

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: Members of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority

4 October 2021

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS
AND PUBLIC

Please note the content of
Page 2 of this Agenda Pack

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a Meeting of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held at **THE OCULUS, THE GATEWAY OFFICES, GATEHOUSE ROAD, AYLESBURY, BUCKS, HP19 8FF** on **WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2021 at 10.00 AM** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

Graham Britten
Director of Legal and Governance

Health and Safety: Covid-19

There will be limited facilities for members of the public to observe the meeting in person due to Government and Public Health England guidance. A recording of the meeting will be available after the meeting.

Chairman: Councillor Clarke OBE

Councillors: Bagge, Carroll, Chapple OBE, Christensen, Darlington, Exon, Hall, Hopkins, Hussain, Lambert, Marland, McLean, Rankine, Stuchbury, Waite, Walsh



MAKING YOU SAFER

www.bucksfire.gov.uk



To observe the meeting as a member of the Press and Public

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 'team's meeting invitation to join the meeting at the specified agenda item.

Petitions

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

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

Questions

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

COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY - TERMS OF REFERENCE

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

AGENDA

Item No:

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 16 June 2021 (Item 2) **(Pages 7 - 20)**

3. 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.

4. Chairman's Announcements

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

The Chairman to receive a presentation of the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award from Station Commander RAF High Wycombe.

5. 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.

6. Petitions

To receive petitions under Standing Order SOA6.

7. Questions

To receive questions in accordance with Standing Order SOA7.

8. Police and Crime Commissioner Thames Valley

To receive a presentation from Mr Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner, Thames Valley

9. Draft Response to the Home Office Consultation 'Giving Police and Crime Commissioners greater powers of competence'

To consider and approve a response (Report to follow; Consultation document only included) **(Pages 21 - 32)**

10. People Strategy 2020-2025 - Year One Update

To consider item 10 **(Pages 33 - 40)**

11. Covid-19 Presentation

To receive a presentation by the Head of Covid-19 Preparedness and Response **(Pages 41 - 52)**

12. Date of next meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Fire Authority will be held on Wednesday 8 December 2021 at a venue and time to be confirmed.

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



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY

ROLE DESCRIPTION

LEAD MEMBERS

1. To take a lead role in providing support and constructive challenge to senior officers in the development of strategies and plans and contributing towards the strategic direction of the Authority, within the Authority's overall policy objectives.
2. To act as a 'sounding board' for senior officers on issues within the portfolio, and be supportive in dealing with any problems at a strategic level.
3. To review, in conjunction with senior officers, the service within the portfolio.
4. To keep abreast of related developments and policies at national, regional and local level.
5. To take the lead in reporting to the Authority, one of its committees, or panels on issues within the portfolio.
6. To attend the Overview and Audit Committee, at its request, in connection with any issues associated with the portfolio which is the subject of scrutiny.
7. To act as a spokesperson for the Authority on issues within the portfolio.
8. To represent the Authority on bodies, at events and at conferences related to the portfolio, as appointed by the Executive Committee and to feedback to the Authority any issues of relevance / importance.

(Approved 8 June 2007)



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY HELD AT MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL CHAMBER ON WEDNESDAY 16 JUNE 2021 AT 11 AM.

Present: Councillors Bagge, Carroll, Chapple OBE, Christensen, Clarke OBE, Darlington, Exon, Hall, Hopkins, Hussain, Lambert, Marland, McLean, Rankine, Stuchbury, Waite and Walsh

Officers: G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer) F Pearson (Communications Manager)

Remotely: J Thelwell (Chief Fire Officer), M Osborne (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), S Wells (Head of Prevention, Response and Resilience), C Bell (Head of Protection, Assurance and Development), S Tuffley (Head of Covid 19 Preparedness and Response), A Stunell (Head of Human Resources), P Mould (Group Commander Protection), K Mercer (Station Commander Aylesbury Fire Station & USAR)

Apologies: None

Live Webcast Broadcast:

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

Councillor Hopkins opened the meeting by thanking the Leader and officers of Milton Keynes Council for the use of the Council Chamber and the technicians supporting the meeting.

