates in the budget and financial strategy, and considering whether general reserves are adequate to deal with unexpected increases. Volatility in the financial markets also points to the need to consider investment and borrowing risks and their impact on income.	Significant uncertainty persists regarding the level of inflation (both pay and non-pay). Amount required to be held in general reserve estimated as circa 2% of net budget requirement	765
Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts	The authority's track record in budget and financial management including the robustness of the medium-term plans. Authorities will also need to take into account changes in the property market and adjust estimates and assumptions for reserves accordingly.	This amount is based on 10% of the average capital receipts received in the previous 3 years.	120
The treatment of demand led pressures	The authority's capacity to manage in-year budget pressures, and its strategy for managing both demand and service delivery in the longer term.	An amount has been set aside to help fund any recommendations that may come from the Grenfell Tower inquiry or the McCloud/Sargeant judgement.	100
The treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains	The strength of the financial information and reporting arrangements. The authority should also be in a position to activate contingency plans should the reporting arrangements identify that planned savings or gains will either not be achieved or be delayed.	A key future efficiency within the Medium-Term Financial Plan is the property saving associated with consolidating the current property portfolio. This is the amount required if planned savings are delayed by one year.	165

Budget Assumptions	Financial standing and management assessment/impact	Comments	Amount Required £000
The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or major capital developments	The authority's virement and end of year procedures in relation to budget under/overspends at authority and department/directorate level. Risk management measures in relation to partnerships, including consideration of risk allocation. Contract provisions designed to safeguard the authority's position in the event of problems arising from outsourcing arrangements.	This amount is based on circa 15% of the total estimated expenditure on the capital programme for 2024/25. There is a specific risk in relation to vehicles and potential increases in import tariffs.	425
The availability of reserves, government grants and other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions	The adequacy of the authority's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks. When considering insurance cover, the structure of the cover as well as the overall level of risk should be taken into account. Risk assessments should be used when balancing the levels of insurance premiums and reserves.	The insurance excess is set at £5,000 for the majority of claims. There is a risk that there may be a large number of high value claims. This value assumes ten claims over £5,000 in any one year.	50
Total Required			1,625



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2024

Report title: 2025 – 2030 Service Planning Update

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse: Service Delivery, Protection and Collaboration

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne, Chief Operating Officer / Deputy Chief Fire Officer

Author and contact: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets,
mhemming@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Decision.

Recommendations: That the Executive Committee approve the changes to the timing of the 2025 – 2030 planning process.

Executive summary:

At its meeting on 7 December 2022 (see Background Papers) the Fire Authority resolved that:

1. the successor plan to the 2020 – 2025 Public Safety Plan, be known as the ‘2025 – 2030 Community Risk Management Plan’;
2. the provisional timescale for preparation of the 2025 – 2030 Community Risk Management and Corporate Plans be approved;
3. any changes to the sequencing and timing of the 2025 – 2030 planning process be delegated to the Executive Committee for approval.

To date, the Community Risk Management Plan (**CRMP**) scope has been agreed, the listening and engagement research completed, and the outcomes of that exercise were reported to the Executive Committee and Fire Authority at their meetings on 13 September 2023 and 11 October 2023 respectively (see Background Papers).

However, one of the risks noted in the report presented to the Fire Authority on 7 December 2022 was of “competing priorities resulting in the diversion of key resources onto other projects or tasks.”

On 19 October 2023 the Service received the outcomes of its most recent inspection and was then required to produce an action plan addressing the causes for concern raised within the report. Furthermore, it was confirmed on 22 November 2023 that the Service would be moved into enhanced monitoring by His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). These events have resulted in work that wasn’t foreseen at the time the original 2025 – 2030 Service planning

timing was approved, which diverted many of the resources away from preparing the draft 2025-2030 CRMP for a number of months. Although the CRMP hazard and risk analysis has been substantially completed there is further work still to be done on the content of the main document.

It is therefore recommended that the revised timing of the planning process as shown in Appendix 1 is approved. This will result in the CRMP being approved later than the original plan (now December 2024) following a proposed 12-week consultation period once the draft has been approved by the Authority, but still well in advance of its proposed implementation date of 1 April 2025.

Financial implications:

No direct impacts resulting from this report.

Risk management:

The leading case which considered the substantive and procedural requirements of a CRMP is [R. \(on the application of Islington LBC\) v Mayor of London \[2013\] EWHC 4142](#) in which the High Court determined an application for judicial review brought against LFEPA (the, then, fire and rescue authority for Greater London) concerning the adoption of its IRMP 2013-16. (The new Service Plan has been designated a 'Community Risk Management Plan' (CRMP), rather than 'IRMP', to align with the 2021 Fire Standards Board Fire Standard).

The London Boroughs argued that (1) the formulation of the IRMP should have commenced with a comprehensive risk assessment of "all foreseeable risks" before considering how those risks were to be addressed. If that had been done, certain vulnerable sections of the community would have been identified as being at higher risk than others elsewhere in London. Instead, it was said that LFEPA had adopted an approach to the IRMP predicated on seeking to achieve uniform attendance time targets, contrary to the Fire and Rescue National Framework, and had failed to take into account local risk factors; and (2) the consultation process leading to the adoption of the IRMP was flawed, in that misleading information had been conveyed in relation to a predicted increase in fatality rates under the proposals. Further, it was alleged that insufficient information had been made available about the impact of the proposals on attendance times at ward level.

The High Court refused the application, finding in favour of LFEPA for, i.a., the following grounds:

(1) The National Framework was not prescriptive as to the means by which all foreseeable risks were to be identified; those risks merely had to be addressed at a level of detail that enabled proper planning of a response to the needs identified. On the evidence, that had been done. Accordingly, the need to consider all foreseeable

local risks in the formulation of the IRMP had been met [see paras 195-196, 207, 227-229 of judgment].

(2) The consultation had fulfilled its purpose of enabling consultees to draw to the attention of the decision-makers any reasoned objection to the proposals advanced [paras 292-293, 307,310 – 311], the High Court noting that care is required should proposals be changed after consultation [340].

(3) Certain sections of the population were more likely to suffer a fire and it was appropriate to consider the effect on them as future users of the fire service when assessing whether there would be indirect discrimination against them under the Equality Act 2010 s.149. LFEPA had complied with the obligation to have due regard to the Act by focusing at borough level on those most likely to experience fire as a legitimate means of considering those with protected characteristics [paras 365-366, 370-372].

Legal implications:

The requirement to produce an IRMP has a statutory basis as it is specified in the National Framework. Section 21 of [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#) (FRSA 2004) requires that:

“(1) The Secretary of State must prepare a Fire and Rescue National Framework.

(2) The Framework—

(a) must set out priorities and objectives for fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of their functions;

(b) may contain guidance to fire and rescue authorities in connection with the discharge of any of their functions;

(c) may contain any other matter relating to fire and rescue authorities or their functions that the Secretary of State considers appropriate.”

Moreover section 21 (7) of the FRSA 2004 requires that: *“(7) Fire and rescue authorities must have regard to the Framework in carrying out their functions.”*

A key concept within the National Framework is the IRMP. For example, at paragraph *“3.6 Fire and rescue authorities are required to assess the risk of emergencies occurring and use this to inform contingency planning. To do this effectively, fire and rescue authorities are expected to assess their existing capability and identify any gaps as part of the integrated risk management planning process. This gap analysis needs to be conducted by fire and rescue authorities individually and collectively to obtain an overall picture of their ability to meet the full range of risks in their areas.”*

Privacy and security implications:

No direct impact.

Duty to collaborate:

The National Framework requires every fire and rescue authority to produce its own IRMP / CRMP. However, officers share thinking on approaches to plan development

and consultation practices with other fire and rescue services, including neighbouring services.

All neighbouring fire and rescue authorities and Thames Valley blue light partners would be included as part of the public consultation process associated with the production of the new CRMP.

Health and safety implications:

No direct implications arising from the production of the draft CRMP and Corporate Plan. Any proposals for change arising from the Plans will include evaluation of any health and safety implications.

Environmental implications:

None arising from the planning process itself. However, any changes to service provision proposed in the CRMP will be subject to environmental impact assessments where appropriate.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

These will be identified and evaluated as the plans are developed, in line with the FSB CRMP Fire Standard; relevant legislative requirements; best practice; and guidance, for example: [Integrated risk management planning: equality and diversity guidance, Home Office 2008](#)

Consultation and communication:

All consultations will be undertaken in compliance with National Framework and FSB CRMP Fire Standard requirements. A consultation and communication plan will be prepared as part of the project planning. All consultation findings will be reported to the Authority. The release of the draft 2025 – 2030 CRMP for public consultation will be subject to Fire Authority approval as specified at Appendix 1.

The period between the closure of the consultation and the proposed date for approval by the Authority in December is to allow for the subsequent analysis of responses, in accordance with the [Gunning Principles](#) which set out the legal tests that define what constitutes a legitimate consultation. These include, amongst other things, that: “3 there is adequate time for consideration and response” and “4 ‘conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made. Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account”.

The outcomes of the consultation are not binding on the Authority. However, it is required to have regard to them in reaching decisions associated with the IRMP / CRMP planning process where relevant.

Background papers:

2025 – 2030 Service Planning, 7 December 2022, Fire Authority, <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/11/item-10-fire-authority-meeting-7-december-2022-2025-2030-service-planning.pdf/>



2025-30 CRMP Listening and Engagement Consultation Outcomes, 11 October 2023, Fire Authority, <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/09/fire-authority-meeting-11-october-2023-item-13b-2025-2030-crpm-listening-and-engagement-consultation-outcomes.pdf/>

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Updated 2025 – 2030 Service Planning Timeline	

Appendix 1 - Updated 2025 – 2030 Service Planning Timeline

Activity	2023				2024				2025	Status
	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Define & agree 2025-2030 CRMP scope & objectives	■									Complete
Listening & engagement research (public & other stakeholders)		■								Complete
Listening & engagement outcomes to Fire Authority			■							Complete
Prepare draft 2025-2030 CRMP (inc. Hazard & Risk Analysis)		■	■	■	■	■				Delayed
Fire Authority approve draft 2025-2030 CRMP for public consultation					■	■				Not Started
12-week public consultation					■	■	■			Not Started
Evaluate consultation findings & finalise CRMP							■	■		Not Started
Fire Authority review consultation outcomes & approve 2025-2030 CRMP *							■	■		Not Started
Develop 2025 – 2030 Corporate Plan								■	■	Not Started
Fire Authority approve 2025 – 2030 Corporate Plan									■	Not Started

* Original plan showed this as September, but as there is no Fire Authority meeting in that month it would have necessarily been October

 Original Timeline
 Updated Timeline



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2024

Report title: Response to The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024-25: Consultation

Lead Member: Councillor Matthew Walsh

Report sponsor: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets

Author and contact: Mark Hemming - mhemming@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Noting

Recommendations: That the response to the consultation be noted.

Executive summary:

The Consultation was published on 18 December 2023, with a deadline for responses of 15 January 2024. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, the response was discussed with the Chairman and Lead Member before submission. This paper details the content of the submission for the attention of the Committee.

The Consultation sought views on a number of areas, including the distribution of Revenue Support Grant, council tax referendum principles and proposals for the Services Grant in 2024/25.

The Consultation also sought views on other areas not directly relevant to the Service, so a response of “not relevant” or “no further comments” was submitted in relation to those questions.

Financial implications: The financial implications of the provisional settlement have been factored into the medium-term financial plan, which is also being presented to the Executive Committee on 8 February 2024.

Risk management: No direct impact.

Legal implications: The Chief Fire Officer may make a formal response on behalf of the Authority to a Government Consultation Paper provided that such a response is subsequently referred to the appropriate committee for their attention.

Privacy and security implications: No direct impact.

Duty to collaborate: No direct impact.

Health and safety implications: No direct impact.

Environmental implications: No direct impact.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: No direct impact.

Consultation and communication: No direct impact.

Background papers: None

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Provisional local government finance settlement 2024 to 2025_ consultation - GOV.UK	None
2	Response to the Consultation	None

Open consultation

Consultation: provisional local government finance settlement 2024 to 2025

Published 18 December 2023

Applies to England

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[Annex A: Personal data](#)

[Annex B: Address details & list of consultation questions](#)

[Annex C: Glossary of technical terms](#)

[Annex D: Worked example of Funding Guarantee](#)



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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2024-to-2025/consultation-provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-2024-to-2025>

Scope of the consultation

Topic of this consultation:

This consultation seeks views on the proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2024 to 2025.

Scope of this consultation:

This consultation seeks views on proposals, in particular from representatives of local government, for the local government finance settlement for 2024-25.^{[footnote 1](#)} The local government finance settlement is an annual process to distribute core resources to local government and consists of grant, council tax and locally retained business rates. Following consultation, the government will determine the final amounts of the Revenue Support Grant, and the section 31 grants distributed alongside the settlement, and their allocations to receiving authorities and the specified body, as part of determining the overall allocation of this year's settlement made to each local authority in England.

This consultation document, together with accompanying documents including the draft Local Government Finance Report for 2024-25, notifies representatives of local government and members of the public of the government's proposals for policies across the upcoming settlement. This includes: the general nature of the basis of Revenue Support Grant distribution; the general nature of the basis of the calculation of 'tariff' and 'top up' payments that form part of the business rates retention system; the determination of the 'central' and 'local share' of business rates for 2024-25; the general nature of the basis of the distribution of section 31 grants alongside the settlement; and council tax referendum principles set through the settlement process. This year's consultation also seeks views from the sector on using financial levers in the future to disincentivise councils from operating a part time work for full time pay policy, for example the so-called '4 day working week' practice.

On 5 December, the government published a policy statement setting out the government's intentions for the 2024-25 settlement. This consultation builds on and invites views on the proposals set out in that statement.

Geographical scope:

These proposals relate to England only.

Basic Information

Body responsible for the consultation:

Local Government Finance Directorate within the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (the "Department")

Duration:

This consultation will last for 4 weeks from 18 December 2023 to 15 January 2024

Enquiries:

For any enquiries about the consultation please contact: lgfcorrespondence@levellingup.gov.uk

How to respond:

We strongly request you respond through the [online form \(https://consult.levellingup.gov.uk/local-government-finance/provisional-lgf-settlement-2024-25\)](https://consult.levellingup.gov.uk/local-government-finance/provisional-lgf-settlement-2024-25)

If you are unable to use the online form, you can email your response to the questions

found in Annex B of this consultation document to lgfcorrespondence@levellingup.gov.uk

When you reply, it would be very useful if you could confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name,
- your position (if applicable),
- the name of organisation (if applicable),
- an email address, and
- a contact telephone number

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and UK data protection legislation). In certain circumstances this may therefore include personal data when required by law.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the information access regimes and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will at all times process your personal data in accordance with UK data protection legislation and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included below.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the consultation principles? If not, or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please, contact us via the [Complaints Procedure](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities/about/complaints-procedure) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities/about/complaints-procedure>).

1. Summary of proposals

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This consultation paper sets out the government's proposals for the 2024-25 local government finance settlement.

1.1.2 This chapter provides a summary of the proposals contained within the 2024-25 provisional local government finance settlement. The [provisional settlement](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2024-to-2025) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2024-to-2025>) sets out the government's proposed distribution of resources for the 2024-25 financial year. This formal consultation forms a key part of the provisional settlement. The government will consider views from representatives of local government offered in response to this consultation. The government will then publish a response to the consultation in the new year, as part of the final local government finance settlement which will notify all local authorities in England of their final settlement allocations.

1.2 Context and overall approach

1.2.1 The policy statement the government published on 12 December 2022 gave councils forward notice of our proposals for the 2024-25 local government finance settlement, including the additional funding set out at the 2022 Autumn Statement. This has supported councils' budget setting processes by giving multi-year certainty over their funding. The policy statement published on 5 December 2023 confirmed these measures and set out further proposals for this financial year. This consultation builds on those statements.

1.2.2 For 2024-25, we are making available an increase in Core Spending Power of 6.5% or almost £4 billion on 2023-24. This is a real terms increase. Total Core Spending Power provided through the local government finance settlement for 2024-25 will be over £64 billion. The government will set the core referendum limit for increases in council tax to 3% for 2024-25. In addition, councils with social care responsibilities will be able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 2%.

1.2.3 The proposals in this document focus on stability. We propose that:

- The Revenue Support Grant will increase in line with the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) between September 2022 and September 2023;
- The sum of baseline funding levels (BFLs) and underindexation compensation will increase as if both business rating multipliers had increased by the change in the CPI between September 2022 and September 2023;
- Additional funding for social care announced at the 2022 Autumn Statement will continue to go through established distribution methodologies like those used for the Social Care Grant and improved Better Care Fund;
- The allocation and distribution of other settlement grants will be maintained, including the New Homes Bonus and Rural Services Delivery Grant;
- The Funding Guarantee introduced last year will be maintained. This will ensure that all authorities will see at least a 3% increase in their core spending power before any decision they make about organisational efficiencies, use of reserves, and council tax levels.

This means that local authorities in England will see an above inflation increase in their core spending power.^{[footnote 2\]](#)}

1.3 Summary of proposals included in the 2024-25 provisional settlement

1.3.1 Chapter 2 – Distribution of Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA): this chapter outlines the government's proposals for distributing core settlement resources in 2024-25.

- Local authorities will see an increase in baseline funding levels (BFLs) and underindexation compensation grant as if both business rating multipliers had increased by CPI.^{[footnote 3\]](#)}

- BFLs will increase to reflect the increase of the standard multiplier, accounting for the fact that authorities have different shares of properties subject to the small and standard multipliers.
- Local authorities will be compensated for the freeze in the small business rates multiplier in 2024-25 via an increase to the calculation for underindexation compensation.
- Before rolling in grants, we propose to provide a uniform percentage increase in Revenue Support Grant (RSG) allocations from 2023-24, in line with the change in the CPI between September 2022 and September 2023, as we had previously stated in last year's policy statement.
- We are confirming that we have no plans to introduce 'negative Revenue Support Grant'.
- We also propose to roll in the Fire and Pensions Grant into the Revenue Support Grant. The Fire and Pensions Grant will retain its existing distribution.

1.3.2 Chapter 3 – Council tax: this chapter details the government's intentions for council tax referendum principles in 2024-25.

- Continuing to protect local taxpayers from excessive increases in council tax, by setting the core council tax referendum limit of up to 3% from April 2024. Councils can set higher increases if they wish, via the consent of a local referendum;
- In addition, local authorities with social care responsibilities will be able to set an adult social care precept of up to 2% without a referendum;
- A bespoke council tax referendum principle of up to 3% or £5, whichever is higher, for shire districts;
- A bespoke additional council tax flexibility of up to £20 on Band D bills for the Greater London Authority, as requested by the Mayor of London;
- Setting no council tax referendum principles for mayoral combined authorities (MCAs);
- Setting no council tax referendum principles for town and parish councils;
- A 3% referendum principle for all fire and rescue authorities;
- A £13 referendum principle on Band D bills for police authorities and police and crime commissioners; and
- Bespoke council tax referendum principles for councils in the most significant financial failure – see section 3.5.

It is for individual authorities to determine whether to use the flexibilities detailed above, taking into consideration the pressures many households are facing.

Where a council has a specific and evidenced concern about its ability to set or maintain a balanced budget, including where there has been local financial failure, the council may seek additional support from government via the exceptional financial support framework. As part of that process, the government will consider representations from councils on council tax provision.

1.3.3 Chapter 4 – Funding Guarantee.

- We will maintain the Funding Guarantee for 2024-25. Renewing the Funding Guarantee will ensure all councils will continue to see at least a 3% increase in their Core Spending Power before any decisions they make about organisational efficiencies, use of reserves, and council tax.

1.3.4 Chapter 5 – Distribution of adults' and children's social care resources: this chapter sets out the government's proposals for making specific funding available for social care services.

- The **Social Care Grant** will increase to £4.5 billion in 2024-25, an increase of £692 million from 2023-24. This includes £1.9 billion from delaying the rollout of adult social care charging reform from October 2023. The majority of this additional funding will be allocated using our adult social care relative needs formula, while £80 million will be used to equalise the variation in yield from the adult social care precept and a further £80 million in equalisation against the adult social care precept will be paid from elsewhere in the settlement, as with last year.
- The **improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)** will retain the same quantum of £2.1 billion and the same distribution as in 2023-24.
- £1.1 billion in 2024-25 will be distributed for adult social care through the **Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF)**. This continues to include £162 million per year of Fair Cost of Care funding. For 2024-25, the MSIF also includes £205 million [MSIF – Workforce Funding](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-workforce-fund) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/market-sustainability-and-improvement-fund-workforce-fund>), a two-year fund which was announced in July 2023. In total, the combined MSIF and MSIF Workforce Fund are worth £123 million more than in 2023-24, when both funds were worth £927 million.
- An additional £200 million will be distributed in 2024-25 through the Discharge Fund to support timely and safe discharge from hospital into the community by reducing the number of people delayed in hospital awaiting social care. This will bring the overall size of the local authority component of the Discharge Fund to £500 million, which will be distributed using the existing iBCF grant shares.

1.3.5 Chapter 6 – Other Grants: this chapter explains the government's proposals for the New Homes Bonus (NHB), Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) and the Services Grant.

- There will be a new round of NHB payments in 2024-25. There will be no change to the calculations process and allocations for 2024-25 will continue to be paid for in the usual way.
- The Rural Services Delivery Grant will remain unchanged at £95 million and will continue to be distributed to local authorities ranking in the upper quartile of the super-sparsity index.
- The Services Grant will continue for a further year with no changes to the distribution methodology. The Services Grant will be reduced compared to 2023-24, to fund other parts of the settlement. The Services Grant will be £77 million in 2024-25. In addition, the government intends to hold back a proportion of the Services Grant as contingency to cover any unexpected movements, such as adjustments to New Homes Bonus allocations.

1.3.6 Chapter 7 – Impacts of these proposals: this chapter invites views and evidence on the impact that the government's proposals may have on persons who share a protected characteristic.

1.3.7 Chapter 8 – Part Time Work for Full Time Pay: this chapter outlines the government's concern about arrangements where staff within the local government sector have their working hours reduced by a consequential amount but retain 100% of their pay, for example a 20% reduction in working hours under the so-called '4 day working week', and asks for views on using financial levers in future settlements occurring after 2024-25 to disincentivise the practice.

- The government believes that the so-called '4 day working week' and equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay are not an appropriate use of taxpayer's money, as they reduce the potential capacity to deliver services.
- The government is issuing a data collection, to run alongside the consultation period, which will work to determine which local authorities' current or proposed operations for 2024-25 fall within the definition of the 'four day working week'.

1.4 Additional information

1.4.1 An online survey link and return address for responses to this consultation, along with a full list of consultation questions, is included in Annex B. A glossary of technical terms can be found in Annex C.

1.5 Allocations for proposals

1.5.1 The supporting tables accompanying this consultation show the allocations for the proposals for individual local authorities. These proposals represent the government's intentions, and the figures are based on available information.

1.5.2 Data changes, new information or errors identified by either the Department or local authorities between the publication of this consultation paper and the calculation of the final local government finance settlement may lead to changes to individual local authority allocations. The government encourages local authorities to check their individual allocations. We strongly encourage local authorities to contact the Department with any concerns over the accuracy of their individual allocations. We will set out the final local authority allocations at the final settlement, following the conclusion of this consultation.

2. Distribution of the Settlement Funding Assessment

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter outlines the government's proposals for distributing the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) in 2024-25, which is comprised of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and baseline funding levels (BFLs).

2.2 Business rates retention

2.2.1 When the business rates retention system was introduced in 2013-14, the government committed that BFLs and business rates baselines (BRBs), which are used to determine tariffs and top-ups, would be fixed in real terms until the system was reset, but with adjustments in response to business rates revaluations. The government confirmed in the policy statement published on 12 December 2022 and restated on 5 December 2023 that we will not be implementing a reset of accumulated business rates growth in this spending review period.

2.2.2 The business rates revaluation took effect from 1 April 2023, with the concurrent transferral of relevant properties from local lists to the central list. Unmitigated, these would lead to changes in the amount of business rates income collected and retained under the Business Rates Retention system.

2.2.3 The [government confirmed](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/business-rates-revaluation-2023-the-central-rating-list/outcome/business-rates-revaluation-2023-the-central-rating-list-summary-of-responses-and-government-response) (https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/business-rates-revaluation-2023-the-central-rating-list/outcome/business-rates-revaluation-2023-the-central-rating-list-summary-of-responses-and-government-response) that it would adjust each local authority's top-up or tariff to ensure that as far as practicable a local authority's retained income from business rates is no more, or less, than it would have been had the revaluation not taken place. It also confirmed that it will compensate authorities for their losses from the transferral of properties to the central list.

2.2.4 The [government consulted](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-adjustment-to-the-business-rates-retention-system-consultation) (https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-adjustment-to-the-business-rates-retention-system-consultation) last year on a methodology to make these adjustments for the 2023 revaluation. This revaluation adjustment methodology updates the 2017 methodology to better remove the impact of the revaluation on local authority income. It also compensates local authorities for properties transferring to the central rating list. The initial adjustment to tariffs and top-ups was made in 2023-24 with subsequent adjustments made in 2024-25 and 2025-26, now that updated data is available. This year, the 'year 2' adjustment will be made. This will update the revaluation adjustment for national non-domestic rate 2022-23 data return, compiled list data as of 1 April 2023 and inflation; the year 2 adjustment will also reconcile the difference between the 2023-24 tariff-top-ups paid from/to local authorities as per the values from last year's settlement, and the 2023-24 tariff-top-up that would have been calculated should the updated data have been available. Further detail on the year 2 adjustment can be found in [last year's revaluation adjustment consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-adjustment-to-the-business-rates-retention-system-consultation) (https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/technical-adjustment-to-the-business-rates-retention-system-consultation). A calculator has been provided alongside this consultation for local authorities to see how the adjustment to their tariff or top-up for 2024-25 has been calculated, the value of the reconciliation factors for 2023-24 tariff-top-ups, and the overall 50% tariff-top-up figure for each local authority for 2024-25.

2.2.5 The 2023 Autumn Statement announced that the small business rates multiplier has been frozen for 2024-25 at 49.9p, and the standard business rates multiplier will increase to 54.6p. The government will compensate local authorities for the reduction in income resulting from the decision to freeze the small business rates multiplier. We will continue to align this level of compensation with the default link, established by government policy in 2018-19, between the small business rates multiplier and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation between September 2022 and September 2023. This inflationary uplift will be paid through underindexation grant. Separately, baseline funding levels (BFLs) will increase by applying the rise in standard multiplier to a weighted proportion of each individual local authority's BFL. Increases will be applied via a weighted average specific to each local authority to account for the fact that authorities have different shares of business rates income attributable to the small and standard multiplier.

2.2.6 We have no plans to introduce 'negative Revenue Support Grant': 2023-24 tariffs and top-ups included the elimination of so-called 'negative RSG' and as such this will continue in 2024-25. This is consistent with the government's previous commitment, made during the implementation of the business rate retention system in 2013-14, that local authorities' retained business rates baselines would be fixed in real terms until the business rates system was reset. [Footnote 4](#)

2.2.7 Areas currently on 100% business rates retention arrangements will continue in 2024-25, with Greater Manchester Combined Authority and West Midlands Combined Authority moving onto new 10-year Trailblazer arrangements. The Greater London Authority will also continue to benefit from increased levels of business rates retention in 2024-25. The government will review enhanced arrangements as a source of income for areas and its impact on local economic growth, and as part of deeper devolution commitments as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper.

2.3 Distribution of Revenue Support Grant

2.3.1 To provide stability in local authority allocations, the government proposes to increase 2023-24 Revenue Support Grant levels in line with the September 2022 to September 2023 change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is before accounting for rolled in grants.

2.4 Simplifying the funding landscape – rolling in grants

2.4.1 The government committed to providing local government with a simplified grants system in the Levelling Up White Paper. The White Paper committed to delivering a more transparent, simple and accountable approach to streamlining the funding landscape. In line with the government's recently published [plan for simplifying the local government funding landscape \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simplifying-the-funding-landscape-for-local-authorities/simplifying-the-funding-landscape-for-local-authorities\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simplifying-the-funding-landscape-for-local-authorities/simplifying-the-funding-landscape-for-local-authorities), we are reducing the number of individual section 31 grants allocated outside of the main local government finance settlement. The government remains committed to improving the local government finance system more broadly in the next Parliament. This will include consideration of how we can go further to simplify and reduce the administrative burden of the funding landscape.

2.4.2 For 2024-25 we propose to consolidate the Home Office's Fire and Pensions Grant, worth £115 million, into the Revenue Support Grant. In order to ensure the grant's policy objective is maintained, this grant will maintain its existing distribution. We have restated historic Core Spending Power (CSP) where applicable for rolled in grants to avoid overstating CSP increases.

Question 1: Do you agree with the government's proposed methodology for the distribution of the Revenue Support Grant in 2024-25?

Question 2: Do you agree with the government's proposals to roll grants into the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

3. Council tax

3.1 Council tax

3.1.1 The government will continue to protect local taxpayers from excessive council tax increases. The proposed package of referendum principles below strikes a fair balance and is an additional local democratic check and balance. The council tax referendum provisions are not a cap, nor do they force councils to increase to the threshold level. They are to protect hard-working people from excessive tax rises. It is for the House of Commons to approve annual thresholds above which a council tax referendum is triggered. Councils will still be able to make the case for higher increases to their local electorate through a local referendum.

3.2 Council tax referendum principles

3.2.1 The government proposes the following package of referendum principles for 2024-25 which will be subject to the approval of the House of Commons alongside the final local government finance settlement:

- A core referendum threshold of 3% per year;
- In addition, local authorities with social care responsibilities will be able to set an adult social care precept of up to 2% per year without a referendum;
- A bespoke council tax referendum principle of up to 3% or £5, whichever is higher, without a referendum for shire districts;
- A bespoke additional council tax flexibility of up to £20 on band D bills for the Greater London Authority, as requested by the Mayor of London;
- Fire and rescue authorities will be able to set an increase of up to 3% without a referendum;
- Police authorities and police and crime commissioners will be able to set an increase of up to £13 on band D bills without a referendum; and
- Bespoke council tax referendum principles for councils in the most significant financial failure - see section 3.5.

3.2.2 It is for individual authorities to determine whether to use the flexibilities detailed above, taking into consideration the pressures many households are facing.

3.2.3 Where a council has a specific and evidenced concern about its ability to set or maintain a balanced budget, including where there has been local financial failure, the council may seek additional support from government via the exceptional financial support framework. As part of that process, the government will consider representations from councils on council tax flexibilities.

3.3 Council tax referendum principles for mayoral combined authorities

3.3.1 Devolution has led to the creation of nine mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) with powers such as transport and planning. To date, the government has not set referendum principles for MCAs, except where the Mayor exercises police and crime commissioner functions, in which case the PCC principle has been applied to the resulting precept. This has been in the expectation that mayors would charge a level of council tax that is affordable and proportionate to their needs.

3.3.2 The government proposes to continue this approach in 2024-25. In line with the referendum principle for police and crime commissioners, we propose to set a £13 threshold for the band D PCC component of the Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire Combined Authorities' precepts.

3.4 Council tax referendum principles for town and parish councils

3.4.1 The government has not previously set referendum principles for town and parish councils. This approach was contingent on town and parish councils taking all available steps to mitigate the need for council tax increases and the government seeing clear evidence of restraint. The government proposes to continue with this approach for 2024-25.

3.5 Council tax referendum principles for Thurrock Council, Slough Borough Council and Woking Borough Council

3.5.1 In the 2023-24 local government finance settlement, the government chose not to oppose local requests for additional council tax flexibilities from the London Borough of Croydon, Slough Borough Council and Thurrock Council. This resulted in an additional 5% flexibility on core referendum principles set for Slough Borough Council and Thurrock Council, and an additional 10% flexibility on core referendum principles set for the London Borough of Croydon.

3.5.2 The government view continues to be that councils in the most severe financial failure, that are seeking multi-year support from government, should continue to take all reasonable local steps to support recovery including additional council tax increases.

3.5.3 For the 2024-25 settlement, in consideration of the significant financial failure of Thurrock Council, Slough Borough Council and Woking Borough Council, and the ongoing need of these councils for exceptional financial support, the government proposes that the following bespoke council tax referendum principles should apply. The figures for the following bespoke council tax principles will be reflected in Core Spending Power figures at the final local government finance settlement:

- For Thurrock and Slough Borough Council, a core council tax referendum threshold of 8%;
- For Woking Borough Council, a council tax referendum principle of 10%.

3.5.4 Bespoke council tax referendum principles are not proposed for the London Borough of Croydon reflecting that a higher flexibility was requested, set and utilised by the council in 2023-24.

3.5.5 Councils in significant financial failure can make use of any additional flexibilities provided to support their financial recovery and going forward the Government will consider all reasonable steps to protect both national and local taxpayers and ensure councils are acting responsibly.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed package of council tax referendum principles for 2024-25?

4. Funding Guarantee

4.1 Funding Guarantee

4.1.1 The Government continues to recognise the importance of protecting the funding position of councils as far as possible. In recognition that pressures continue to be felt across all tiers of local government, we will maintain the Funding Guarantee from 2023-24 to ensure that all councils will see at least a 3% increase in their Core Spending Power before any decisions about organisational efficiencies, use of reserves or council tax levels. The Funding Guarantee will be funded through the Services Grant. The Government has published provisional allocations for the new Funding Guarantee alongside the provisional local government finance settlement.

4.1.2 We will continue to provide the Funding Guarantee on the same terms as last year. For eligible authorities, the value of the Funding Guarantee will be the difference between a 3% increase in their 2023-24 Core Spending Power, and their actual increase in Core Spending Power in 2024-25 before any increases to council tax levels. The increase in Core Spending Power used for this calculation excludes any newly rolled-in grants but includes growth in the council tax base as calculated in the normal way, increases in Baseline Funding Levels and growth in compensation for under-indexing the multipliers. Annex D below gives a worked example of how the Funding Guarantee is calculated.

Question 4: Do you agree with the Government's proposals to maintain the Funding Guarantee for 2024-25?

5. Distribution of adult and children's social care resources

5.1 Social Care

5.1.1 The government announced at the 2022 Autumn Statement that up to £4.7 billion of additional funding will be made available in 2024-25 compared to 2022-23 to help support adult social care and discharge in England, of which £500 million will be allocated to the NHS via the Discharge Fund. In addition to this, in July 2023 the Department of Health and Social Care announced the £570 million Market Sustainability and Improvement (MSIF) Workforce Fund over two years, which includes £205 million of new grant funding for social care in 2024-25. This £205 million will be combined with the £845 million of MSIF funding in 2024-25, bringing the combined value of MSIF to £1 billion.

Local authorities can therefore make use of £1 billion in additional grant for social care (both adult and children's) to be distributed through the 2024-25 local government finance settlement, including:

- a £692 million increase in the Social Care Grant
- a £123 million increase to MSIF
- a £200 million increase to the local authority component of the Discharge Fund

5.1.2 Joined-up planning for adult social care services and NHS services is vital. An addendum to the 2023-25 BCF Policy Framework will be published in the new year and will set out further information on aligning BCF capacity and demand plans for intermediate care with wider local authority commissioning and planning for long term care, and NHS operational planning.

5.2 Social Care Grant

5.2.1 As set out at the 2022 Autumn Statement, the government proposes to increase allocations of the Social Care Grant to £4.5 billion in 2024-25. This is an increase of £692 million compared to 2023-24. As with the current grant, the Social Care Grant can be used on either adult or children's social care services.

5.2.2 The £4.5 billion Social Care Grant includes £1.9 billion which is the result of savings from delaying the rollout of adult social care charging reform from October 2023. We have listened to the concerns of local government by making the difficult decision to delay these important reforms and are making the funding available to local authorities to help meet the current pressures in social care.

5.2.3 The government intends to use £160 million of the total increase to maintain the component of the Social Care Grant which is used to equalise the variation in yield from the adult social care precept, in recognition of the differing abilities to generate income from council tax increases. This will partly be funded from delays to adult social care charging reform announced at the 2022 Autumn Statement, together with an additional £80 million which is being added from elsewhere in the settlement, as with last year. The remaining Social Care Grant funding will be distributed using our adult social care relative needs formula.

5.2.4 The government proposes that the Social Care Grant remains ringfenced for adult and children's social care.

5.3 Improved Better Care Fund

5.3.1 For 2024-25, the government proposes that the improved Better Care Fund (iBCF) will retain the same quantum of £2,140 million and the same distribution as in 2023-24.

5.3.2 The grant will continue to be required to be pooled as part of the Better Care Fund.

5.4 Discharge Fund

5.4.1 The 2022 Autumn Statement announced £1 billion of new grant funding in 2024-25 to support timely and safe discharge from hospital into the community by reducing the number of people delayed in hospital awaiting social care. Of this, £500 million will be allocated directly to local authorities and £500 million will be allocated to Integrated Care Boards. This follows the £600 million allocated in 2023-24, which was also distributed with a 50:50 split between local authorities and Integrated Care Boards.

5.4.2 The government proposes that the £500 million allocated to local authorities from the Discharge Fund be distributed using the existing iBCF grant shares – this is consistent with the approach taken in 2023-24.

5.4.3 The Discharge Fund will be required to be pooled as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF), with local authorities and Integrated Care Boards required to produce jointly agreed plans for its deployment. The government will set out further details on the BCF and the Discharge Fund conditions in due course.

5.5 Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund

5.5.1 The government is making £845 million available for local authorities for adult social care, as part of the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund (MSIF). This includes £683 million which was announced at the 2022 Autumn Statement, and (as in 2023-24) £162 million of Fair Cost of Care funding. This funding can be used by local authorities to target increasing fee rates paid to providers, workforce recruitment and retention, and improving waiting times for care.

5.5.2 In addition, in July 2023 the government announced the two-year MSIF Workforce Fund, providing a further £365 million to local authorities in 2023-24 and £205 million in 2024-25. This funding is designed to further support local authorities in the MSIF target areas, with a particular focus on workforce pay.

5.5.3. In 2024-25, the government proposes to combine the £845 million MSIF fund with the £205 million MSIF Workforce Fund. These existing funds share the same grant design, distribution methodology, and purpose. This brings the total value of the MSIF to £1 billion in 2024-25.

5.5.4 The government proposes to distribute this funding using the existing adult social care relative needs formula.

5.5.5 As with the fund in 2023-24, there will be reporting requirements placed on the MSIF regarding performance and use of funding to support improvement against the objectives. The government will provide further details on reporting in due course.

Question 5: Do you agree with the government's proposals on funding for social care as part of the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

6. Other Grants - New Homes Bonus, Rural Services Delivery Grant and Services Grant

6.1 New Homes Bonus

6.1.1 The New Homes Bonus (NHB) was introduced in 2011 to provide an incentive for local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas by rewarding local authorities for net additional homes added to the council tax base. It is paid annually from a top-slice of Revenue Support Grant.

6.1.2 The government is not intending to change the calculation process for the NHB for 2024-25. The NHB payments will be calculated as units for reward above a payments baseline of 0.4%, multiplied by the average Band D council tax payment, with an additional payment made for affordable homes. In two-tier areas, the annual payment will be split: 80% for shire districts and 20% for shire counties.

6.1.3 New legacy commitments ceased to be made in allocations from 2020-21, and the government confirmed in February 2021 that it did not intend to reintroduce legacy payments. These 2024-25 payments will not attract new legacy commitments.

6.1.4 As in previous years, the allocations for 2024-25 will be funded through a top slice of the Revenue Support Grant. We expect this will be £291 million, although, as in recent years, this may change for the final local government finance settlement following updates in data.

6.2 Rural Services Delivery Grant

6.2.1 The government proposes to roll forward the 2023-24 allocations of the £95 million Rural Service Delivery Grant for 2024-25 in recognition of additional costs rural areas may face. The distribution methodology remains unchanged from last year and the funding will continue to be distributed to the top-quartile of authorities ranked by 'super-sparsity', a measure of rurality.

6.3 Services Grant

6.3.1 The government proposes that in 2024-25 the Services Grant will continue and will be distributed by the Settlement Funding Assessment, as per last year. The total Services Grant amount will be reduced to £77 million after factoring in the costs of using some of the remaining Services Grant to fund increases to other settlement grants and equalisation of the adult social care precept.

6.3.2 In addition to the £77 million, the government intends to hold a small proportion of the Services Grant back as contingency to cover any unexpected costs that may arise between provisional and final settlement. This is the same approach as previous years, where contingency has been used to cover, for example, adjustments to New Homes Bonus allocations following updated data.

Question 6: Do you agree with the government's proposals for New Homes Bonus in 2024-25?

Question 7: Do you agree with the government's proposals for Rural Services Delivery Grant in 2024-25?

Question 8: Do you agree with the government's proposals for Services Grant in 2024-25?

7. Impacts of these proposals

7.1 Public Sector Equality Duty

7.1.1 Public bodies have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the needs of people who share particular protected characteristics. These are: age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

7.1.2 We have considered the equalities impacts of the proposals and decisions in the provisional local government finance settlement for 2024-25. The government intends to include a summary of the equalities impacts of its proposals as part of the response to this consultation. As usual, the government response, which will include the summary of responses and the summary of equalities impacts, will be published alongside the final settlement.

7.1.3 We would be grateful for views on the impact of the proposals contained in this consultation document on the three aims under the Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a particular protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a particular protected characteristic and people who do not share it

7.2 Foreseeable impacts of proposals on people who share protected characteristics

7.2.1 The government has considered the impact of the funding distribution on protected characteristics by assessing the distribution of Core Spending Power (CSP) between local authorities and the characteristics of the people that live in the local authorities. Across all protected characteristics there is a funding increase in CSP per capita from comparing the 2023-24 funding distribution to the 2024-25 funding distribution, with England seeing a CSP increase of 6.5% on last year. This increase in resources will support the delivery of core services across local government.