Councillor Hopkins also welcomed to the Chamber the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Mr George Anson and congratulated him on his appointment in March 2021.

Councillor Hopkins wished to acknowledge Mr David Tooley, Democratic Reporter, as he understood this would be his last meeting; and to endorse the Chairman's announcement regarding Fraser Pearson.

To comply with social distancing guidelines, senior officers including Chief Fire Officer Jason Thelwell, Deputy Chief Fire Officer Mick Osborne and Chief Finance Officer Mark Hemming were joining the meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams.

FA01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

(Councillor Hopkins in the Chair)

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Clarke OBE be elected Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2021/22.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Clarke OBE be elected Chairman of the Authority for 2021/22.

(Councillor Clarke OBE in the Chair)

Councillor Clarke OBE thanked Members for re-electing her.

FA02 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Hopkins be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority for 2021/22.

RESOLVED –

That Councillor Hopkins be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Authority for 2021/22.

FA03 MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Fire Authority held on 17 February 2021, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

FA04 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Chapple declared he was in receipt of a firefighter's pension.

FA05 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that:

She wished to thank former Members Andrew Cole, Wendy Mallen, Douglas McCall, Tim Mills, Hannah Minns and Liz Walsh for their service on the Authority; and to welcome the four new Members from Buckinghamshire Council, Ralph Bagge, Bill Chapple OBE, Ashley Waite, and Matthew Walsh; and two new Members from Milton Keynes Council, Emily Darlington and Allan Rankine.

The Service was currently undergoing its third inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. The current inspection started on 24 May 2021 and is being undertaken

virtually, (due to Covid-19 restrictions) over several weeks, concluding in early July. I look forward to receiving our inspection report, which will be published in the Autumn.

After over 25 years in the public sector, Fraser Pearson, Communications Manager is retiring from Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service. Fraser joined from Buckinghamshire County Council, in 2005, when the majority of news was found in print and Facebook had just launched. During his time he has led on getting our safety messages out to the community and promoting the work of the service, from news articles to Twitter posts, with national media often picking up our messages. Fraser's social media posts regularly reach over 20,000 people across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and beyond. On behalf of the Authority, I would like to thank Fraser for his dedicated service to Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The past couple of weeks have seen the Service attend a number of challenging incidents that despite the repeated endeavours of our operational crews, sadly resulted in the tragic deaths of two young males. During the recent Bank Holiday Monday, operational crews were mobilised in the afternoon, to separate water related incidents the first being at Abbotsbrook, Bourne End and the second in Olney. Both incidents involved young males entering the water, which on each occasion attracted a multi-agency response and the deployment of our specialist water rescue teams from Beaconsfield and Newport Pagnell respectively.

The Service works tirelessly to reduce the number of these incidents, through simple safety messaging and supporting the national water safety campaigns, such as the recent National Fire Chiefs Council 'Be Water Aware' campaign, that took place between the 26 April – 2 May 2021. Following these dreadful incidents, water safety messages were again reiterated through our various media platforms, receiving 25,000 views and being shared on 250 occasions.

A further notable incident occurred at the Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe, which involved an industrial property fire. The incident required an operational response from all three fire and rescue services within the Thames Valley, with ten pumps and two aerial appliances required to bring about its safe and controlled resolution. The fire developed extremely quickly, which meant the chances of saving the effected industrial units were unlikely. Therefore, firefighting operations concentrated on mitigating the spread of fire to adjacent premises. Perhaps unsurprisingly this incident generated significant interest with more than 4,000 visits to the page about the incident on

the BFRS website and 17,000 website visits overall (more than seven times our daily average).