7.2.2 Councils provide various services which people that share a protected characteristic will benefit from. Changes in the amount of flexible funding available to local authorities – whether an increase or a reduction – will affect a

local authority's ability to provide these services, and therefore impact those persons sharing protected characteristics.

7.2.3 Local authorities understand the needs of their communities best and decide on how their resources are allocated. It is not, therefore, possible to say for certain how changes in funding will affect specific groups of persons sharing a protected characteristic, as this will be dependent on decisions that are made locally. We can, however, make reasonable assumptions about how changes in funding will affect changes in service delivery, in turn affecting service users.

7.3 Proposed mitigations on people who share protected characteristics

7.3.1 As part of the provisional local government finance settlement, the government is proposing an increase in the funding available to local authorities. We will be providing local authorities with a Funding Guarantee that will ensure all councils will see at least a 3% increase in their Core Spending Power before any decision they make about organisational efficiencies, use of reserves, and council tax. This can be used to help mitigate any potential impacts on members of protected groups by ensuring there is an increase in funding for local authorities to assist members of protected groups.

7.3.2 As set out at the 2022 Autumn Statement, we will also be putting additional funding towards social care. This will likely mitigate some negative impacts for individuals with the protected characteristics of age 65+ or under 18, who account for a large proportion of the need for social care services. As much of this additional funding will be distributed through the Social Care Grant, which is ringfenced for both adult and children's services, we expect this to mitigate negative impacts for both the elderly and children services.

Question 9: Do you have any comments on the impact of the proposals outlined in this consultation document on persons who share a protected characteristic? Please provide evidence to support your comments.

8. Part time work for full time pay

8.1 The so-called '4 day working week' practice and equivalent arrangements

8.1.1 Local authorities should not be practicing an arrangement where staff have their working hours reduced by a consequential amount but retain 100% of their pay. For example, a 20% reduction in working hours under the so-called 'four day working week'. This is Part Time Work for Full Time Pay. These practices raise significant concerns about their value for taxpayers' money, as well as their potential effect on service delivery and the local government sector's reputation with the general public. These practices should be considered as distinct from flexible working, which the government continues to broadly support as a suitable approach to providing workers with some choice about how they prefer to work.

8.1.2 The government believes that local authorities, including combined authorities, should not be practising an arrangement where it has an overall policy (temporary or permanent) which allows its employees to reduce their contracted hours per week by a consequential amount, for example 20%, without a reduction in their pay and benefits. The government believes that the so-called '4 day working week' (or equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay) reduces the potential capacity to deliver services by up to 20% and, as a result, does not deliver value. The government therefore does not expect councils to adopt this arrangement. The government has already taken steps to deter the sector from operating 'four day working week' practices (or equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay) and will legislate if necessary.

8.1.3 The local government finance settlement gives funding to local authorities through several methods. The settlement is made up of Baseline Funding Levels, council tax and Revenue Support Grant, as well as a series of section 31 grants that are published alongside the settlement. The government is currently considering which financial levers could be used in future settlements to disincentivise local authorities from operating a '4 day working week' (or equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay) and want to seek the views of the sector about how this could be affected and what impact it would have.

8.1.4 The government will be issuing a data collection in order to determine which local authorities' operations for 2024-25 fall within the definition of the 'four day working week' (or equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay) as described in paragraph 8.1.2.

Question 10: Do you have any views about the government using levers in future local government finance settlements (those occurring after 2024-25) to disincentivise the so-called '4 day working week' and equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay?

Annex A: Personal data

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are entitled to under UK data protection legislation.

Note that this section only refers to personal data (your name, contact details and any other information that relates to you or another identified or identifiable individual personally) not the content otherwise of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@levellingup.gov.uk or by writing to the following address:

Data Protection Officer,
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities,
Fry Building,
2 Marsham Street,
London,
SW1P 4DF.

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, DLUHC may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest i.e. a consultation. This consultation fulfils the mandatory statutory requirements to consult under sections 78(5), 78A(3) and paragraph of Schedule 7B of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The collection of your personal data is lawful under article 6(1)(e) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation as it is necessary for the performance by DLUHC of a task in the public interest-in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 states that this will include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department i.e. in this case a consultation.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

Other government departments including:

1. Attorney General's Office
2. Cabinet Office
3. Department for Business and Trade
4. Department for Culture, Media and Sport
5. Department for Education
6. Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
7. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
8. Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
9. Department for Transport
10. Department for Work and Pensions
11. Department of Health and Social Care
12. Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
13. His Majesty's Treasury
14. Home Office
15. Ministry of Defence
16. Ministry of Justice
17. Northern Ireland Office
18. Office of the Advocate General for Scotland
19. Office of the Leader of the House of Commons
20. Office of the Leader of the House of Lords
21. Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland
22. Office of the Secretary of State for Wales
23. UK Export Finance

DLUHC may appoint a 'data processor', acting on behalf of the department and under our instruction, to help analyse the responses to this consultation. Where we do, we will ensure that the processing of your personal data remains in strict accordance with the requirements of the data protection legislation.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, restriction, objection

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have your data corrected if it is incorrect or incomplete
- d. to object to our use of your personal data in certain circumstances
- e. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> (<https://ico.org.uk/>), or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Please contact us at the following address if you wish to exercise the rights listed above, except the right to lodge a complaint with the ICO: dataprotection@levellingup.gov.uk or Knowledge and Information Access Team, Department for levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF.

7. Your personal data will not be sent overseas.

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.

9. Your personal data will be stored in a secure government IT system.

We use a third-party system, Citizen Space, to collect consultation responses. In the first instance, your personal data will be stored on their secure UK-based server. Your personal data will be transferred to our secure government IT system as soon as possible, and it will be stored there for two years before it is deleted.

Annex B: Address details & list of consultation questions

We request responses through the [online form \(https://consult.levelingup.gov.uk/local-government-finance/provisional-lgf-settlement-2024-25\)](https://consult.levelingup.gov.uk/local-government-finance/provisional-lgf-settlement-2024-25)

If the survey link is inoperable, written responses may be sent by email or post to: lgfcorrespondence@levelingup.gov.uk

Or

£A Local Government Finance Settlement Team Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities 2nd floor, Fry Building 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF £A

When replying to this consultation please confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name,
- your position (if applicable),
- the name of organisation (if applicable),
- an email address, and
- a contact telephone number

Question 1: Do you agree with the government's proposed methodology for the distribution of Revenue Support Grant in 2024-25?

Question 2: Do you agree with the government's proposals to roll grants into the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed package of council tax referendum principles for 2024-25?

Question 4: Do you agree with the government's proposals to maintain the Funding Guarantee for 2024-25?

Question 5: Do you agree with the government's proposals on funding for social care as part of the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

Question 6: Do you agree with the government's proposals for New Homes Bonus in 2024-25?

Question 7: Do you agree with the government's proposals for Rural Services Delivery Grant in 2024-25?

Question 8: Do you agree with the government's proposals for Services Grant in 2024-25?

Question 9: Do you have any comments on the impact of the proposals outlined in this consultation document on persons who share a protected characteristic? Please provide evidence to support your comments.

Question 10: Do you have any views about the government using levers in future local government finance settlements (those occurring after 2024-25) to disincentivise the '4 day working week' and equivalent arrangements of part time work for full time pay?

Annex C: Glossary of technical terms

Baseline Funding Level

The amount of an individual local authority's 2013-14 Settlement Funding Assessment provided through the local share of retained business rates income.

Business Rates Baseline (BRB)

An authority's BRB is an estimate of the authority's business rates income generating ability determined on an individual basis at the outset of the Business Rates Retention system.

Business Rates Retention (BRR)

Business rates are a tax on non-domestic properties. Billing authorities have a responsibility to issue bills and collect rates in their areas. Since 2013-14, local government has retained, as a whole, 50% of its business rates (excluding areas with increased Business Rates Retention arrangements). This income is subject to redistribution across local government via 'top-ups' and 'tariffs'.

Core Spending Power (CSP)

A measure of the revenue funding available for local authority services. This includes council tax; business rates; Revenue Support Grant; New Homes Bonus; Social Care grants; and other grants.

This includes grant included for under-indexation of the Multipliers. This is an indicative notional number and is not to be seen as a real 'grant' – it is dealt with within the BRR system and the number in CSP is for indicative purposes only.

Council tax referendum principles

These mark levels of council tax increases (either in percentage or cash terms) above which a local authority must hold a referendum, which allows residents to approve or veto the increase. The comparison is made between the authority's average Band D council tax level for the current financial year and the proposed average Band D for the next financial year.

Devolution deals

Introduced in 2014, devolution deals are a bespoke arrangement tailored to certain local authorities. Devolution deals give local government greater powers and more autonomy over budgeting.

Equalisation of the adult social care precept

We recognise that different places have different abilities to raise local council tax income from the adult social care precept. In response, we make an adjustment to offset these differences so that areas less able to raise council tax income receive a greater share of grant, called equalisation. We have done so since the adult social care precept was introduced. Equalisation is the process through which a proportion of Social Care Grant funding is used to take account of the impact of the distribution of the adult social care council tax precept.

Local Government Departmental Expenditure Limit (LG DEL)

The Departmental budget derived from central government resources for the purposes of local government.

New Homes Bonus

The New Homes Bonus acts as an incentive to increase housing supply and spur growth. The level of funding for an area reflects additional housing supply in that area. Most authorities receive some form of New Homes Bonus funding from central government.

Precept

A council tax charge from local authorities which do not issue bills themselves. These include county councils, police and crime commissioners, fire and rescue authorities, the Greater London Authority, combined authority mayors, and town and parish councils. Billing authorities – usually shire district councils or unitary authorities – collect council tax on behalf of precepting authorities and pass the proceeds to them.

Revenue Support Grant

Revenue Support Grant is paid from central government to authorities as part of their allocation through the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). It is in addition to their local share of business rates, as long as their Revenue Support Grant allocation through the SFA methodology has not fallen to, or below, zero.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

Funding provided in recognition of the possible additional costs of delivering services in sparsely populated areas.

Safety Net

Mechanism to protect any authority which sees its business rates income drop, in any year, by more than 7.5% below their baseline funding level for that year.

Settlement Funding Assessment

A local authority's share of the local government spending control total comprising its Revenue Support Grant and its Baseline Funding Level for the year in question.

Small and Standard Business Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier

Properties in England will have their business rates bill calculated using a small or standard multiplier. The rateable value threshold for the standard multiplier will remain £51,000.

Spending Review

The Spending Review sets out the long-term spending limits for government and typically covers the next three or four years.

Spending Round

The Spending Round sets out the short-term spending limits for all government departments and typically covers a full calendar year.

Tariffs and Top-Ups

Calculated by comparing at the outset of the business rate retention system an individual authority's business rates baseline against its baseline funding level. Tariffs and top-ups were fixed at the start of the system and have been indexed in line with the change in the small business rating multiplier up to and including 2023-24. From 2024-25 they will be adjusted in line with both the change of the small and the standard multiplier, accounting for the fact that authorities have different shares of properties subject to the small and standard multipliers. Tariffs and top-ups are

adjusted at revaluations to neutralise rises or falls in income resulting from changes in rateable value at local authority-level.

Tariff Authority

An authority with a higher individual authority business rates baseline than its baseline funding level, and which therefore pays a tariff.

Top-up Authority

An authority with a lower individual authority business rates baseline than its baseline funding level, and which therefore receives a top-up.

Annex D: Worked example of Funding Guarantee

The Funding Guarantee will continue to ensure that all councils will see at least a 3% increase in their Core Spending Power before any decisions about organisational efficiencies, use of reserves or council tax levels. The below worked example sets out how the Funding Guarantee payment for a hypothetical council is calculated.

Council X had available £3.5 million in Core Spending Power in 2023-24, made up of £1 million in grant, £0.5 million through the business rates system and £2 million in council tax.

In 2024-25, Council X had a net increase in grant of £20,000, a £50,000 increase in funding from baseline funding levels and underindexation grant, and the 5-year average of council tax-base growth is £20,000.

Step 1 – Calculate minimum increase in Core Spending Power

- Core Spending Power defined as 2023-24 published Core Spending Power, updated for actual take-up of council tax flexibilities and actual council tax base growth.
- £3.5 million x 3% = £105,000

Step 2 – Total increase in grants (excluding the newly rolled in grants – MSIF Workforce Fund and Fire Pensions Grant), funding received through business rates income in Core Spending Power and council tax income from growth in tax-base

- The total increase for Council X is £90,000 (£20,000 grant increase, £50,000 business rates income in Core Spending Power, £20,000 council tax-base growth)

Step 3 – Compare Step 2 to Step 1 and compensate for the difference

- Council X has a total increase before any local decision about council tax levels of £90,000, which is £15,000 less than the minimum increase in Core Spending Power.
- Council X will receive £15,000 in grant funding from the Funding Guarantee.

-
1. As required by section 78(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
 2. Based on the Office for Budget Responsibility's November 2023 forecast of the GDP deflator for 2024-25.
 3. The small business multiplier was frozen at 49.9p for 2024-25, however the standard multiplier will increase to 54.6p in line with September 2022 to September 2023 measure of inflation. In response to this change in how business rates multipliers are calculated and applied, a new proxy measure of the proportion of income in each local authority which derives from each multiplier will be used to generate a local authority-specific inflation factor from 2024-25. This uplift increases baseline funding levels, but does not give the full CPI increase, the rest of which is compensated via underindexation grant, calculated through the Department's National Non-Domestic Rates statistical return.
 4. Please refer to section 5.1 of the [2019-20 local government finance settlement technical consultation](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-finance-settlement-2019-to-2020-technical-consultation) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-finance-settlement-2019-to-2020-technical-consultation>) for an explanation of the issue of negative Revenue Support Grant.

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Sent by Email to: LGFCorrespondence@levellingup.gov.uk

15 January 2024

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024 to 2025

Dear LGF Settlement Team,

This letter represents the response from Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BFRS) to the Provisional 2024-25 Local Government Finance Settlement. The Authority also refers the DLUHC to the response from the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC).

SUMMARY

The Authority's response to the Provisional Settlement can be summarised as follows:

1. **The Authority is disappointed that the £5 council tax referendum principle has not been applied and strongly urges the Government to reconsider.** BFRS has one of the lowest Band D council tax precepts of any fire and rescue service and is therefore disproportionately disadvantaged by referendum thresholds being expressed in percentage terms. Our Band D charge of £77.16 is lower than the average parish council precept of £79.35, and yet parish councils are not subject to any referendum principles.
2. **The 84% reduction in Services Grant far exceeds FRAs' forecasts and means that settlement funding is reducing in real terms.** Using the Services Grant to pay for Revenue Support Grant (RSG) is a funding cut. It was understood that the Services Grant was being set aside for local government funding reforms. If this is not the case, then it ought to have been rolled into Settlement Funding Assessment and protected in real terms.
3. **31 FRAs hit the 3% Funding Guarantee threshold, compared to five in 2023-24.** This lower grant increase combines with a lower council tax limit, despite similar inflationary pressures.
4. **FRAs will see the lowest increase in core spending power (CSP) by class at just 4.6% without changes to the final settlement.**

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Question 1: Do you agree with the Government's proposed methodology for the distribution of the Revenue Support Grant in 2024-25?

No, the Government has claimed to have protected RSG in real terms, but this has been done through a reduction in Services Grant. It is of utmost importance that core funding is protected in real terms and this should be set out as a principle of local funding and should never be in doubt.

Question 2: Do you agree with the Government's proposals to roll grants into the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

Yes, the Authority is glad to see that calls for the transfer of the Fire Pensions Grant into FRAs' baseline funding (thus reducing the associated uncertainty which existed) have been heard. This

(as well as settlement funding more generally) must be fully protected in real-terms as BFRS's forecast reserves would very quickly run out should this funding stream ever cease. Furthermore, for the same reason it is imperative that pension funding announced for 2024-25 is rolled in as part of next year's settlement.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed package of council tax referendum principles for 2024-25?

No, the 3% referendum principles alongside grant cuts mean that FRAs will be unable to meet inflationary pressures. For 2023-24, FRAs' council tax referendum principles were £5, a principle that should remain in place. Although settlement funding was increased by September CPI, council tax makes up the largest share of our funding and (excluding the one-off funding guarantee) our core spending power only increased 4.3% compared to the September CPI figure of 6.7%. This represents a significant real-terms cut in funding at a time when independent inspectors have already expressed concerns about how lean the Service is.

Question 4: Do you agree with the Government's proposals to maintain the Funding Guarantee for 2024-25?

The Authority supports the principle of recognising that all local authorities / FRAs face inflationary pressures and, therefore, a percentage guarantee makes sense. Given the cuts to other grants, the funding guarantee is a vital protection for the overwhelming majority of FRAs. However, it would not be required if the rest of the settlement was funded properly. This funding cannot however be relied upon beyond this year, making planning more difficult, especially in the absence of a multi-year settlement.

Question 5: Do you agree with the Government's proposals on funding for social care as part of the local government finance settlement in 2024-25?

As a Combined Fire Authority, this is not relevant for us.

Question 6: Do you agree with the Government's proposals for New Homes Bonus in 2024-25?

As a Combined Fire Authority, this is not relevant for us.

Question 7: Do you agree with the Government's proposals for Rural Services Delivery Grant in 2024-25?

As a Combined Fire Authority that does not benefit from RSDG, this is not relevant for us.

Question 8: Do you agree with the Government's proposals for Services Grant in 2024-25?

No, the 84% reduction in Services Grant far exceeds what we thought was an extremely prudent forecast of a 50% reduction and means that settlement funding is reducing in real terms. Using the Services Grant to pay for RSG increases is a funding cut. It was understood that the Services Grant was being set aside for local government funding reforms. If this is not the case, then it ought to have been rolled into Settlement Funding Assessment and protected in real terms. The proposed funding cut means that even utilising the maximum referendum-free council tax precepts will not be enough to even keep up with inflation.

Question 9: Do you have any comments on the impact of the proposals outlined in this consultation document on persons who share a protected characteristic? Please provide evidence to support your comments.

No further comments.

FINAL REMARKS

BFRS has one of the lowest Band D council tax precepts of any fire and rescue service and is disproportionately disadvantaged by referendum thresholds being expressed in percentage terms.

Our Band D charge of £77.16 is lower than the average parish council precept of £79.35, and yet parish councils are not subject to any referendum principles.

Given how lean our current funding levels are it is vitally important that BFRS's funding is protected in real terms and in that regard the Authority is extremely concerned that the £5 council tax referendum principle has not been applied and strongly urges the Government to reconsider.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Harrison'.

Louise Harrison
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive
Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2024

Report title: The Prudential Code, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Lead Member: Councillor Matthew Walsh

Report sponsor: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets

Author and contact: Marcus Hussey mhussey@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Decision.

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

That the Authority be recommended to approve:

1. the Prudential Indicators for 2024/25
2. the Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement

Executive summary:

This report is being presented as the Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision policy statement are required to be approved by the Fire Authority and to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Authority has already made sufficient revenue provision to cover the repayment of its gross borrowing. Historically, due to prohibitive penalties the early repayment of this borrowing has not been an option. However, due to the recent rises in interest rates, during 2023/24 the Authority took the opportunity to make early repayment on a loan totalling £627k. The Authority has no plans for additional borrowing in the foreseeable future, according to the current MTFP.

It is recommended that the Authorised Limit for 2024/25 continues to be set at £2m higher than the Operational Limit to allow for the effective management of cashflow.

Financial implications:

The decision on the prudential indicators sets out the financial limits within which the Authority will operate in future years.

The minimum revenue provision is a statutory charge against the General Fund, estimated at £47k for 2024/25 (no change from 2023/24).

The impact of the Prudential Code will allow the Authority to make informed choices between revenue and capital financing of procured services, to encourage invest to save schemes and will only allow capital investment to proceed where the Authority can fund projects within prudential limits.

Making sufficient minimum revenue provision ensures that when borrowing matures, cash is available to make the repayment. This ensures that the Authority does not need to borrow additional money to repay existing loans.

Risk management:

The Prudential Code was established to ensure that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. The indicators presented here demonstrate that the current plans for capital investment meet these criteria and present an acceptable level of risk to the Authority.

Minimum revenue provision is a statutory charge to the General Fund, which ensures that an Authority has sufficient cash balances to repay borrowing upon maturity, reducing the refinancing risk.

There are no direct staffing implications.

Legal implications:

The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/3146 make provision for capital finance and accounts under the Local Government Act 2003 requiring the authority to have regard to the 'Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities' when determining, under the Local Government 2003 Act, how much money it can afford to borrow; and require the Authority to determine for the current financial year an amount of minimum revenue provision which it considers to be prudent.

Privacy and security implications:

No direct impact.

Duty to collaborate:

No direct impact.

Health and safety implications:

No direct impact.

Environmental implications:

No direct impact.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

No direct impact.

Consultation and communication:

No direct impact.

Background papers:

Realignment of Reserve Balances to Facilitate the Medium Term Financial Plan,
Executive Committee, 18 November 2015, agenda item 6:

https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/03/181115_exec_committee_papers.pdf/

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	The Prudential Code, Prudential Indicators and MRP	

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Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
we save lives

The Prudential Code, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision

2024-2025

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Prudential Indicators

1.0 Indicators for Affordability

1.1 The ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream

This indicator measures the percentage of the net revenue funding used to finance external debt. As no future borrowing is planned and a decision was made to reallocate reserves to reduce the capital financing requirement in 2015/16, the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream will remain consistently low:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	0.02%	-1.72%	-1.28%	-0.61%	0.02%

2.0 Indicators for Prudence

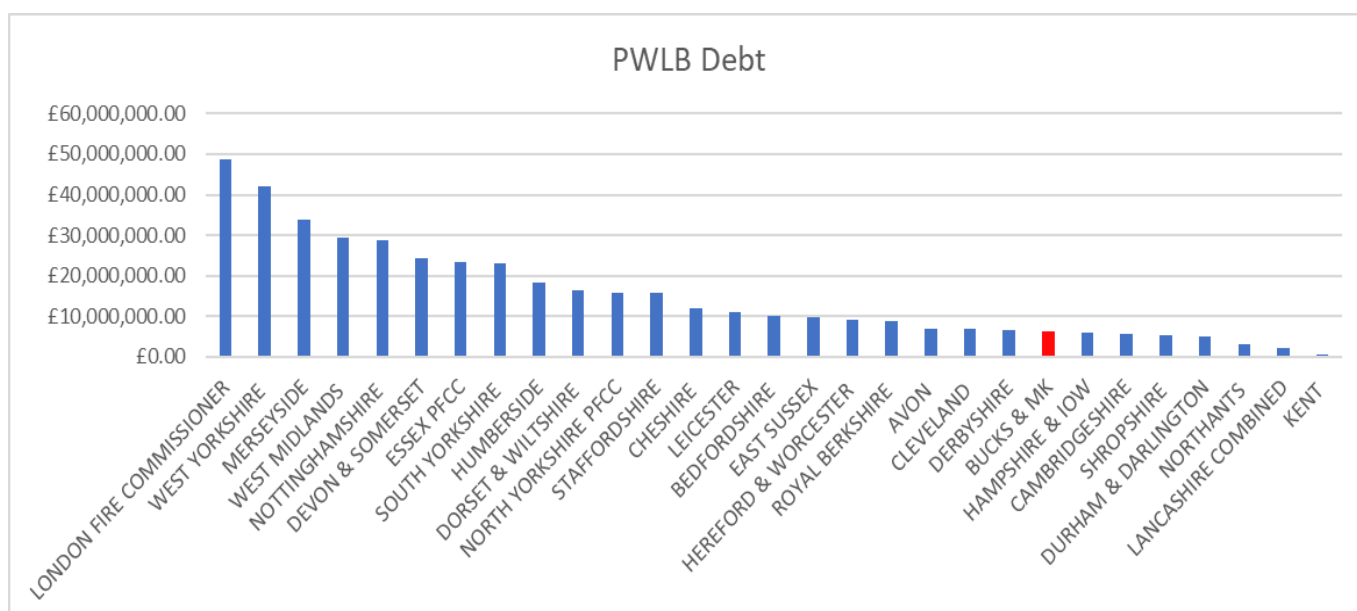
2.1 Gross borrowing and the Capital Financing Requirement

The table below shows gross borrowing and the capital financing requirement (CFR). The Authority should ensure that gross borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the CFR. However, due to the reallocation of reserves to reduce the CFR (excluding finance lease) to zero (see Provenance Section & Background Papers) gross borrowing will exceed CFR for the medium to long-term. This situation will exist until borrowing is repaid.

Gross borrowing at the start of 2022/23 financial year was £6.797m. The figures shown below indicate the maximum level of borrowing during the year (i.e. repayments will reduce the limit for the following year):

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Gross borrowing (£000)	6,797	6,177	4,550	4,550	4,550
Capital financing requirement (£000)	1,496	1,449	1,402	1,355	1,308

The graph below provides an overview of gross borrowing from Public Works Loan Board across Fire Services in England as of 31st March 2023.



3.0 Indicators for Capital Expenditure

3.1 Capital Expenditure

This indicator shows the expected level of capital expenditure for future years:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Capital expenditure (£000)	2,774	3,337	2,443	1,079	993

3.2 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The CFR reflects the Authority's underlying need to borrow. This figure was reduced down to the level of the finance lease by the reallocation of reserves (see Background Papers). No additional borrowing is planned in the medium term. The CFR should be looked at in relation to gross borrowing, as detailed in Section 2.1:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Capital financing requirement (underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose) (£000)	1,496	1,449	1,402	1,355	1,308

4.0 Indicators for External Debt

4.1 Authorised Limit

This is the maximum limit on borrowing and other long-term liabilities (currently limited to the finance lease at Gerrards Cross). This amount cannot be exceeded without approval from the Fire Authority:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Authorised limit for borrowing (£000)	8,797	8,177	6,550	6,550	6,550
Authorised limit for other long-term liabilities (£000)	1,496	1,449	1,402	1,355	1,308
Authorised limit for external debt (£000)	10,293	9,626	7,952	7,905	7,858

4.2 Operational Boundary

This indicator shows the most likely estimate of debt for future years:

The actual external debt for the year ending 31 March 2023 was **£8.293m**.

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Operational boundary for borrowing (£000)	6,797	6,177	4,550	4,550	4,550
Operational boundary for other long-term liabilities (£000)	1,496	1,449	1,402	1,355	1,308
Operational boundary for external debt (£000)	8,293	7,626	5,952	5,905	5,858

5.0 Indicators for Treasury Management

5.1 Adoption of CIPFA’s Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectorial Guidance Notes

The aim is to ensure that treasury management is led by a clear and integrated forward treasury management strategy, and a recognition of the pre-existing structure of the Authority’s borrowing and investment portfolios.

5.2 Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposures

This indicator shows the Authority’s upper limit of the net exposure to fixed interest rates. Currently all borrowing is at a fixed rate of interest:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposures	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

5.3 Upper limit on variable interest rate exposures

This indicator shows the Authority’s upper limit of the net exposure to variable interest rates:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposures	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%

5.4 Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing

This shows the repayment profile of fixed rate borrowing. All loans are repayable on maturity:

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23		Estimate 2023/24		Estimate 2024/25		Estimate 2025/26		Estimate 2026/27	
	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Maturity structure of fixed rate borrowings										
Under 12 months	0%	16%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%
24 months and within five years	0%	16%	0%	19%	0%	22%	0%	22%	0%	14%
five years and within 10 years	0%	22%	0%	27%	0%	30%	0%	30%	0%	16%
10 years and within 20 years	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
20 years and within 30 years	0%	36%	0%	42%	0%	48%	0%	48%	0%	48%
30 years and within 40 years	0%	10%	0%	12%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
40 years and above	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

5.5 Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days

The purpose of this indicator is for the Authority to contain its exposure to the possibility of loss that might arise as a result of it having to seek early repayment or redemption of principal sums invested. The Authority currently has no investments over a period longer than 365 days.

Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days (£000)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

5.6 Credit Risk

The duration of any investment with a counterparty will be restricted as advised by the Authority's treasury management advisors, Link Asset Services. The advisors will base their assessment of credit risk based on credit ratings provided by the major agencies, as well as reviewing credit default swaps (a proxy measure for the markets perceived risk of default).

Summary Table of Prudential Indicators

For reference, the following table summarises the key indicators detailed in Appendix 1 in a single table:

	Indicator	Actuals 2022/23	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27
Indicators for Affordability						
1.1	Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	0.02%	-1.72%	-1.28%	-0.61%	0.02%
1.2	The incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the council tax	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Indicators for Prudence						
2.1	Gross borrowing (£000)	6,797	6,177	4,550	4,550	4,550
Indicators for Capital Expenditure						
3.1	Capital expenditure (£000)	2,774	3,337	2,443	1,079	993
3.2	Capital financing requirement (underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose) (£000)	1,496	1,449	1,402	1,355	1,308
Indicators for External Debt						
4.1	Authorised limit for external debt (£000)	10,293	9,626	7,952	7,905	7,858
4.2	Operational boundary for external debt (£000)	8,293	7,626	5,952	5,905	5,858
Indicators for Treasury Management						
5.2	Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposures	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5.3	Upper limit on variable interest rate exposures	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
5.5	Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days (£000)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

The actual external debt for the year ending 31 March 2023 was £8.293m. The projected external debt for the year ending 31 March 2024 is £7.626m (both figures include the finance lease liability).

The following indicators are not shown above:

- 5.1 – the Authority has adopted CIPFA’s Treasury Management Code
- 5.4 – details of the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing
- 5.6 – narrative regarding credit risk

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

The two methods for calculating prudent provision are set out below and were approved by members in 2008/09. Regulation 28 of the 2003 Regulations (as amended by regulation 4 of the 2008 Regulations) requires a local authority to calculate for the current financial year an amount of MRP which it considers to be prudent. The Secretary of State recommends that, for the purposes of regulation 4 the prudent amount of provision should be determined in accordance with one of four options, two of which were agreed by members in 2008/09 and are outlined below.

The broad aim of prudent provision is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits (asset life).

(a) CFR Method

MRP is equal to 4% of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) at the end of the preceding financial years. Since the CFR (excluding finance lease) is now at zero, this method is no longer applicable (for finance leases, the MRP requirement is regarded as met by a charge equal to the element of the rent that goes to write down the Balance Sheet liability).

(b) Asset Life Method

Since 1 April 2008, where capital expenditure on an asset is financed wholly or partly by borrowing or credit arrangements, MRP is to be determined by reference to the life of the asset, based on an equal instalment method. This amount is projected to be nil for 2024/25.

Where assets have been purchased utilising Capital grants or Revenue Contributions no MRP calculation is required. Only assets purchased utilising borrowing require an MRP charge.

The asset life method calculation requires estimated useful lives of assets to be input in to the calculations. These life periods will be determined by the Director of Finance and Assets & Treasurer, with regard to the statutory guidance and advice from professional valuers.



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee 8 February 2024

Report title: Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 - December 2023

Lead Member: Councillor Matthew Walsh

Report sponsor: Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets

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

Action: Noting

Recommendations:

That the provisional outturn forecast for the Authority as of 31 December 2023 be noted.

Executive summary:

The report in Appendix A sets out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 31 December 2023, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year.

The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £36.200m gives a forecast yearend underspend of £0.250m. Furthermore, the level of funding is showing a favourable variance of £0.024m which has resulted in an overall net underspend of £0.274m against the expenditure budget.

The underspend is predominantly due to a favourable variance being reported under employee costs due to vacant positions. Furthermore, due to the significant increase in the Bank of England base rate since the budget was approved, the investment returns have been revised upwards and currently projecting at least £0.550m additional interest in investment returns than originally budgeted.

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

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

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

Legal implications: None.

Privacy and security implications: None.

Duty to collaborate: None.

Health and safety implications: None.

Environmental implications: None.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: None.

Consultation and communication: None.

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

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
A	Appendix A – Budget Monitoring Report April 2023 – December 2023 – Q3	None
B	Appendix B – Property Works 2023-24	None

1. Revenue Forecasts by Service Area – Table 1

Table 1 shows the budget and forecast outturn for each Directorate as at the end of 2023/24 financial year. The budget of £36.450m compared to the forecast outturn of £36.200m gives a forecast yearend underspend of £0.250m. Furthermore, the level of funding is showing a favourable variance of £0.024m which has resulted in an overall net underspend of £0.274m against the expenditure budget.

Directorate	Total Budget £	Actual Year to Date £	Forecast Outturn £	Projected Year End Variance £
Corporate Core	1,105,890	764,860	811,115	-294,775
Finance & Assets	6,878,050	5,893,746	6,817,684	-60,366
Human Resources	551,150	424,210	552,704	1,554
Delivery, Corp. Dev. Planning	25,768,410	18,130,038	25,593,250	-175,160
Statutory Acc. & Contingency	2,146,500	190,998	2,424,785	278,285
Total Expenditure	36,450,000	25,403,852	36,199,538	-250,462
Total Funding	-36,450,000	-30,091,600	-36,474,386	-24,386
Net Position	0	-4,687,748	-274,848	-274,848

Protection Grant - Table 2

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

Protection Grant	Funding £	Actual Year to Date £	Commitments Full Year £	Forecast Outturn £	Residual Grant Remaining £
Protection Uplift	-430,216	73,655	3,938	133,752	-296,464
Grenfell Uplift	-23,023	4,890	12,085	23,023	0
Total	-453,239	78,545	16,023	156,775	-296,464

Variance by Directorate

Corporate Core £0.295m under – The underspend mainly relates to higher-than-expected investment income as a direct result of the Bank of England base rate increasing significantly over the past year. Currently the service is projecting to overachieve by £0.550m in investment returns which is more than double that had been budgeted. It is expected that the base rate has now peaked and with a significant drop in consumer price index in December, it may result in a reduction in the interest base rate in the coming months. Even if there is a drop-in interest rates, the service expects to achieve the interest returns that have been forecast for the current financial year.

Finance & Assets £0.060m under – The underspend relates to employees not being on top of their pay scales as well as lower than expected rates costs and additional aerial site income. Utilities contract has been fixed for 12 months and will cover the period April 2023 to March 2024 which provides a level of certainty in terms of costs in this volatile market.

Delivery, Corporate Development & Planning £0.175m under – The directorates underspend is primarily due to operational establishment being less than budgeted for the first two quarters, and on-call activity being lower than forecast. In terms of operational establishment numbers, the service has as at the end of September surpassed the 300 budgeted establishment with the operational establishment currently at 314. It is anticipated that this number will fluctuate throughout the year due to anticipated leavers/retirees and establishment numbers are projected to reduce slightly but still be over 300 at year end.

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

Statutory Accounting £0.278m over – The directorate is overspending due to an approval of in-year growth bids (table 3) which relate to the purchase of vehicles, generic equipment and operational equipment. The proper accounting treatment for this is to capitalise these items due to their cost and expected useful life. Therefore, the service will increase capital contributions and recognise these purchases in the asset register as capital assets.

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

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

2. Direct Employee Variances

Table 3 shows the breakdown of all the favourable (-) and adverse (+) variances for each sub-heading within the direct employees subjective as at the 31 December 2023:

Subjective	Salary (Including Training costs)	Allowances	NI	Pension	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Wholetime	- 110,414	184,868	74,167	-228,886	- 80,265
On-Call	113,513	-308,757	28,808	-82,654	-249,090
Support	-221,590	0	-27,736	-85,244	-334,570
Technicians	11,206	0	1,972	2,351	15,529
Sessional	-1,230	5,440	2,051	-274	5,987
Agency	54,726	0	0	0	54,726
Grand Total	-153,789	-118,449	79,262	-394,707	-587,683

Wholetime – The operational establishment was below budgeted levels until September. As of December, the operational establishment is 314 as illustrated in section 4. Due to projected leavers and retirees, it is anticipated the operational establishment will reduce to 309 by the end of the financial year.

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

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

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

3. In-Year Growth Bids

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

May 2023

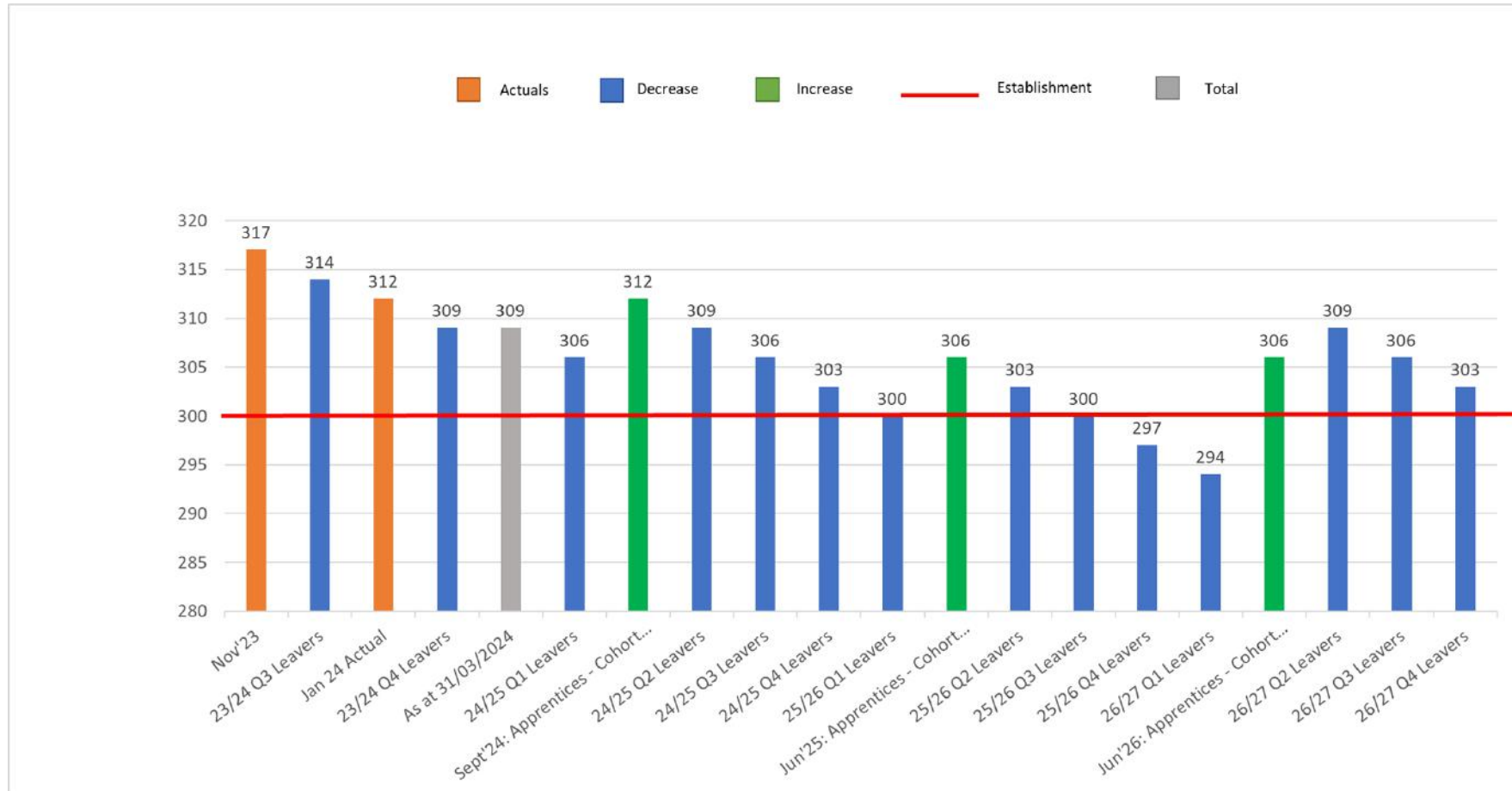
Project	Total Bid £	Comments
Installation of a brake roll tester	36,500	Order placed and delivered.
Airwave Device Refresh	12,100	Orders placed.
Airwave Contract	70,000	This budget relates to the significant increase in contract cost which will be paid throughout the year.
Resource to support the delivery of BFRS' Staff Development Pathway project	53,500	Individual commenced role in July 2023.
White Ribbon Accreditation	2,000	Application approved for White Ribbon accreditation. Merchandise have been purchased.
Marketing and Communications equipment	5,100	50% of the spend has been spent or committed on marketing equipment, predominantly camera equipment.
Prevention Events equipment	5,750	Orders placed.
NILO Ballistic PPE	8,000	Orders to be placed.
Operational Support Unit Refresh	32,000	Orders to be placed.
Total	224,950	

August 2023

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

4. Wholetime Establishment Roadmap

The following graph illustrates the wholetime operational establishment as at 1 April 2022 through to 2026/27 taking into consideration projected retirees, leavers, transfers and recruitment of apprentices. Future years establishment numbers are indicative and illustrate when the Service will be recruiting in the future.



5. Funding

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

Funding	Total Budget £	Actual Year to Date £	Projected Forecast	Projected Year End Variance £
Government Funding	-3,861,790	-3,378,006	-3,861,790	0
Specific Grants	-1,188,000	-898,780	-1,197,000	-9,000
NNDR	-7,174,055	-5,712,604	-7,111,251	62,804
Top-up Grant	-1,510,155	-1,147,714	-1,510,155	0
Precept	-25,194,000	-18,954,497	-25,272,190	-78,190
Transfer to Reserves	2,478,000	0	2,478,000	0
Grand Total	-36,450,000	-30,091,600	-36,474,386	-24,386

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

6. Capital Monitoring

Capital Forecast

The capital programme for 2023/24 is £3.392m, including £1.100m from 2022/23 carry forward capital projects and approval of £0.270m in-year funding for capital projects.