FA06 MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

The Authority noted that the following Members had been appointed by the Constituent Authorities to serve on the Fire Authority for 2021/22:

Buckinghamshire Council (11)

Councillors Bagge, Carroll, Chapple OBE, Christensen, Clarke OBE, Hall, Hussain, Lambert, Stuchbury, Waite and Walsh

Milton Keynes Council (6)

Councillors Darlington, Exon, Hopkins, Marland, McLean and Rankine

FA07 COMMITTEE MATTERS

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

The Authority notes that the allocation of seats on the Authority was:

(i)	Conservative Group:	11 seats	(64.70%)
(ii)	Liberal Democrat Group:	3 seats	(17.65%)
(iii)	Labour Group:	3 seats	(17.65%)

- (b) Committee Matters – Committee Appointments

RESOLVED –

That the following Committees be appointed and seats be allocated, as follows:

- (a) Executive Committee (8 Members):

- (i) Conservative – 5 seats
- (ii) Liberal Democrats – 2 seats
- (iii) Labour – 1 seat

- (b) Overview and Audit Committee (9 Members):

- (i) Conservative – 6 seats
- (ii) Liberal Democrats – 1 seat
- (iii) Labour – 2 seats

RESOLVED –

1. That the following Members be appointed to the Executive Committee:

Councillors Christensen, Clarke OBE, Hall, Hopkins, Lambert, Marland, McLean and Walsh in accordance with the Group Leaders wishes.

2. That the following Members be appointed to the Overview and Audit Committee:

Councillors Bagge, Carroll, Chapple OBE, Darlington, Exon, Hussain, Rankine, Stuchbury and Waite in accordance with the Group Leaders wishes.

- (c) Standing Orders for the Authority and its Committees
The Director of Legal and Governance advised Members that at a meeting of the Executive Committee in March 2021, the Chairman agreed to an amendment of the procedural standing orders. The proposed amendment introduced an opportunity for the Chairman to invite officers to provide updates on actions committed from proceeding meetings. Also, the opportunity had been taken to delete from the agenda order receiving the minutes of the standing committees.

RESOLVED –

That the amendments to the Standing Orders for the Authority and its Committees be approved.

FA08 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

The Authority considered proposed dates for its meetings and meetings of its committees during 2021/22.

RESOLVED –

1. That meetings of the Authority be held on Wednesday 13 October 2021, Wednesday 8 December 2021, Wednesday 16 February 2022 and Wednesday 15 June 2022, all at 11 am.
2. That meetings of the Executive Committee be held on Wednesday 14 July 2021, Wednesday 15 September 2021,

Wednesday 17 November 2021, Wednesday 9 February 2022 and Wednesday 23 March 2022, all at 10 am.

3. That meetings of the Overview and Audit Committee be held on Wednesday 21 July 2021, Wednesday 10 November 2021 and Wednesday 16 March 2022, all at 10am.

FA09 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Authority considered the appointment of representatives to outside bodies having received nominations which were seconded:

RESOLVED –

1. That Councillors Clarke OBE and Hopkins be appointed to attend the Local Government Association Annual Conference.
2. That Councillor Clarke OBE be appointed as the Authority's representative (and Councillor Hopkins as the Standing Deputy) to the Local Government Association Fire Commission.
3. That Councillors Clarke OBE and Hopkins be appointed as the Authority's representatives to the Local Government Association Annual Fire Conference.
4. That Councillors Clarke OBE and Hopkins be appointed as the Authority's representatives to the Combined Fire Authorities Conference.
5. That Councillors Clarke OBE and Lambert be appointed as the Authority's representatives on the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee.
6. That Councillors Carroll and Hopkins be nominated as substitute members of the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee.