Project Name	Original Budget 2023/24 £	Carry Forwards 2022/23 £	In Year Funding £	Revised Budget 2023/24 £	Actuals Year to Date £	Slippage £	Provisional Outturn £	Projected Year End Variance £
Property	1,139,000	249,000	0	1,388,000	239,226	338,876	1,006,484	-42,640
Total Property Portfolio	1,139,000	249,000	0	1,388,000	239,226	338,876	1,006,484	-42,640
Hydraulic Equipment	65,000	18,915	0	83,915	0	0	83,915	0
Operational Equipment	90,000	0	35,749	125,749	56,728	0	125,749	0
Operational Red Fleet Vehicles	750,000	560,148	0	1,310,148	948,409	0	1,385,901	75,753
Operational White Fleet Vehicles	37,000	0	87,190	124,190	32,160	55,200	68,990	0
BA and Associated Equipment	0	65,460	74,994	140,454	9,994	0	140,454	0
Fireground Radios	0	115,000	0	115,000	0	0	115,000	0
Total Fire Appliances & Equipment	942,000	759,523	197,933	1,899,456	1,047,290	55,200	1,920,009	75,753
ICT	156,000	91,656	71,612	319,268	154,165	0	319,268	0
Total Support	156,000	91,656	71,612	319,268	154,165	0	319,268	0
Grand Total	2,237,000	1,100,179	269,545	3,606,724	1,440,682	394,076	3,245,761	33,113

Capital Funding

The capital programme will be funded as follows:

Capital Funding	Balance at 1 April 2023 £000	Estimated Transfers (in) £000	Estimates Transfers Out £000	Estimate Balance at 31 March 2024 £000
Revenue Contribution to Capital	-3,359	-2,140	3,246	-2,253
Other Capital Contributions	0	-3,543	0	-3,543
Total Capital Funding	-3,359	-5,683	3,246	-5,796

Capital Summary

Property Portfolio

Property has a capital budget of £1.388m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.249m. The capital expenditure is being utilised to carry out planned capital projects as agreed at Business Transformation Board. This includes capital works across several sites following a condition survey carried out during 2022/23. Furthermore, a business case was presented to the Executive Committee in September setting out the plan to exit Unit 7 and relocation of the services provided from this site. This resulted in the approval of vacating this site and relocating services by September 2024. The vacating and relocating costs associated with Unit 7 have been revised and will cost significantly less than originally planned which has been reflected in the outturn. Some of the identified cost savings has been reallocated for the refurbishment of Amersham kitchen and installation of solar panels at Marlow. The works relating to the exit of Unit 7 are well underway with works commencing at HQ to relocate personnel and services.

Capital works to date have been completed at Aylesbury, Gerrards Cross, High Wycombe, Marlow, Olney, West Ashland and Winslow. Drill towers upgrades at Broughton, Buckingham and Newport Pagnell have also been completed. A slippage of £0.339m is projected for works at Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Broughton, Buckingham and Marlow as works are being put on hold until 2024/25. This is due to the focus being the departure and relocation of services currently provided from Unit 7 site and installation of solar panels at Marlow. Upgrades to the remaining drill towers has also been put on hold until 2024/25. A further breakdown of property works has been provided in Appendix B.

Fire Appliances & Equipment

Fire Appliances & Equipment has a capital budget of £1.702m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.760m. The capital funds will be utilised to purchase three red fleet appliances and to purchase operational equipment for these appliances in line with the fleet strategy. This will also include the purchase of a white fleet vehicle. £0.087m in year funding has been allocated to purchased three additional white fleet vehicles, two of which are not due to be delivered until early 2024/25 and has been factored into the slippage of £0.055m. The carry forward budget of £0.760m relates to delays in the delivery of the two fire appliances and equipment which were due to be delivered in 2022/23, additional equipment for BA and purchase of fire ground radios. The two delayed fire appliances from 2022/23 were delivered in October 2023. There has been an identified price increase in the fire appliances build costs from the manufacturer, and an increase to the cost of equipment resulting in a projected overspend of £0.076m.

Support

ICT has a capital budget of £0.248m for 2023/24, which includes carry forward budget from 2022/23 of £0.092m. This budget will be utilised for the purchase of ICT hardware equipment, as per the ICT replacement strategy along with replacement of On-Call MDTs, purchase of servers and replacement of station end turnout system. The carry forward budget of £0.092m relates to an agreed change to the ICT capital spend plan, which includes the carried forward capital works of station end turnout system upgrade from 2022/23 into 2023/24. Year to date spend on ICT capital equipment includes the purchase of laptops, surfaces and equipment for station end turnout system. There was also an in-year growth bid approved for the on-call station turnout system for £0.072m, with works expected to be completed before March 2024.

7. Reserves

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

Reserves	Balance at Start of year £000	Projected Movement £000	Balance at End of Year £000
General Fund	-1,625	0	-1,625
Earmarked Reserves (Revenue)*	-1,937	-2,530	-4,467
Earmarked Reserves (Capital)	-3,359	-2,437	-5,796
Total Reserves	-6,921	-4,967	-11,888

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

Appendix B



Property Capital Progress Report 2023/24																			
Ref	Station / Department	Capital works to be completed	Complete	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	Update
P.0.1 Carried forward Capital works from 2022/23																			
0.1.6	Aylesbury	Refurb old drill tower, with option to be installed at another station		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				Exploring installation at Princess Risborough with Supplier, very likely works will be completed in 2024/25
1.2.2a	High Wycombe	Various works including: Redecoration, fitting and replacement of flooring in multiple areas, blinds and furniture	Yes	●	●	●	●												Complete
E1.10	Aylesbury	Installation of motorised front door at Brigade HQ	Yes	●	●	●	●												Complete
E1.16	West Ashland	Installation of external stair case (from first to second floor)	Yes	●	●	●	●												Complete
PF.03	Broughton	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Install new road surface adequate for HGVs in car park, repair brick boundary wall, replace dehumidifier/heater in line with replacement schedule.		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				On Hold - To be completed in 2024/25
PF.05	Gerrards Cross	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Road resurfacing, replace flat roofing in line with life cycle and upgrade rainwater pipes	Yes	●	●	●	●												Complete
PF.08	Olney	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including Brickwork repairs / replacement	Yes	●	●	●	●												Complete
P 1.1 Implement Priority Capital Repair- Works Drill Towers																			
1.1.1	High Wycombe	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				- 2022/23 - Went out for tender for all drill towers but received zero responses. - 2022/23 - Agreed with operational managers to repair prioritised drill towers based on operational need. - 2023/24 - Remainder of drill towers on hold pending further work linked to relocation of Aylesbury's old drill tower - 2023/24 - all remaining drill tower works have been put on hold until 2024/25
1.1.2	Gerrards Cross	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.3	Beaconsfield	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.4	Broughton	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●														
1.1.5	Buckingham	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●														
1.1.6	Newport Pagnell	Drill tower works	Yes	●	●														
1.1.7	Princess Risborough	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.8	Haddenham	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.10	Stokenchurch	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.14a	Brill	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.14b	Great Missenden	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.14c	Amersham	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.14d	Olney	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
1.1.14e	Winslow	Drill tower works		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				
U7 Unit 7 Departure (Dilapidations) and Facilities Relocation																			
U7.1.01	Unit 7	Unit 7 Departure Costs (Dilapidations)		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Work in progress - Approval from Executive Committee to vacate Unit 7 by September 2024
U7.2.01	Unit 7	Unit 7 Facilities Relocation Costs		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				Work in progress - Approval from Executive Committee to vacate Unit 7 by September 2024
W Implementation of MTFP capital works																			
W.1.0	Aylesbury	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Internal upgrades to flooring, ceiling, walls and windows								●	●	●	●	●	●				On Hold - To be completed in 2024/25
W.2.0	Beaconsfield	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: resurfacing of drill yard and car park, and internal ground works								●	●	●	●	●	●				On Hold - To be completed in 2024/25
W.3.0	Buckingham	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Replace Ideal concord gas fired boiler in line with replacement schedule. Along with resurfacing of front yard and internal ground works & door replacements		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				All yard work completed, other works still in progress (Going out to market for quotations looking at various options (Ground source, Air source heating etc) which will provide value for money with a view to award a contract in Q3.) Works for remaining works at Buckingham put On Hold until 2024/25.
W.4.0	Marlow	Various works from 2022-23 Condition Survey. Including: Roof upgrades and internal flooring replacement							●	●	●	●	●	●	●				On Hold - To be completed in 2024/25
OW Other Workstreams																			
OW.1.0	Winslow	Window replacement	Yes	●	●	●													Completed
OW.2.0	Gerrards Cross	Kitchen replacement	Yes	●	●	●													Completed
OW.3.0	Workshops	Replacement of Bay Lighting	Yes	●	●	●													Completed
OW.4.0	Aylesbury	Fuel Tank repairs and upgrades	Yes	●	●	●													Completed
OW.5.0	Amersham	Kitchen replacement											●	●	●				Not Started - To be completed during Q4 2023/24
OW.6.0	Marlow	Solar Panel Installation										●	●	●	●	●			Works in progress
EW Emergency Unplanned Capital Works																			
EW.02	Marlow	Replacement of Extraction System	Complete					●											Completed
EDI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Capital Works																			
EDI.02	Blue Light Hub	Installation of motorised front door at Blue Light Hub	Complete							●	●	●	●	●					Work in progress

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 2023

Report title: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) 2023 Update

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse, Chairman

Report sponsor: Chief Fire Officer, Louise Harrison

Author and contact: Anne-Marie Carter, Head of Technology, Transformation and PMO – Acarter@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Noting

Recommendations: That the report be recommended for submission to the Authority:

That the Authority note the BFRS HMICFRS 2023 update.

Executive summary:

In July 2017, HMICFRS extended its remit to include inspections of England's fire and rescue service. They assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 44 fire and rescue services in England.

HMICFRS published the BFRS Round 3/2023-2025 report on 19 October 2023. The report can be found here: [BFRS 2023-2025 - HMICFRS](#)

This report sets out HMICFRS inspection findings for Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service following the inspection during May and June 2023.

The latest report for this Service identifies three causes of concern, accompanied by 10 recommendations, and 26 areas for improvement. The report was noted at the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting on 24 October 2023.

As per requirements set out in the report covering letter to the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer on 17 October 2023, a copy of the action plan detailing how the Service will address the recommendations must be submitted to HMICFRS within 28 days of the report. A copy of the action plan was sent to HMICFRS within 28 days of the report publication; on the 15 November 2023.

On 21 November 2023, HMICFRS informed the Service that it will now be entering the supportive Engage process. The Engage process provides additional scrutiny and support from the Inspectorate.

Key Progress to highlight is:

Fire Performance Oversight Group (FPOG)

An internal HMICFRS Improvement Board has been set up and meeting on a regular basis. The Board is chaired by the Chief Fire Officer, attended by the relevant strategic leads and other subject matter experts when needed. The terms of reference for the HMICFRS Improvement board can be found in Appendix 1.

Officers have also engaged with and held a number of separate meetings with key partners and peers to assist in both developing and monitoring the action plan including.

- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Chair
- Chief Fire Officer of Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service, the current NFCC Protection Committee Chair
- Buckinghamshire Council – EDI Policy Support
- London Fire Commissioner
- Home Office Officials
- Local Government Association

Preparations are well underway for the Chief Fire Officer and Chairman to present to the Fire Performance Oversight Group on 7 February 2024

Revisit

The Service's revisit has been confirmed to take place week commencing 20th May 2024. The revisit will include desktop reviews, interviews and reality testing. It will focus on the Round 3 causes of concern.

Action Plan

As at the end of December 2023 the Service has made the following progress against the HMICFRS action plan:

	Prevention	Protection	EDI
Complete	1	3	
In Progress/On Track	4	4	8
Risk to progress		3	1
Not started	2	2	12

The action plan will be managed as part of the Portfolio Management Office (PMO), with regular reporting through internal governance structures. As stated in the recommendation at the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting on 24 October 2023, the Authority will be kept informed of progress in delivering against the HMICFRS

Action Plan via regular reporting to both the Overview and Audit Committee and full Authority.

Financial implications:

The prioritisation of improvements to address the specific recommendations raised within the causes of concern may introduce additional financial implications, either through reprioritisation of other projects, or through new workstreams.

Consideration will be given to ensure associated costs, both direct and indirect, are fully understood and managed effectively.

Risk management:

There remains reputational corporate risks to the organisation. The Service continues to take steps to mitigate this through having extensive internal and external audits of a number of areas of the Service, in addition to the HMICFRS inspections. The internal audit plan for 23/24 can be found here: [Internal Audit Report – Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Internal](#)

Legal implications:

The current Fire and Rescue Service National Framework issued under section 21 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, to which the Authority must have regard when carrying out its functions, states as follows at paragraph 7.5:

‘Fire and rescue authorities must give due regard to reports and recommendations made by HMICFRS and – if recommendations are made – prepare, update and regularly publish an action plan detailing how the recommendations are being actioned. If the fire and rescue authority does not propose to undertake any action as a result of a recommendation, reasons for this should be given.’

It continues: ‘When forming an action plan, the fire and rescue authority could seek advice and support from other organisations, for example, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association’.

Privacy and security implications:

No privacy or security implications have been identified that are directly associated with this report or its appendices.

The report and its appendices are not protectively marked.

Duty to collaborate:

Each fire and rescue service is inspected individually. However, the latest report includes findings relating to the Service’s ability to collaborate effectively with partners. The report states: “We were pleased to see the service meets its statutory duty to collaborate. It continues to consider opportunities to collaborate with other emergency responders.”

Health and safety implications:

The HMICFRS report states:

- The service provides good well-being provisions to its workforce, but work-related stress is not being fully addressed
- The service has a positive health and safety culture

The areas for improvement relating to working hours and secondary contracts will feed into the health, safety and wellbeing group.

Environmental implications:

The HMICFRS report states:

“The service didn’t identify all the potential climate impacts and mitigation measures required in its 2020–2025 public safety plan. This is what it calls its integrated risk management plan. It has now recognised that it needs a different range of equipment to be ready to respond to this risk both now and in the future.”

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

The Service has been judged as ‘requires improvement’ in the area relating to ensuring fairness and promoting diversity, along with a cause of concern and four recommendations relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. All the findings from the HMICFRS round three inspection report have been fully considered and prioritised to ensure continual improvement is established and maintained.

The Authority’s equality, diversity, and inclusion objectives 2020-2025 – year 3 progress was presented to the Fire Authority on 14 June 2023.

Consultation and communication:

Specific areas identified for Service improvement are being captured in relevant plans and will be reported on in line with the recommendations.

Background papers:

HMICFRS BFRS Home Page: [Buckinghamshire - His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/buckinghamshire/)

16 February 2022 – Fire Authority: Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Report 2021

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/02/fa-item-10-16022022.pdf/>

20 January 2023 - State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2022

[State of Fire and Rescue: The Annual Assessment of Fire and Rescue Services in England 2022 - HMICFRS](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/state-of-fire-and-rescue/)

24 October 2023 – Extraordinary Fire Authority: His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) – Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (BFRS) Inspection Report 2023

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/10/extraordinary-fire-authority-meeting-24-october-2023-item-9-hmicfrs-inspection-report.pdf/

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	BFRS HMICFRS Improvement Board Terms of Reference	N/A
2	HMICFRS Timeline	N/A

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HMICFRS Improvement Board Terms of Reference

1. Objective

- The primary objective of the Improvement Board is to address and rectify the causes of concern and areas for improvement (AFI's) highlighted in the recent 2023 HMICFRS inspection report, aiming for substantial enhancements in the overall performance and quality of Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service.
- To drive improvements within the Service in line with the action plan and present progress and outcomes to the HMICFRS Fire Performance Oversight Group (FPOG).

2. Membership

- A designated chair, the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive (CFO) will lead the board and ensure effective coordination among members.
- The other members of the Improvement Board will be:
 - Deputy Chief Fire Officer/ Chief Executive
 - Director of Finance and Assets
 - Director of Legal and Governance
 - Interim Assistant Chief Fire Officer
 - Head of Protection & Assurance
 - Head of Human Resources
 - Service Liaison Lead
- The Improvement Board may invite other guests or observers to attend its meetings as appropriate, such as subject matter experts, external consultants or advisers and the Chairman and relevant Lead Members.

3. Accountability and Responsibilities

- Review the detailed findings of the inspection report and identify specific areas requiring improvement.
- Develop a comprehensive action plan with clear, measurable objectives and timelines to address causes of concern and areas for improvement.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the progress of the implementation of improvement measures against the action plan and areas for improvement within the report.
- Review risks and opportunities elevated from sponsors for each improvement area and consider strategic investment, or transformational change proposals that mitigate risk, maintain momentum and take account of identified opportunities
- Ensure effective communication channels are established to disseminate information regarding improvement initiatives to all stakeholders.
- Act as the final point of review for all papers being submitted to the FPOG
- Ensure the People, Culture and Equality aspects are considered for all areas of the action plan and ensure these are documented, scrutinised and reviewed on a regular basis

4. Implementation

- Establish strategic leads and work groups as necessary, to focus on specific aspects of improvement identified in the inspection report and action plan.
- Allocate resources, including personnel, budget, and technology, to support the implementation of improvement initiatives.
- Collaborate with relevant internal and external entities to leverage expertise and best practices.

5. Reporting (Internal and external)

- Provide regular progress reports to the Fire Authority and Overview and Audit Committee and other stakeholders.
- Reports should include, where relevant, progress against actions identified in HMICFRS thematic reports (e.g. culture and values)
- Relevant Lead Members should be provided with (at least) quarterly updates on progress against their areas of responsibility.
- Progress updates from strategic leads.
- Include key performance indicators (KPI's), metrics, risks and milestones in reports where appropriate, to demonstrate tangible improvements.
- Highlight any challenges and propose solutions.

6. Review and Assessment

- Conduct periodic reviews of the improvement plan's effectiveness and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and changing circumstances.
- Review timetable and any actions.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement within the Service.

7. Timeline

- Define a realistic timeline for the implementation of improvement measures, taking into consideration the urgency of certain issues.
- The Improvement Board will meet on a fortnightly basis; the dates will be agreed in advance and sent to the members of the Board; further meetings will be arranged as appropriate to ensure all actions are on track

8. Documentation

- Maintain detailed records of improvement initiatives, including meeting minutes, action plans / logs, and progress reports.
- Develop framework for FPOG presentations.

9. Governance

- Adhere to established governance structures within the Fire Authority and organisation, while ensuring the Improvement Board has the necessary authority to make impactful decisions.

10. Communications

- Develop internal communications plan.
- Good news and good practice.

11. Conclusion

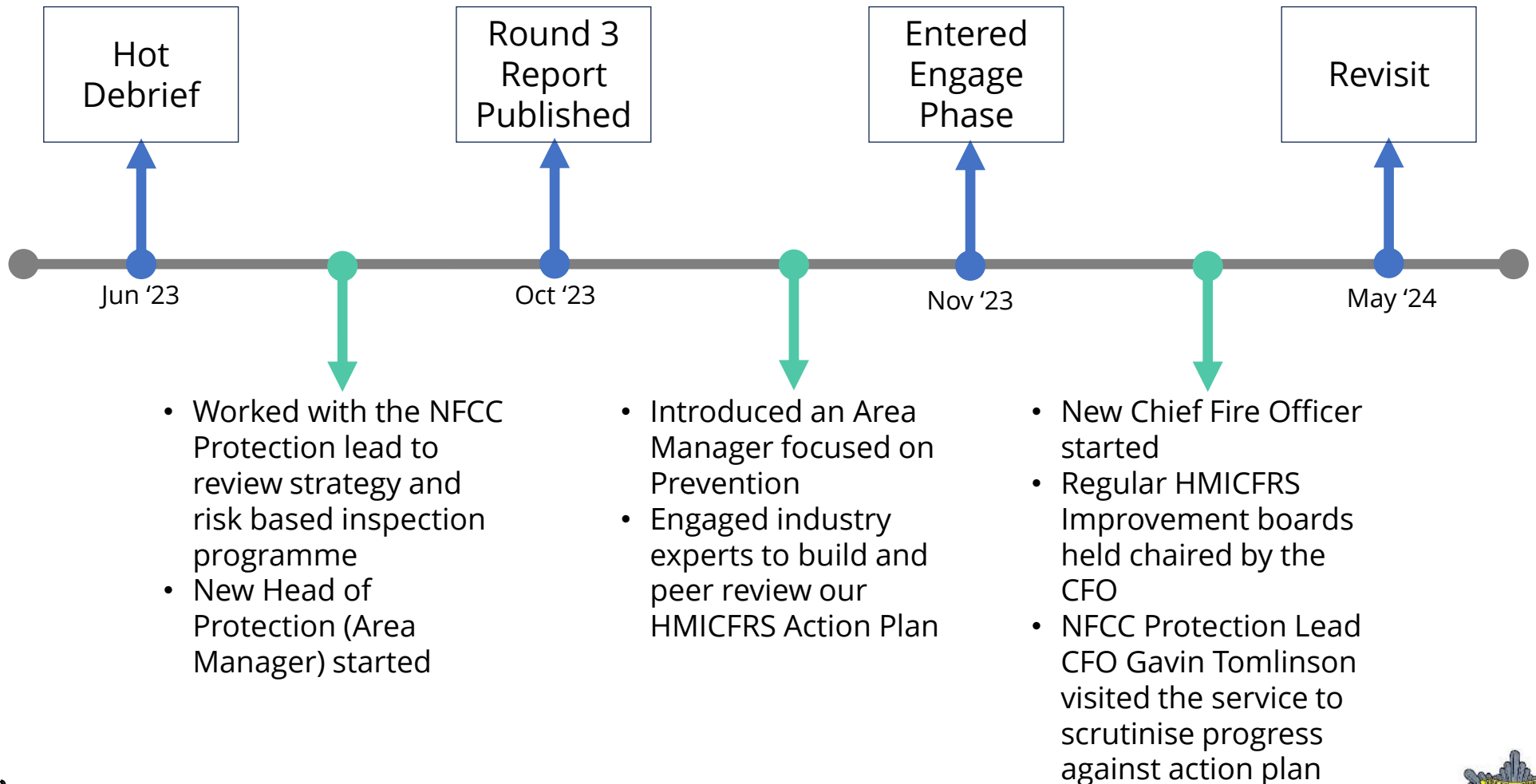
- The Improvement Board will strive to instil a culture of excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement within Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, ensuring that the expectations of HMICFRS are met and future inspections reflect positive advancements.

This Terms of Reference document is subject to review and amendment as deemed necessary by the Improvement Board.

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HMICFRS Round 3 Timeline & Activity

We have worked with a wide range of industry experts, on our journey, throughout the last 8 months



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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Executive Committee, 8 February 24

Report title: Performance Management – Q2 2023/24

Lead Member: Councillor Simon Rouse

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne, Deputy Chief Fire Officer/Chief Operating Officer

Author and contact: Craig Newman, Data Intelligence Team Manager,
cnewman@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Noting

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

1. It is recommended that the Performance Management – Q2 2023/24 be noted.

Executive summary:

This report details the suite of 69 performance measures split across 4 quadrants:

- 1) Public Impact
- 2) Response
- 3) Great Place to Work
- 4) Public Value

This report comprises of the Service performance against these measures for Q2 2023/24, see Appendix 1, containing the following:

- 1) Performance Measures Overview – each quadrant on one page
- 2) Performance Measures Details – shows actual performance alongside relevant trend information and where needed commentary.

At the end of Q2, 55 measures reported with a Blue, Green, Amber or Red status, nine are for information, five are awaiting information.

BRAG	Number		Total	%
	Target	Monitor		
B	13	3	16	25%
G	24	3	27	42%
A	10	0	10	16%
R	8	3	11	17%

Financial implications: A detailed understanding of the Service’s performance allows informed decision making in relation to future resource allocation. The balance of measures also allows an understanding of the Service’s financial performance and enables a view to be formed of its overall value for money compared with others.

Risk management: Performance and risk information is designed and presented to assist the Authority in the strategic decision-making through understanding the communities we serve and associated risk profiles. Performance management information is a major contributor to service improvement and to the effective prioritisation of resources.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

Privacy and security implications: There are no Privacy and Security implications arising from this paper.

Duty to collaborate: There are no opportunities to collaborate directly from this report.

Health and safety implications: There are no specific Health, Safety and Wellbeing implications arising from this paper. Performance reports on Health, Safety and Wellbeing is subject to separate scrutiny and performance reporting.

Environmental implications: There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report. Performance measures will be developed during the year to provide reassurance that the Service is making progress against its recently approved Environment and Climate action plan.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: There are no specific Equality, diversity and inclusion implications arising from this paper. Performance reports on Equality, diversity and inclusion are subject to separate performance reporting.

Consultation and communication: We aim to provide performance information incorporating stakeholder contributions. The report will be circulated throughout the organisation for information and awareness.

Board	Date	Outcome
Senior Management Team	21 November 2023	Approved to go to SMB
Strategic Management Board	16 January 2024	Approved to go to Executive Committee

Next steps -

- The performance measures will be reported quarterly
- Indicators and targets will be reviewed annually

Background papers:

Overview and Audit Committee, 8 November 2023: 2022-23 Annual Performance Monitoring

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/10/overview-and-audit-committee-8-november-2023-item-16-performance-monitoring-report.pdf/

Executive Committee, 13 September 2023: Performance Management – Q1 2022/23

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/09/executive-committee-13-september-2023-item-7-q123-24-performance-management-report.pdf/

Fire Authority, 14 June 2023: Performance Management – Q4 2022/23

bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/06/fire-authority-annual-meeting-14-june-2023-item-19-performance-management-q4-2022-23.pdf/

Executive Committee, 22 March 2023: Performance Management – Q3 2022/23

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2023/03/executive-committee-22-march-2023-item-8-performance-management-q3-2022-23.pdf/>

Fire Authority, 7 December 2022: Performance Management – Q2 2022/23

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/11/item-14-fire-authority-meeting-7-december-2022-performance-management-q2-2022-23.pdf/>

Special Meeting of the Executive Committee, 7 October 2022: Performance Management – Q1 2022/23

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for BMKFA Executive Committee, 14/09/2022 10:00 \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2022/09/agenda-document-for-bmkfa-executive-committee-14-09-2022-10-00.pdf/)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	BFRS Key Performance Measures: Q2 – 23/24	N/A

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KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES - 2023-2024

QUARTER 2 (JUL - SEP)

Introduction

This Key Performance Measures report has been designed as a rounded and balanced picture of how the Service is performing at a local level.

Due to the regular frequency of this report being produced, most indicators used within each measures represent change within the Service and does not always represent good or bad performance. For example, Accidental Dwelling Fires could increase, yet still have the fewest number within the country (relative). This level of detail will be covered in annual reports and ad-hoc reports when requested, as most national data is published annually.

It's worth noting, the report contains many types of targets and methods of comparison. Some targets are aspirational, some are there to ensure minimum standards are met and others are there to identify exceptions within trends, allowing us to identify possible needs for change/reaction.

	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)
Better than expected	B	B
As expected (within trend/target)	G	G
Worse than expected	A	A
Considerably worse than expected	R	R

For monitoring purposes	B
For monitoring purposes	G
For monitoring purposes	A
For monitoring purposes	R
No reporting for this pattern	-
Information not received	?

HIGHLIGHTED MEASURES - 1 of 2

PI.1.01 - Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

PUBLIC IMPACT—IN THE HOME

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	23	26	23	19	22	24	24	24	27	25	24	19	B <10%
	2023/2024	28	25	23	18	13	15							G Within 10%
	Status	R	G	G	G	B	B							A >10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	23	49	72	91	112	136	161	184	212	237	261	280	What is good
	2023/2024	28	53	76	94	107	122							Less is better
	Status	R	G	G	G	G	B							

Ref	PI.1.01	Number of dwelling fires where the cause of the fire was recorded as accidental. Dwelling fires are fires in properties that are a place of residence i.e. places occupied by households such as houses and flats, excluding hotels/ hostels and residential institutions.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

The lowest number of ADFs attended during Q1 & Q2 since incident reporting changed in 2009.

It is also pleasing to see that the number of dwelling fires listed with the cause as unknow was also at an all time low (PI.1.05).

As a result of fewer ADF's the number of serious ADFs and injuries recorded at ADFs have also seen lower numbers.

The Service continues to prioritise it's prevention activities in the home, with the aim of reducing the number of ADFs even further.

HIGHLIGHTED MEASURES - 2 of 2

PI.2.08 - Fire Safety Audits

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Target	20	20	20	20	20	83	83	83	83	83	83	B > 29 Per month	
	2023/2024	33	15	28	24	17	30						G > 19 Per month	
	Status	B	G	G	G	A	B							A < 20 Per month
Cumulative	Target	20	40	60	80	100	120	203	286	369	452	535	618	What is good
	2023/2024	33	48	76	100	117	147							More is better
	Status	B	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.2.08	Number of Fire Safety Audits Completed. A fire safety audit is an examination of the premises and relevant documents to ascertain how the premises are being managed with regards to fire safety. Occupants will need to demonstrate to our officers that they have met the duties required by the Fire Safety Order.
Owner	Protection	
Comparison	Target	
Source	PRMS	

The target number of audits identified for the period 2023/24 was achieved during quarter two. However, the service acknowledge the HMICFRS feedback in respect of protection, both in relation to the requirements to have a clearly identified risk based inspection programme and the need to make more effective use of our protection staff.

The new Protection strategy provides the framework for planned activity, with a key focus on high risk targeting. The revised risk based inspection programme (undertaken during Q3) has identified an audit schedule for very high and high risk premises types, which will require a significant increase in planned audit activity. A new in year target of 1000 planned audits will be introduced from Q3. This a stretched target and it is likely that it will take some time to adjust ways of working and re-balance ways of working, so less time is apportioned to demand led interventions.

PUBLIC IMPACT

IN THE HOME

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PI.1.01	Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADFs)	B	B	9
PI.1.02	Number of serious ADFs	G	B	9
PI.1.03	ADFs - Fire related fatalities	G	G	10
PI.1.04	ADFs—Fire related serious injuries	G	G	10
PI.1.05	Dwelling fires - Cause not known	B	B	11
PI.1.06	Dwelling fires - Deliberate	B	A	11
PI.1.07	False Alarms in the home	R	R	12
PI.1.08	Home Fire Safety Visits	G	G	12
PI.1.09	Home Fire Safety Visits - Vulnerable	B	B	13

IN THE WORKPLACE

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PI.2.01	Non-domestic property fires - Accidental	B	B	14
PI.2.02	Non-domestic property fires - Deliberate	G	G	14
PI.2.03	Non-domestic property fires - Not Known	G	G	15
PI.2.04	Non-domestic property fires - Serious	B	B	15
PI.2.05	Non-domestic property fires - Fire related fatalities	G	G	16
PI.2.06	Non-domestic property fires - Fire related injuries - Serious	G	G	16
PI.2.07	Non-domestic property fires - False Alarms	G	G	17
PI.2.08	Fire Safety Audits	B	G	17
PI.2.09	Prison Fires	R	R	18

TRAVEL

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PI.3.01	Road Traffic collisions (RTCs) - Attended	G	G	19
PI.3.02	RTC Fatalities	G	A	19
PI.3.03	RTC Injuries - Serious	A	G	20
PI.3.04	RTC Injuries - Slight	R	R	20

COMMUNITIES

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PI.4.01	Deliberate Secondary Fires (to other's property)	B	B	21
PI.4.02	Deliberate Primary Fires (to other's property)	G	G	21

RESPONSE

INCIDENTS

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
R.1.01	Total incidents (exc co-responders)	G	B	23
R.1.02	Co-responder incidents	B	B	23
R.1.03	Effecting Entry incidents	G	R	24
R.1.04	Average attendance time to all incidents (exc co-responder)	R	A	24
R.1.05	Average attendance time to accidental dwelling fires	B	G	25

RESPONSE MODEL

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
R.2.01	Availability - Wholetime Appliances	A	R	26
R.2.02	Availability - On-call Appliances	R	R	26
R.2.03	Response Model - Wholetime Appliances	G	G	27
R.2.04	Response Model - On-call Appliances	R	R	27
R.2.05	Over The Border Mobilisations into BFRS	G	G	28
R.2.06	Over The Border Mobilisations out of BFRS	B	B	28

OPS RESILIENCE

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
R.3.01	Maintenance of Competencies	-	B	29
R.3.02	Hydrant Availability	?	?	29
R.3.03	High Risk Site Information	G	G	30

A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

PEOPLE

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
GP.1.01	Actual vs Establishment - Wholetime	G	G	33
GP.1.02	Actual vs Establishment - On-Call	R	R	33
GP.1.03	Actual vs Establishment - Support	A	A	34
GP.1.04	Staff Turnover	A	A	34
GP.1.05	Absence	A	B	35
GP.1.06	Employee Assistance Programme	-	-	35
GP.1.07	Employee Engagement	-	R	36
GP.1.08	Appraisal & Objectives Completion	R	R	36
GP.1.09	Mandatory E-Learning Completed	G	A	37
GP.1.10	Grievance & Disciplines	G	G	37

HEALTH & SAFETY

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
GP.2.01	Injury Rate	B	-	38
GP.2.02	Workplace Injuries	G	G	38
GP.2.03	Near Miss Events Recorded	G	G	39
GP.2.04	Vehicle Incidents	R	R	39
GP.2.05	RIDDOR Reportable Injuries	G	A	40
GP.2.06	Attacks on members of staff	A	A	40
GP.2.07	Equipment damage	A	A	41

PUBLIC VALUE

FINANCE

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.1.01	Forecast - Outturn	G	-	43
PV.1.02	Bank Cost	G	G	43
PV.1.03	Fraud	-	G	44

COMPLIANCE

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.2.01	Data Breaches	-	G	45
PV.2.02	FOIs responded to within timescales	G	-	45

ENGAGEMENT

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.3.01	Compliments & Complaints	-	B	46
PV.3.02	Social Media Engagements	B	B	46
PV.3.03	Website Engagements	B	G	47

ICT

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.4.01	Service Desk Response	G	G	48
PV.4.02	Network Uptime	?	?	48

PROJECTS

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.5.01	Internal Audits	-	A	49
PV.5.02	Projects	-	B	49

ENVIRONMENT

Ref	Description	Monthly (in most cases)	Cumulative (in most cases)	Page
PV.6.01	Carbon Emissions	-	-	50
PV.6.02	Printing	-	-	50



PUBLIC IMPACT

PI.1.01 - Number of Accidental Dwelling Fires (ADF)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	23	26	23	19	22	24	24	24	27	25	24	19	B <10%
	2023/2024	28	25	23	18	13	15							G Within 10%
	Status	R	G	G	G	B	B							A >10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	23	49	72	91	112	136	161	184	212	237	261	280	R >20%
	2023/2024	28	53	76	94	107	122							What is good
	Status	R	G	G	G	G	B							Less is better

Ref	PI.1.01	Number of dwelling fires where the cause of the fire was recorded as accidental. Dwelling fires are fires in properties that are a place of residence i.e. places occupied by households such as houses and flats, excluding hotels/ hostels and residential institutions.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

The lowest number of ADFs attended during Q1 & Q2 since incident reporting changed in 2009.

It is also pleasing to see that the number of dwelling fires listed with the cause as unknow was also at an all time low (PI.1.05).

For more information, please see the highlighted measure section of the report.

PI.1.02 - Number of Serious ADFs

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	8.2	7	7.8	6.8	6.6	7.8	7.8	8	8.4	8.2	7	8.6	B <20%
	2023/2024	11	6	5	4	2	7							G Within 20%
	Status	R	G	B	B	B	G							A >20%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	8.2	15.2	23	29.8	36.4	44.2	52	60	68.4	76.6	83.6	92.2	R >30%
	2023/2024	11	17	22	26	28	35							What is good
	Status	R	G	G	G	B	B							Less is better

Ref	PI.1.02	Number of accidental dwelling fires where the fire spread from the item that had first ignited. Fire spread is in relation to heat or flame damage. This does not include smoke damage.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

Of the 35 serious ADFs:

- 23 were limited to the room of origin.
- 8 were limited to the floor of origin
- 3 involved more than one floor (this may include roof space)
- 1 resulted in whole building being damaged by fire.

The average attendance time to the incidents listed above was 8:23 (eight minutes and 23 seconds)

PI.1.03 - ADF Fire-Related Fatalities

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	0	0	0.4	0	0.2	0	0.4	0	0	0.2	0	0.2	B
	2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0								G 0
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							A > 0 a year
														R > 3 a year
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	0	0	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.6	1	1	1	1.2	1.2	1.4	What is good
	2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0	0							Less is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.1.03	Number of fire related fatalities recorded at accidental dwelling fires. In general, 'fire-related deaths' are those that would not have otherwise occurred had there not been a fire.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

PI.1.04 - ADF Fire Related Serious Injuries

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	0	0	0.2	0.4	0.6	0	0	0	0.6	0.8	0	0.4	B
	2023/2024	1	0	0	0	0								G < 3 a year
	Status	A	G	G	G	G	G							A > 2 a year
														R > 4 a year
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	0	0	0.2	0.6	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.8	2.6	2.6	3	What is good
	2023/2024	1	1	1	1	1	1							Less is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.1.04	Number of fire related serious injuries recorded at accidental dwelling fires. In general, 'serious injury' can be defined as: at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

No serious fire related injuries were recorded at ADFs during Q2.

PI.1.05 - Dwelling Fires - Cause Not Known

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	1.8	1.6	1.6	0.8	0.6	2.4	1.4	1	1	1.2	0.6	2	B < 1 per month
	2023/2024	1	1	0	1	2	0							G 1-2 per month
	Status	G	G	B	G	G	B							A > 2 per month
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	1.8	3.4	5	5.8	6.4	8.8	10.2	11.2	12.2	13.4	14	16	What is good
	2023/2024	1	2	2	3	5	5							Less is better
	Status	G	G	B	B	G	B							

Ref	PI.1.05
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of dwelling fire incidents attended where the cause of the fire was recorded as 'Not Known'.
 Not known is recorded when there is general uncertainty about the cause or motivation of the fire. 'Not Known' should only be used if absolute necessary.

As mentioned, the number dwelling fires listed with an unknow cause during Q1 and Q2 is at its lowest since incident data was changed in 2009.
 The service continues to support it's officers in establishing a motive/cause of fire at properties.

PI.1.06 - Deliberate Dwelling Fires

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	1.2	1.4	1.4	2.6	2.8	0.4	2.8	2	1	1.2	1.8	0.6	B < 2 per month
	2023/2024	2	6	4	3	2	1							G 2 per month
	Status	G	R	A	A	G	B							A > 2 per month
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	1.2	2.6	4	6.6	9.4	9.8	12.6	14.6	15.6	16.8	18.6	19.2	What is good
	2023/2024	2	8	12	15	17	18							Less is better
	Status	G	A	A	A	A	A							

Ref	PI.1.06
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of dwelling fires where the fire was started deliberately by someone other than the owner/occupant.
 This includes derelict properties - derelict are buildings which are unfit for further use.

PI.1.07 - False Alarms in the Home

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	91	103	95	116	122	114	120	100	100	89	85	81	B <5%
	2023/2024	95	100	116	139	123	148							G Within 5%
	Status	G	G	R	R	G	R							A >5%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	91	193	289	405	527	641	761	861	961	1050	1135	1216	R >10%
	2023/2024	95	195	311	450	573	721							What is good
	Status	G	G	A	R	A	R							Monitor

Ref	PI.1.07	Number of incidents attended in dwellings that were recorded as a False Alarm. These could have been fire related or a special service i.e. flooding. However, this does not include where we attended as a co-responder.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

In contrast to accidental dwelling fires, false alarms in the home has seen its highest number across Q1 and Q2 since incident data changed in 2009. At the time of incident, crews take the opportunity to educate, engage and where appropriate, provide or replace appropriate equipment, such as smoke detectors.

These interactions prevent callouts to the same address.

	2023/2024	23-24 %
Apparatus - Contaminants	42	5.8%
Apparatus - External Factors	12	1.7%
Apparatus - Human	238	33.0%
Apparatus - Faulty	128	17.8%
Apparatus - Other (incorrect positioning/unsuitable)	26	3.6%
Apparatus - unknown	118	16.4%
Good Intent - Fire	110	15.3%
Good Intent - Special Service	31	4.3%
Malicious	16	2.2%

PI.1.08 - Home Fire Safety Visits

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Target	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	B > 10%	
	2023/2024	340	342	457	436	583	408						G Within 10%	
	Status	R	R	B	G	B	G							A < 10%
Cumulative	Target	400	800	1200	1600	2000	2400	2800	3200	3600	4000	4400	4800	R < 20%
	2023/2024	340	682	1139	1575	2158	2566							What is good
	Status	R	R	G	G	G	G							More is better

Ref	PI.1.08	Number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) completed monthly by operational crews and the Community Safety delivery team. This includes targeted addresses, referrals, post incidents and hot-strikes.
Owner	Prevention	
Comparison	Against Target	
Source	BFRS PRMS	

HFSVs were particularly high in August where operational crews were provided with lists of referrals to be contacted as part of a drive to address an administrative backlog.

The reduced number of HFSVs completed in September reflects the impact of targeted work by operational crews being suspended to free capacity for the administration teams to book appointments to resolve the referral backlog. The number of HFSVs actually booked was impacted by staff capacity and the conversion rate from referral to appointment being reduced due to the time from referral receipt to first contact.

PI.1.09 - Home Fire Safety Visits - Vulnerable

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	B > 80%
	2023/2024	90%	99%	92%	88%	93%	90%						G > 70%
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B						A > 59%
Cumulative	Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	R < 60%
	2023/2024	90%	95%	94%	93%	92%	92%						What is good
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B						Higher is better

Ref	PI.1.09	Number of Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) completed successfully, where at least one vulnerable person was resident. Vulnerability to fire fatality or fire injury is defined in the prevention strategy but includes; age 65 or over, frailty (mobility), disability, dementia, medical equipment use, alcohol or substance use. These align to the categories identified for Home Office reporting.
Owner	Prevention	
Comparison	Against Target	
Source	BFRS PRMS	

Our focus on targeting the vulnerable remains as our visits increase.

Due to work commenced in Quarter 2 to address a referral backlog, the proportion of HFSVs linked to referrals to targeted HFSVs shifted which had a negative impact on the proportion of recipients who met the vulnerability threshold. This particularly impacted September (& October not yet shown) where targeted HFSVs were placed on hold to release capacity for the referral backlog to be booked into operational calendars.