FA10 LEAD MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

That Members be appointed as Lead Members for 2021/22 as follows having received nominations which were seconded:

RESOLVED –

Responsibility	Lead Member
Service Delivery, Protection and Collaboration	Councillor Clarke OBE
People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance	Councillor Lambert
Finance and Assets, Information Security and IT	Councillor Hopkins

Health and Safety and Corporate Risk	Councillor McLean
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FA11

2020-2025 CORPORATE PLAN: YEAR 1 PROGRESS REVIEW AND UPDATE

The Chairman advised Members that this was a review of progress made over the first year of the five-year Corporate Plan that was approved at the Annual Meeting in June last year. In light of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, officers had also taken the opportunity to refresh and streamline the programme of activities that would be undertaken over the remaining four years of the plan in pursuit of the Strategic Objectives.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised Members that for each item of the original plan approved last year, the report showed what had been completed during the first year of the plan and also provided a status report for the remaining items using the RAG system. Of the 47 projects and workstreams set out in the plan, 12 had been completed or were now embedded as 'business as usual', 11 were amber, which meant they were slightly behind but recoverable and in some instances this was due to the impact of Covid-19. 20 were green and 4 were without a RAG status marked N/A as they were not due to commence during the first year of the plan. There was an error at item SE2.1, it was marked green but colour coded amber.

The Corporate Planning Manager advised that the last part of appendix 2 reported on the outcome of the streamlining exercise carried out by the Senior Management Team, consolidating items that were thematically similar and/or had strong interdependencies. The biggest change related to ongoing work on the evaluation of risk in the community, operational resourcing, the people related themes and property had been consolidated into a single item. The document had also been updated to reflect the latest financial projections that were reported to the Authority in February 2021.

In addition, as Members were aware, the Service was currently under inspection by HMICFRS. This was the second full inspection of the Service, the first having been carried out in 2019 and Members would have seen that the Corporate Plan included 'areas for improvement' identified by the Inspectorate in their report on their findings. The findings of the current inspection should be available towards the end of the year, and these would be reviewed, and the plan potentially update again.

A Member asked that because of the current financial situation, if it was the plan to bring forward holding a referendum or would the Authority be looking at other means of raising finances. He was advised by the Director of Finance and Assets that although it was a challenging financial outlook since the budget was set in February 2021, the Authority had received some positive financial news around business rates projections. The plan was to bring an update to Members on the annual financial strategy over the coming months to look at potential options for savings, whether the Authority chooses to borrow and other options available. As advised by the Chairman, the Authority continued to lobby Government to increase the referendum limit, but as Members would recall, a referendum reserve was agreed, so there was money set aside if it was needed.

A Member asked if the environmental and global impact could be added to the Corporate Plan and was advised that this area was in the Public Safety Plan and addresses issues around climate under civil contingencies. Although flooding wasn't specifically referenced in the Corporate Plan, there were regular reviews of the Authority's capabilities in light of the risks that were faced.

A Member was pleased to see under 'SE3.1 Civil emergencies' a mention of electric vehicles and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that infrastructure for electric vehicle charging was already in place at the Blue Light hub and the service was also looking at other sites. The technology was not there yet for fire appliances, but the Authority was certainly looking at the rest of the fleet.

RESOLVED –

That the 2020-2025 Corporate Plan Progress Review and Update be approved.

FA12

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION OBJECTIVES 2020-2025 YEAR ONE UPDATE

The Lead Member for People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance introduced the report and advised Members that the service took its responsibility for people, equality and diversity and assurance very seriously; and this work had been undertaken over a number of years both internally and collaboratively with other local fire and rescue services and nationally with other fire related organisations. The strategic enablers within the Corporate Plan, show some of the projects and their rag status.

As previously mentioned, the last HMICFRS inspection rating for People was good. The Lead Member thanked the Deputy Chief Fire Officer for his strategic guidance, the Head of Human Resources and the members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group. All members of the EDI group were volunteers from the organisation, who had put thought into how the Service could reflect the needs and wants not only of its own staff, but also that of the communities it served.