PI.2.01 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Accidental

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	10	12.8	11.2	13.2	9	9.4	12.2	10.2	9	11.6	8.2	9.8	B < 10%
	2023/2024	14	8	8	10	11	5							G Within 10%
	Status	R	B	B	B	R	B							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	10	22.8	34	47.2	56.2	65.6	77.8	88	97	108.6	116.6	126.4	What is good
	2023/2024	14	22	30	40	51	56							Less is better
	Status	R	G	B	B	G	B							

Ref	PI.2.01
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of fires in non-domestic properties where the cause was recorded as accidental.
 This excludes derelict properties (unless four or more pumps were needed) and Prisons.

Like ADFs, accidental non-domestic property fires were at their lowest during Q1 & Q2.
 Like ADFs, the number of non-domestic property fires with a cause listed as not known was also at an all time low (PI.2.03).

PI.2.02 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Deliberate

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	1.8	1.8	1.6	3	2.8	2	2.4	0.6	2.2	2	1.8	3.2	B < 1 per month
	2023/2024	2	1	5	1	2	1							G < 3 per month
	Status	G	G	R	G	G	G							A > 2 per month
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	1.8	3.6	5.2	8.2	11	13	15.4	16	18.2	20.2	22	25.2	What is good
	2023/2024	2	3	8	9	11	12							Less is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.2.02
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of fires in non-domestic properties where the cause was recorded as deliberate (where the fire was started deliberately by someone other than the owner/occupant).
 This excludes derelict properties (unless four or more pumps were needed) and Prisons.

PI.2.03 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Not Known

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	2	1.2	1.2	2	2	1.6	1	0.6	0	0.8	0.4	1.2	B < 1 per month
	2023/2024	0	1	1	3	0	1							G 1-2 per month
	Status	B	G	G	A	B	G							A > 2 per month
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	1.8	3.6	5.2	8.2	11	13	15.4	16	18.2	20.2	22	25.2	What is good
	2023/2024	0	1	2	5	5	6							Less is better
	Status	B	B	B	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.2.03
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of fires in non-domestic properties where the cause was recorded as 'Not Known' This excludes derelict properties (unless four or more pumps were needed) and Prisons.
 Not known is recorded when there is general uncertainty about the cause or motivation of the fire. 'Not Known' should only be used if absolute necessary.

BFRS now forms part of the Thames Valley Fire Investigation Team. This team delivers additional training (including forensic training) to Junior Officers (level 1 fire investigators). Crews also have access to support from Level 2 Fire Investigators should they need it during an incident.
 This additional training and access to support should help reduce the number of not known causes reported at fires.

PI.2.04 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Serious

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	8.4	7.6	7.4	11.4	6.8	6.4	5.2	5.6	5.8	4.8	6.2	7.2	B < 10%
	2023/2024	7	3	10	10	5	4							G Within 10%
	Status	B	B	R	B	B	B							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	8.4	16	23.4	34.8	41.6	48	53.2	58.8	64.6	69.4	75.6	82.8	What is good
	2023/2024	7	10	20	30	35	39							Less is better
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							

Ref	PI.2.04
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of fires in non-domestic properties where the fire spread from the item that first ignited. This excludes derelict properties (unless four or more pumps were needed) and Prisons.
 Fire spread is in relation to heat or flame damage. This does not include smoke damage.

PI.2.05 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Fire Related Fatalities

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Prev 5 year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	B
	2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0							G 0 per year
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						A
													R > 0 per year
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	What is good
	2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0							Less is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						

Ref	PI.2.05
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of fire related fatalities recorded at non-domestic property fires. In general, 'fire-related deaths' are those that would not have otherwise occurred had there not been a fire. These numbers exclude incidents in Prisons.

PI.2.06 - Non-domestic Property Fires - Fire Related Injuries - Serious

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Prev 5 year	0	0.2	0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	B
	2023/2024	1	0	0	0	0							G < 2 per year
	Status	A	G	G	G	G	G						A > 1 per year
													R > 2 per year
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	What is good
	2023/2024	1	1	1	1	1							Less is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						

Ref	PI.2.06
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of serious fire related injuries recorded at non-domestic property fires. In general, 'serious injury' can be defined as: at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient. These numbers exclude incidents in Prisons.

PI.2.07 - Non-domestic Property False Alarms

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	112	125	120	143	136	151	157	142	144	134	116	118	B < 10%
	2023/2024	119	114	132	138	164	157							G Within 10%
	Status	G	G	A	G	R	G							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	112	237	357	500	636	787	944	1086	1230	1364	1480	1598	R > 20%
	2023/2024	119	233	365	503	667	824							What is good
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							Less is better

Ref	PI.2.07
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of incidents attended in non-domestic properties that were recorded as a False Alarm. These could have been fire related or a special service i.e. flooding. However, this does not include where we attended as a co-responder. These numbers do not include incidents in Prisons.

The increase in False Alarms in non-domestic properties during August doesn't appear to be related to any specific property type. Residential homes did see an increase from an average of 14 incidents to 27 incidents. However, these were spread out over 23 properties and were also spread across the month.

PI.2.08 - Fire Safety Audits

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Target	20	20	20	20	20	83	83	83	83	83	83	B > 29 Per month	
	2023/2024	33	15	28	24	17	30						G > 19 Per month	
	Status	B	G	G	G	A	B							A < 20 Per month
Cumulative	Target	20	40	60	80	100	120	203	286	369	452	535	618	R < 11 Per month
	2023/2024	33	48	76	100	117	147							What is good
	Status	B	G	G	G	G	G							More is better

Ref	PI.2.08
Owner	Protection
Comparison	Target
Source	PRMS

Number of Fire Safety Audits Completed.
 A fire safety audit is an examination of the premises and relevant documents to ascertain how the premises are being managed with regards to fire safety. Occupants will need to demonstrate to our officers that they have met the duties required by the Fire Safety Order.

The target number of audits identified for the period 2023/24 was achieved during quarter two. However, the service acknowledge the HMICFRS feedback in respect of protection, both in relation to the requirements to have a clearly identified risk based inspection programme and the need to make more effective use of our protection staff.

The new Protection strategy provides the framework for planned activity, with a key focus on high risk targeting. The revised risk based inspection programme (undertaken during Q3) has identified an audit schedule for very high and high risk premise types, which will require a significant increase in planned audit activity. A new in year target of 1000 planned audits will be introduced from Q3. This a stretched target and it is likely that it will take some time to adjust ways of working and re-balance ways of working, so less time is apportioned to demand led interventions.

PI.2.09 - Prison Fires

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	2022/2023	4	5	3	9	10	1	1	10	6	6	9	4	B < 10%
	2023/2024	3	6	10	14	18	23							G Within 10%
	Status	B	A	R	R	R	R							A > 10%
														R > 20%
Cumulative	2022/2023	4	9	12	21	31	32	33	43	49	55	64	68	What is good
	2023/2024	3	9	19	33	51	74							Less is better
	Status	B	G	R	R	R	R							

Ref	PI.2.09	Number of fires attended in prisons. All causes i.e. accidental/deliberate were included within these figures. All damage levels are included within these figures.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous year	
Source	BFRS IRS	

The majority of the above incidents continue to be associated with the same location, HMP Woodhill.

Over this quarter, prevention and engagement activity has been undertaken with this site, however, incidents have continued to increase. A review is now underway, including levels of response.

PI.3.01 - Number of RTCs attended

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	35	38.8	45.8	44.8	44.6	48	50.2	56	48.6	49.8	38.6	35.6	B < 10%
	2023/2024	38	52	54	41	45	44							G Within 10%
	Status	G	R	A	G	G	G							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	35	73.8	119.6	164.4	209	257	307.2	363.2	411.8	461.6	500.2	535.8	R > 20%
	2023/2024	38	90	144	185	230	274							What is good
	Status	G	R	R	A	A	G							Less is better

Ref	PI.3.01
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Total number of Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) attended. This includes all RTCs, from those where an extrication was performed to those where BFRS only provided support with scene safety.

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PI.3.02 - RTCs - Fatalities

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	1.2	1	1.2	0.2	2.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.2	0.6	0.4	B < 1 per month
	2023/2024	3	3	1	0	0	1							G 1 per month
	Status	R	R	G	B	B	G							A > 1 per month
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	1	2	3	4	6	7	7	8	9	10	10	11	R > 2 per month
	2023/2024	3	6	7	7	7	8							What is good
	Status	R	R	R	A	A	A							Less is better

Ref	PI.3.02
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Total number of fatalities recorded at RTCs. It is worth noting that these numbers only reflect where BFRS were requested and attended. It does not represent all RTC related fatalities within Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes.

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PI.3.03 - RTC Injuries - Serious

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	5.8	8.2	10.6	5.8	8.2	5.2	6.6	8.4	4.2	8.2	6	5.4	B <10%
	2023/2024	6	17	8	4	7	6							G Within 10%
	Status	G	R	B	B	B	A							A >10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	6	14	25	30	39	44	50	59	63	71	77	83	What is good
	2023/2024	6	23	31	35	42	48							Less is better
	Status	G	R	R	A	G	G							

Ref	PI.3.03	Total number of serious injuries recorded at RTCs. In general, 'serious injury' can be defined as: at least an overnight stay in hospital as an in-patient. It is worth noting that these numbers only reflect where BFRS were requested and attended.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

PI.3.04 - RTCs Injuries - Slight

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	14.2	18.2	20.2	19.2	19.4	20.6	19.6	22.2	17	22.4	19.4	13.4	B < 10%
	2023/2024	13	25	17	24	29	27							G Within 10%
	Status	G	R	B	R	R	R							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	14	32	53	72	91	112	131	154	171	193	212	226	What is good
	2023/2024	13	38	55	79	108	135							Less is better
	Status	G	A	G	A	A	R							

Ref	PI.3.04	Total number of slight injuries recorded at RTCs in BFRS grounds. In general, 'slight injury' can be defined as: at attending hospital as an outpatient. It is worth noting that these numbers only reflect where BFRS were requested and attended.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

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PI.4.01 - Deliberate Secondary Fires (to other's property)

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B < 10%
Monthly	Prev 5 year	41	37.6	38.8	56.6	57	40.8	22	19.2	13.2	13.6	19	22.4	G Within 10%
	2023/2024	18	35	52	26	38	13							A > 10%
	Status	B	G	R	B	B	B							R > 20%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	41	79	117	174	231	272	294	313	326	340	359	381	What is good
	2023/2024	18	53	105	131	169	182							Less is better
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							

Ref	PI.3.05
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of secondary fires that were deliberately started by somebody that wasn't the owner. Secondary fires are generally small outdoor fires, not involving people or property. These include refuse fires, grassland fires and fires in derelict buildings or vehicles, unless these fires involved casualties or rescues, or five or more pumping appliances attended.

PI.4.02 - Deliberate Primary Fires (to other's property)

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	B < 10%
Monthly	Prev 5 year	13.2	14.2	16.0	20.6	19.0	16.0	12.8	10.4	9.0	10.2	9.2	13.0	G Within 10%
	2023/2024	10	14	19	23	17	15							A > 10%
	Status	B	G	A	A	B	G							R > 20%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	13.2	27.4	43.4	64.0	83.0	99.0	111.8	122.2	131.2	141.4	150.6	163.6	What is good
	2023/2024	10	24	43	66	83	98							Less is better
	Status	B	B	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PI.3.06
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Number of Primary fires that were deliberately started by somebody that wasn't the owner. Primary fires are potentially more serious fires that harm people or cause damage to non-derelict property such as buildings, vehicle or (some) outdoor structures. Prison Fires have been excluded from these numbers.

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RESPONSE

R.1.01 - Total Incidents (exc co-responders)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	573	602	604	742	710	638	599	568	566	528	490	503	B < 2.51%
	2023/2024	526	592	678	609	656	647							G Within 2.5%
	Status	B	G	R	B	B	G							A > 2.51%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	573	1175	1779	2521	3231	3869	4468	5036	5602	6129	6619	7122	R > 10%
	2023/2024	526	1118	1796	2405	3061	3708							What is good
	Status	B	B	G	B	B	B							Monitor

Ref	R.1.01	Total number of incidents attended within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes (excluding co-responder incidents).
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

R.1.02 - Co-Responder Incidents

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	54	52	55	66	66	67	57	65	76	60	57	58	B < 2.51%
	2023/2024	29	50	60	49	50	43							G Within 2.5%
	Status	B	B	A	B	B	B							A > 2.51%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	54	105	160	226	292	360	417	482	558	618	675	733	R > 10%
	2023/2024	29	79	139	188	238	281							What is good
	Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							Monitor

Ref	R.1.02	Total number of co-responder incidents attended within Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

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R.1.03 - Effecting Entry Incidents

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Prev 5 year	18.8	19.4	15	15.4	18.4	17	17.8	19.8	24	18.2	24.8	20.8
2023/2024	27	28	18	20	22	18						
Status	R	R	A	R	A	G						
Prev 5 year	19	38	53	69	87	104	122	142	166	184	209	229
2023/2024	27	55	73	93	115	133						
Status	R	R	R	R	R	R						

B	< 10%
G	Within 10%
A	> 10%
R	> 20%

What is good
Monitor

Owner	R.1.03
Lead Member	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

Total number of incidents where BFRS were requested to support South Central Ambulance Service in gaining access to a property or room for a medical emergency.

R.1.04 - Average Attendance Time to all Incidents (exc Co-Res)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Prev 5 year	08:22	08:25	09:08	08:51	08:54	08:42	08:43	08:42	08:38	08:25	08:17	08:29
2023/2024	08:48	08:41	09:31	08:44	08:33	09:26						
Status	A	A	A	G	B	R						
Prev 5 year	08:22	08:24	08:39	08:42	08:45	08:44	08:44	08:44	08:43	08:42	08:40	08:39
2023/2024	08:48	08:44	09:02	08:57	08:52	08:58						
Status	A	A	A	A	G	A						

B	< 10 Sec
G	Within 10 sec
A	> 10 Sec
R	> 30 seconds

What is good
Less is better

Ref	R.1.04
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

The average attendance time to all incidents (excluding co-responding incidents).
The average time is the minutes and seconds elapsed from the time the first appliance was assigned to the incident, to the arrival of the first appliance at the incident.

Looking at September’s attendance times, there were seven incidents that took over 29 minutes to attend. The longest attendance time took 52minutes and 25 seconds. This incident was a request by TVP for specific equipment to support with entry into a crime scene. The second longest was call challenged based on flooding and was attended by an officer after the caller was advised that this would be a long response time. The remaining incidents all related to being unable to initially locate the incident based on the callers details, or unable to locate any incident. These are usually RTCs.
It is also worth noting that September saw pockets of flooding, which can lead to numerous calls in a single station ground.

R.1.05 - Average Attendance Time to ADFs

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Prev 5 year	07:42	07:30	07:54	08:22	08:12	08:24	08:20	08:27	07:26	08:26	07:44	08:07
	2023/2024	08:38	08:26	08:03	07:40	07:50	07:14						
	Status	R	R	G	B	B	B						
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	07:42	07:35	07:41	07:50	07:54	07:59	08:02	08:05	08:00	08:03	08:01	08:02
	2023/2024	08:38	08:32	08:24	08:15	08:12	08:05						
	Status	R	R	R	A	A	G						

B	< 10 Sec
G	Within 10 sec
A	> 10 Sec
R	> 30 seconds

What is good
Less is better

Ref	R.1.05
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

The average attendance time to Accidental Dwelling Fires.
 The average time is the minutes and seconds elapsed from the time the first appliance was assigned to the incident, to the arrival of the first appliance at the incident.

R.2.01 - Availability - Wholetime

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
2023/2024	92%	90.9%	88.2%	94.3%	95.1%	97.4%						
Status	R	R	R	R	R	A						
Target	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
2023/2024	92.0%	91.5%	90.4%	91.4%	92.1%	93.0%						
Status	R	R	R	R	R	R						

B	99% - 99.9%
G	98% - 98.9%
A	96% - 97.9%
R	<96%

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.2.01
Owner	Response
Comparison	Target
Source	TVFC Vision

The availability of BFRS pumps to respond to incidents. This measure reflects when pumps are “on the run”. With this in mind, should an appliance be at an incident, it would still be recorded as being available.
Reasons for an appliance being “off the run” include, crew/skill deficient, vehicle defects and decontamination.

Availability continues to improve inline with firefighter numbers.
The continuing challenge is ensuring the skillsets are available and maintained to ensure maximum wholetime appliance availability.

R.2.02 - Availability On-Call

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Target	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
2023/2024	9.7%	7.1%	7.6%	9.0%	6.8%	7.6%						
Status	R	R	R	R	R	R						
Target	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
2023/2024	9.7%	8.4%	8.1%	8.3%	8.0%	8.0%						
Status	R	R	R	R	R	R						

B	>55%
G	>29%
A	> 16%
R	< 17%

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.2.02
Owner	Response
Comparison	Target
Source	TVFC Vision

The availability of BFRS pumps to respond to incidents. This measure reflects when pumps are “on the run”. With this in mind, should an appliance be at an incident, it would still be recorded as being available.
Reasons for an appliance being “off the run” include, crew deficient, vehicle defects and decontamination.

On-call recruitment continues alongside the CRMP Resource Review.
The latest campaign has resulted in 14 new on-call recruits that are currently awaiting training.
A large challenge to keeping on-call appliances on the run is the need for certain skills such as driving and incident command.
In-line with CRMP recommendations, any future recruitment campaigns will be targeted as appropriate.

R.2.03 - Wholetime - Response Model

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Day	Target	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	B	> 11
	2023/2024	10.8	10.7	10.5	11.2	11.0	11.3						G	> 10
	Status	A	A	A	G	G	G						A	> 10
Night	Target	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	R	< 10
	2023/2024	11.4	11.3	10.9	11.7	11.5	11.7							
	Status	G	G	A	G	G	G							

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.2.03
Owner	Response
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS Fire Service Rota

The average number of Whole Time pumps available at the beginning of each shift, broken down my day shift and night shift.

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R.2.04 - On-Call - Response Model

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Day	Prev 5 year	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	B	> 5
	2023/2024	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.3					G	> 3
	Status	R	R	R	R	R	R	R					A	< 3
Night	Prev 5 year	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	R	< 2
	2023/2024	1.1	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.7						
	Status	R	R	R	R	R	R	R						

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.2.04
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous five year average
Source	BFRS IRS

The average number of On-Call pumps available at the beginning of each shift, broken down my day shift and night shift.

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R.2.05 - OTB Mobilisations into BFRS Grounds

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	118	132	134	226	189	144	143	125	131	110	94	103	B < 10%
	2023/2024	166	137	206	160	164	158							G Within 10%
	Status	R	G	R	B	B	G							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	118	251	384	610	799	943	1086	1212	1342	1453	1547	1649	R > 20%
	2023/2024	166	303	509	669	833	991							What is good
	Status	R	R	R	G	G	G							Less is better

Ref	R.2.05	Number of mobilisations of appliance from Over The Border (OTB) into BFRS grounds
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

R.2.06 - OTB Mobilisations out of BFRS Grounds

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	45	50	47	69	65	42	51	33	50	39	31	33	B < 10%
	2023/2024	41	49	43	53	47	47							G Within 10%
	Status	G	G	G	B	B	B							A > 10%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	45	94	141	210	275	317	368	401	541	490	521	554	R > 20%
	2023/2024	41	90	133	186	233	250							What is good
	Status	G	G	G	B	B	B							Within range is better

Ref	R.2.05	Number of mobilisations of appliance from BFRS into Over The Border (OTB) grounds.
Owner	Response	
Comparison	Previous five year average	
Source	BFRS IRS	

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R.3.01 - Maintenance of Competencies

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Target	24%	48%	72%	96%
2023/2024	38%	59%		
Status	B	B		

B	> 5%
G	Within 5%
A	< 5%
R	< 10%

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R3.01
Owner	Response
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS IRS

Progress against maintenance of competencies completed by wholetime firefighters and junior officers.

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R.3.02 - Hydrant Availability

Monthly

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Target	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
2023/2024												
Status												

B	< 10%
G	Within 10%
A	> 10%
R	> 20%

Cumulative

Target	500	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000	3500	4000	4500	5000	5500	6000
2023/2024												
Status												

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.3.02
Owner	Water Officer
Comparison	Target
Source	Hydra

The number of Hydrants serviced each month.
Our water officers maintain hydrants located in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to ensure crews have appropriate access to water when responding to an emergency.
The target ensures that all hydrants are serviced within a two year period.

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R.3.03 - High Risk Site Information

Level 4

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
2023/2024	81%	89%	89%	89%	89%	88%						
Status	A	G	G	G	G	G						
Prev 5 year	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
2023/2024	73%	73%	74%	73%	73%	74%						
Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						

B	> 5%
G	Within 5%
A	> 5%
R	> 10%

Level 3

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	R.3.03
Owner	Response
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS SSRI

Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI) for high-risk sites is updated in accordance with the current risk review process.
 The level of detail obtained is relevant to the level of risk at each site.
 Site visits to maintain records and training is dependent on both crew and business cooperation and availability.

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**A GREAT PLACE
TO WORK**

GP.1.01 - Actual vs Establishment - Wholetime

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	B >100%
	2023/2024	288	288	285	292	293	298							G > 94.9%
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							A < 95%
														R < 90%
Average YTD	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	What is good
	2023/2024	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%							Higher is better
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	GP.1.01
Owner	HR
Comparison	Target
Source	iTrent

Total number of people in Wholetime roles v's budgeted establishment

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GP.1.02 - Actual vs Establishment - On-Call

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	B > 95%
	2023/2024	65.8	65.4	61.4	60.4	61.3	59.9							G > 89.9%
	Status	R	R	R	R	R	R							A < 90%
														R < 85%
Average YTD	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	What is good
	2023/2024	68.5%	68.4%	66.9%	65.9%	65.5%	65.0%							Higher is better
	Status	R	R	R	R	R	R							

Ref	GP.1.02
Owner	HR
Comparison	Target
Source	iTrent

Total number of people in On-Call roles v's budgeted establishment (FTE).

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GP.1.03 - Actual vs Establishment - Support

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	133	B >100%
	2023/2024	126	126	125	123	127	125							G > 94.9%
	Status	A	A	A	A	G	A							A < 95%
														R < 90%
Average	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	What is good
	2023/2024	94.7%	94.7%	94.5%	94.0%	94.3%	94.2%							Higher is better
	Status	A	A	A	A	A	A							

Ref	GP.1.03	Total number of people in Support roles v's budgeted establishment.
Owner	HR	
Comparison	Target	
Source	iTrent	

All but one vacancy is currently being recruited for, one of which is proving more challenging than others. The one vacancy that is not currently being recruited for is due to a job/role evaluation.

GP.1.04 - Staff Turnover

		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Prev 5 year	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	B
	2023/2024	0.6%	3%	1.5%	0.2%	0.8%	1%							G < 1%
	Status	G	R	A	G	G	A							A < 2%
														R > 1.9%
Average	Prev 5 year	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	< 1%	What is good
	2023/2024	0.6%	1.8%	1.7%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%							Less is better
	Status	G	A	A	A	A	A							

Ref	GP.1.04	Percentage of employees who leave the Service, expressed as a percentage of the total workforce.
Owner	HR	
Comparison	Target	
Source	iTrent	

GP.1.05 - Absence

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Target	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	226	B < 20%
2023/2024	75.5	147	147.5	187.5	141.5	237.5							G < 0%
Status	B	B	B	B	B	A							A > 0%
													R > 10%
Target	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	103	What is good
2023/2024	81.2	81.4	71	23	70	49							Less is better
Status	B	B	B	B	B	B							

Ref	GP.1.05
Owner	HR
Comparison	Target
Source	iTrent

The number of working days (shifts) lost per month due to sickness. This covers short and long term sickness.
 The target within the measure is based on the sector average in 2019/2020, as detailed within the National Fire and Rescue Service Sickness Absence Report. The 2019/2020 report was used as not to reflect the impact of Covid 19.

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GP.1.06 - Employee Assistance Programme

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Prev 3 year	13.7	19.7	14.3	7.3	18.0	51.7	31.7	27.7	18.7	21.0	13.3	8.7	B
2023/2024	11	23	42										G Within 50%
Status	G	G	A										A > 50% difference
													R
Prev 3 year	13.7	33.3	47.7	55.0	73.0	124.7	156.3	184.0	202.7	223.7	237.0	245.7	What is good
2023/2024	11	34	76										Monitor
Status	G	G	A										

Ref	GP.1.06
Owner	HR
Comparison	Previous three years
Source	Health Assured

The number of times our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) has been contacted via phone or online.

Awaiting figures from 3rd party													
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GP.1.07 - Employment Engagement

	2017	2020	2022	
Target	65%	65%	65%	65%
Actual	21%	32%	24%	
Status	R	R	R	

B	> 65%
G	55-65%
A	45-55%
R	< 45%

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	GP.1.07
Owner	HR
Comparison	Target
Source	Supplier of Staff Survey

Most Effective employees are both highly engaged and enabled.

Culture Survey supplier tender specification written, and procurement process started. Supplier evaluation to take place in October with the contract awarded shortly after.

The Employee engagement group continues to look at other activities including a review of the People Awards that took place in June.

GP.1.08 - Appraisal & Objectives Completion

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Target	75%	95%	95%	95%
2023/2024	58%	63%		
Status	A	R		
Target	75%	95%	95%	95%
2023/2024	47%	66%		
Status	R	R		

B	>95%
G	Within 10%
A	< 10% of target
R	< 20% of target

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	GP.1.08
Owner	Learning & Development
Comparison	Target
Source	iTrent

The percentage of all staff that have received their 2022/2023 end of year review and their 2023/2024 objectives.

Throughout this year, face to face and virtual training sessions were held for anyone learn more about the appraisal process. These sessions encouraged discussion around the barriers to appraisal completion and gave guidance on how to carry out effective appraisals and talked about how to facilitate an appraisal discussion.

During the month of November, SMT are supporting the OD Team with a drive for all outstanding appraisals to be completed. Regular appraisals are essential to improving staff engagement and providing clear direction and expectation in the form of objectives . They are also an opportunity for all employees to discuss career development, and this is why appraisal completion is one of our key organisational performance measures. Reports sent will be up to date as of Monday 30 October and will then be run again on the 1 December to see that all outstanding appraisals have been completed.

We continue to engage with employees to break down the barriers to completion and to educate on the appraisal process and its benefits to employees and the organisation.

GP.1.09 - Mandatory E-Learning Completed

Wholetime

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Target	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%			
2023/2024	16%	29%	33%	38%	43%	52%						
Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						
Prev 5 year	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%			
2023/2024	12%	23%	30%	37%	43%	45%						
Status	G	G	G	G	G	A						

B	
G	Within 10%
A	< 10 %
R	< 20 %

Support

What is good
Higher is better

Ref	GP.1.09
Owner	Learning & Development
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS IRS

All BFRS staff are required to complete a number of mandatory e-learning packages every year. These packages cover three main subjects across Health & Safety, Equality Diversity & Inclusion and Data Protection. Within the subjects, there are packages such as Safety Event Reporting, ED&I in the Workplace and Responsible for Information.

Mandatory E-Learning packages are required to be completed by all staff on an annual basis. Subjects include but are not limited to; Health & Safety, Equality Diversity & Inclusion and Data Protection. These mandatory packages do not include the Operational requirements for Maintenance of Competence, which is reportedly on separately. All managers within the organisation have access to a manager progress report within the Hub of Education and Training (HEAT) system, which details their direct reports and which packages have not been completed. To provide more emphasis on the need for completing these, the Organisational Development Team will start providing managers with quarterly reports to allow them to take the necessary action.

GP.1.10 - Grievance & Disciplines

Grievances

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2022/2023	0	1	0	3	1	4	3	0	1	1	0	0
2023/2024	0	0	0	4	1	0						
Status	G	G	G	R	G	G						
2022/2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	1
2023/2024	1	2	1	2	0	1						
Status	G	A	G	A	G	G						

B	
G	< 2 per month
A	2 per month
R	> 2 per month

Disciplines

What is good
Monitor

Ref	GP.1.10
Owner	HR
Comparison	Target
Source	HR

The number of new grievances and disciplines recorded each month. Figures include both informal and formal grievances. Where an informal grievance is escalated to being a formal grievance, this will be counted twice.

GP.2.01 - Injury Rate

Quarterly

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Prev 3 year	19.0	15.6	22.6	25.8
2023/2024	18.67	12.0		
Status	G	B		

B	< 15
G	< 23
A	> 22
R	> 30

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.01
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

The injury rate give the number of people injured over a quarter based on a group of 1,000 employees or workers.

Injury rates are inline with usual outcomes, both local and national.

GP.2.02 - Workplace injuries

Quarterly

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Prev 3 year	9.0	7.3	10.7	12.3
2023/2024	9	6		
Status	G	G		

B	< 5 per qtr
G	< 11 per qtr
A	> 10 per qtr
R	> 15 per qtr

Cumulative

Prev 3 year	9.0	16.3	27.0	39.3
2023/2024	9	15		
Status	G	G		

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.02
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

The number of workplace injuries reported across the Service. This includes operational staff, support staff, agency and visitors.

Of the six workplace injuries, three were minor and three were moderate.
 The moderate injuries were recorded at the following:
 One during an incident (while moving heavy goods). One during driver training and the last was recorded at a fire investigation (involving a sharp object).
 At the time of writing this report, the investigations were still ongoing, with actions yet to be agreed.

GP.2.03 - Near Miss Events Recorded

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarterly Prev 3 year	12.3	9.7	7.3	9.3
Quarterly 2023/2024	13	8		
Quarterly Status	A	G		
Cumulative				
Cumulative Prev 3 year	12.3	22.0	29.3	38.7
Cumulative 2023/2024	13	21		
Cumulative Status	A	G		

B	< 5 per qtr
G	< 11 per qtr
A	> 10 per qtr
R	> 15 per qtr

What is good
Monitor

Ref	GP.2.03
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

Number of near miss events recorded across the Service.
A near miss is where a safety event (an accident or incident) occurs, but no personal injury, damage or financial loss results.

Five near miss events were recorded as minor, the remaining three were recorded as moderate.

The moderate near misses were recorded as*****

GP.2.04 - Vehicle Incidents

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarterly Prev 3 year	9.7	8.3	10.0	12.3
Quarterly 2023/2024	20	15		
Quarterly Status	R	R		
Cumulative				
Cumulative Prev 3 year	9.7	18.0	28.0	40.3
Cumulative 2023/2024	20	35		
Cumulative Status	R	R		

B	< 7 per qtr
G	< 13 per qtr
A	> 12 per qtr
R	> 15 per qtr

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.04
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

Number of reported vehicle incidents involving BFRS vehicles. These numbers include third party liability and all levels of damage.

9 minor, 5 moderate & 1 Major

The one major involved an overturned water tanker while training on public roads. A list of actions have been identified following a thorough investigation.

The five moderate incidents included, one vehicle failure (warning lights) during training. One was a collision in which a member of the public's car collided with back of the appliance (RTC). One involved an HGV clipping an out-rig light on a trailer light bar. One involved a jockey wheel that detached from its housing during transport. The final incident involved a trailer bar dropping and causing damage to other equipment.

GP.2.05 - RIDDOR reportable Injuries

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarterly Prev 3 year	2.0	0.7	1.0	3.7
Quarterly 2023/2024	3	0		
Quarterly Status	A	G		
Cumulative				
Cumulative Prev 3 year	2.0	2.7	3.7	7.3
Cumulative 2023/2024	3	3		
Cumulative Status	A	A		

B	
G	< 1 per qtr
A	=> 1 per qtr
R	=> 3 per qtr

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.05
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

Number of staff who suffered RIDDOR reportable injuries at work. RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable injuries are generally considered to be serious injuries to staff and visitors. The definition of RIDDOR injuries can be found on HSE's website.

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GP.2.06 - Attacks on Members of Staff

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarterly Prev 3 year	0.7	0.3	1.0	1.3
Quarterly 2023/2024	2	1		
Quarterly Status	A	A		
Cumulative				
Cumulative Prev 3 year	0.7	1.0	2.0	3.3
Cumulative 2023/2024	2	3		
Cumulative Status	A	A		

B	
G	< 1 per qtr
A	=> 1 per qtr
R	=> 3 per qtr

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.06
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

Number of incidents in which there was a verbal or physical attack on a member of staff. An incident is recorded if the attack was within the employees working hours, or during work related travel. These figures would also include attacks on visitors while on site.

Verbal abuse during phone call in relation to fire safety

GP.2.07 - Equipment Damage

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarterly	Prev 3 year	10.7	15.3	9.7	12.7
	2023/2024	20	16		
	Status	A	A		
Cumulative	Prev 3 year	10.7	26.0	35.7	48.3
	2023/2024	20	36		
	Status	A	A		

B	< 5 per qtr
G	< 15 per qtr
A	> 14 per qtr
R	> 20 per qtr

What is good
Less is better

Ref	GP.2.07
Owner	Health & Safety
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	H&S Reporting System

Number of reported incidents where an item of equipment was damaged. This includes everything from office equipment to demountable equipment on operational appliances. Please note, this does not include damage to vehicles or premises.

14 minor, 2 moderate
 One moderate was recorded at a drill in which cabling for the BA board was damaged from the heat. The second also involved a charging cable for a BA board, in which parts of the housing cable were found to have broken off. These were not at the same location.

"The advantages of working from home and being an On-Call Firefighter means I can manage my time effectively"



What are On-Call Firefighters?

An On-Call Firefighter is someone employed by a fire and rescue service who is paid to be 'on call' to respond to a range of emergencies and to engage with their community.

They have everyday lives and jobs, until their alerter sounds - then they become professional firefighters.

What's in it for you?

- Great way of meeting new people.
- Retainer fee, plus hourly rate when you attend incidents.
- Learn new skills such as firefighting, wearing breathing apparatus, working at heights.
- Opportunities to achieve qualifications in other transferable skills, such as leadership and management, large goods vehicle driving, first aid, trauma care and health and safety.

bucksfire.gov.uk/on-call-firefighter

MAISONVILLE



Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
We care for you

PUBLIC VALUE

PV.1.01 - Forecast - Outturn (£000's)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Target	36,450	36,450	36,450	36,450	36,450	36,450							B	Within 0.5%
													G	Within 1.0%
Forecast	36,450	35,938	35,772	35,749	36,109	36,131							A	Within 2.0%
% Difference	0	-1.4%	-1.9%	-1.9%	-0.9%	-0.9%							R	> 2% difference
Status	B	A	A	A	G	G								

What is good
Closer to Target

Ref	PV.1.01
Owner	Finance
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS IRS

The financial measure compares the approved revenue budget (target) against the forecast revenue outturn position (forecast). Negative % difference indicates an underspend whereas positive % difference indicating an overspend.

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PV.1.02 - Bank Shift Cost (£)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
Monthly	Prev 3 year	105K	95K	99K	104K	114K	114K	130K	120K	101K	59K	77K	82K	B	
	2023/2024	105k	101k	92K	90K	113K	89K							G	< 0%
	Status	A	A	G	G	G	G							A	> 0%
Cumulative	Prev 3 year	105K	200K	299K	403K	517K	631K	761K	881K	982K	1041K	1118K	1200K	R	> 10%
	2023/2024	105k	206k	298K	388K	502K	591K								
	Status	A	A	G	G	G	G								

What is good
Less is better

Ref	PV.1.02
Owner	Response
Comparison	Previous three year average
Source	BFRS Accounts

The total cost of Bank shifts. Bank shifts are paid to cover shortfall in operational staff or skills at wholetime and day crewed stations.

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PV.1.03 - Fraud

Annual

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Target	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0	0
Status	G	G	G	G	G	G

B	
G	0
A	
R	> 0

What is good
Less is better

Ref	PV.1.03
Owner	Finance
Comparison	Target
Source	BFRS Accounts

The number of confirmed cases of fraud.

PV.2.01 - Reportable Data Breaches

Annual		17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
	Target	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2023/2024	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G	G

B	
G	0
A	
R	> 0

What is good
Less is better

Ref	PV.1.03
Owner	Legal & Governance
Comparison	Target
Source	

A data breach means a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. A reportable data breach is one that triggers a requirement for notification to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) where a breach is likely to result in a significant risk to an individual to whom the data relates.

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PV.2.02 - FOIs Responded to Within Timescales

Monthly		Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	No of FOIs	9	6	7	10	10	5						
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Target	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Not in time-scales	1	2	0	1	1	0						
Status	A	R	G	A	A	G							

B	
G	0
A	1
R	> 1

What is good
Lower is better

Ref	PV.2.02
Owner	Legal & Governance
Comparison	Target
Source	Legal & Governance

The number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests responded to within the statutory timescales.
The FOI Act requires that a response to an FOI request be provided within 20 working days from receipt.

The FOI in July was 4 days late and the Requestor required a list of invoices that were not paid within 30 days for the last 6 financial years which would feed into the Regulation 113 Notice you are required to publish each year as part of your obligations under The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

The FOI in August was 1 day late, the Requestor required The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, came into force on 23 January 2023. Since its implementation, how many up-to-date electronic building plans and information on the design and materials of external walls have you received in relation to high rise buildings in your jurisdiction? How many up-to-date electronic building plans and information on the design and materials of the external wall did you receive in relation to high rise buildings in your jurisdiction in 2022?

PV.3.01 - Compliments and Complaints

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Compliments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	B 0
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	G 1
	2023/2024	0	1	1	1	1	0						A > 1
Status	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	R > 2
Complaints													
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	What is good
2023/2024	1	2	2	2	0	0							Monitor
Status	G	A	A	A	B	B							

Ref	PV.3.01	Number of compliments and complaints received each month. This does not identify if the complaints were upheld.
Owner	Legal & Governance	
Comparison	Monitor	
Source		

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PV.3.02 - Social Media - Engagement (000's)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	2022/2023	23.5	3.1	3.6	39.1	12.3	4.7	2.9	3.7	11.7	10.5	15.0	B > 10%	
	2023/2024	14.1	13.5	19.9	16.0	18.9	16.7						G Within 10%	
	Status	R	B	B	R	B	B						A < 10%	
Cumulative														
	2022/2023	25.5	26.7	30.3	69.4	81.7	86.3	89.2	92.9	104.6	115.1	130.2	165.0	What is good
2023/2024	14.1	27.6	47.5	63.6	82.5	99.2								Higher is better
Status	R	G	B	G	G	B								

Ref	PV.3.02	Total number of unique engagements with our social media content across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn.
Owner	MarComms	
Comparison	Previous year	
Source	Social Media Platforms	

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PV.3.03 - Website Visits (000's)

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Monthly	Prev 5 year	13.7	12.5	15.7	21.2	16.8	14.5							B > 10%
	2023/2024	13.2	13.4	17.6	14.5	15.9	16.6							G Within 10%
	Status	G	G	B	R	G	B							A < 10%
														R < 20%
Cumulative	Prev 5 year	13.7	26.1	41.9	63.1	79.9	94.4							What is good
	2023/2024	13.2	26.5	44.2	58.7	74.6	91.2							Monitor
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G							

Ref	PV.3.03	Our website is our biggest public communication and engagement channel. Website traffic is monitored for user analyse. Currently, we monitor this superficially due to capacity and conflicting priorities. However it enables us to react, when required, yielding valuable insights to help identify audience, improve the customer experience and website performance.
Owner	MarComms	
Comparison	Monitor	
Source	Google Analytics	

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PV.4.01 - Service Desk Response

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	B > 99%
	2023/2024	97.2%	97.6%	98%	98%	99.2%	97.7%						G > 95%
	Status	G	G	G	G	B	G						A > 90%
Cumulative	Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	R < 90%
	2023/2024	97.2%	97.4%	97.6%	97.7%	98%	98%						What is good
	Status	G	G	G	G	G	G						Higher is better

Ref	PV.4.01
Owner	ICT
Comparison	Target
Source	Vivantio

The percentage of ICT Helpdesk tickets responded to within Service Level Agreement. These tickets include items such as account unlocks, password resets, CCTV retrieval and accommodating the business needs in relation to starters, leavers and transfers. The ICT team can expect to receive up to 1000 tickets per month.

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PV.4.02 - Network Uptime

	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Monthly	Target	?	?	?	?	?	?						B
	2023/2024	?	?	?	?	?	?						G
	Status	?	?	?	?	?	?						A
Cumulative	Target	?	?	?	?	?	?						R
	2023/2024	?	?	?	?	?	?						What is good
	Status	?	?	?	?	?	?						Higher is better

Ref	PV.4.02
Owner	ICT
Comparison	Target
Source	Buckinghamshire Council

Network uptime is a measure of how well the computer network—whether a local area network (LAN) or a wide-area network (WAN)—can respond to the connectivity and performance demands placed on it. This information is monitored and managed by Buckinghamshire Council

Buckinghamshire Council have investigated the network uptime reporting issue and this will be in place and reported on in Q3.	
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PV.5.01 - Internal Audits

	Feb-21	Jun-21	Oct-21	Feb-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Feb-23	Jun-23				
Number	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	19	23	22	21	22	29	12	13				
	Status	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage	Target	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%				
	2023/2024	14%	7%	29%	19%	22%	30%	13%	14%			
	Status	A	G	R	A	R	R	A	A			

B	< 5%
G	5% - 9.9%
A	10% - 20%
R	> 20%

What is good
Less is better

Ref	PV.5.01	Number of overdue audits actions following internal audits. This is then compared with the total number of actions.
Owner	PMO	
Comparison	Target	
Source	Audit Providers - (BC)	

PV.5.02 - Projects

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
In Progress	-	-	-	-	
	15	13			
	-	-	-	-	
Off Track	Target	<3	<3	<3	<3
	2023/2024	0	0		
	Status	B	B		

B	0 off track
G	< 3 off track
A	< 5 off track 10%
R	> 4 off track

What is good
Less is better

Ref	PV.5.02	The number of projects the service has in progress, and the number of those deemed to be 'at project status red' (off track - not recoverable). This excludes projects in relation to property.
Owner	PMO	
Comparison	Target	
Source	PMO	

2 projects have moved to complete, evaluations will now be completed.