The Head of Human Resources advised Members that in June 2020 the Authority approved the overarching EDI Objectives 2020 to 2025 and the refreshed six, twelve and eighteen-month tangible objectives which were set out against elements of the Authority's core values, diversity, service to the community, improvement and people.

Appendix 1 provided an introduction to the statutory duties outlined by the prevailing legislation, the overarching objectives and a summary of EDI headlines. The EDI group were engaged and had taken ownership of actions to ensure that EDI was embedded into the service. In the 2019 HMICFRS report, EDI was assessed under the 'People' pillar, and was deemed 'Good.' The January 2021 HMICFRS Pandemic report stated, 'staff wellbeing was a clear priority.' The People Strategy approved at the October 2020 Authority meeting was refreshed to ensure it was fully reflective of the 2020–2025 Corporate Plan. The strategy detailed the Service's vision, values, aim and key areas.

The Head of Human Resources advised Members that community engagement was progressing through new ways of working including the following - virtual presentations to community groups; a series of talks simultaneously translated into Urdu; engagement through the new Community Boards across Buckinghamshire; delivery of food parcels to families identified by Social Care Welfare visits; virtual school and uniformed group visits; fire and wellness visits to high-risk occupants; virtual on-call awareness evenings and interviews, which moved to socially distanced, covid secure interviews when restrictions allowed; participation in virtual LGBTQ+ Pride webinars on hate crime; trans awareness to trans acceptance and positive action.

The Head of Human Resources advised Members that Appendix 2 showed the six, twelve and eighteen-to-twenty-four month objectives, where progress had been made, what has been completed and where objective timescales had been reviewed. The EDI group continued to make strong progress against these objectives. The objectives had been extended to twenty-four months to ensure they reflected the refreshed Corporate Plan and HMICFRS priorities where EDI was a key area.

A Member asked about the disability internship and if it would be funded and was advised that the service was only at the first stage of the process, further information on costs and whether there was any

funding available needed to be discussed and a report would come back to the Authority in due course.

A Member asked what it meant by 'investigate the need for a driving licence' in Appendix 2 and was advised that this was something discussed by the EDI Group, currently it was a requirement for operational staff to have a driving licence. Looking at the barriers, potentially financially, for people being recruited who could not necessarily afford driving lessons.

A Member asked in Appendix 3 if the numbers could be added, not just percentages, and was advised that they would be added.

RESOLVED –

1. that the contents of the report, EDI objectives for 2020-2025 in Appendix 1 and EDI workforce data in Appendix 3 be noted;
2. the revised six, twelve and eighteen to twenty-four month objectives in Appendix 2 be approved.

FA13

PROTECTION UPDATE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The Group Commander Protection advised Members that the report was split into two areas. One was the quarterly update on the Protection Team's progress against the Building Risk Review and Protection Uplift programmes, and the other was the revised Protection Policy Statement. Contained within Appendix A was the refreshed Protection Policy Statement, this was shortened and in line with the Regulators Code. It set out the Authority's commitment to support Responsible Persons where appropriate and take the proportionate level of enforcement action where required.

The Group Commander Protection advised Members that following approval, the aim was to publish the Protection Policy Statement on the external website. Appendix B related to the Building Risk Review progress, based on activity submitted through the National Fire Chiefs Councils Tymly portal. Officers had reported back on 50 premises and were on target to complete this work by mid-July 2021. The other appendices gave information on current activities being undertaken. Also, a question was raised at the last Authority meeting regarding premises figures provided by the Home Office, compared to those held by the Service. A comparison could be seen at Appendix E. Additional grant funding had now been allocated to UK fire and rescue services for 2021/ 22. This Service had been allocated £195,925.69, fifty per cent of which had already been received, with the subsequent fifty per cent to be received in March 2022, subject to a number of criteria being met.

The Chairman asked Councillor Marland in his capacity as Leader of Milton Keynes Council to explain to Members what was being done in Milton Keynes. Councillor Marland advised that Milton Keynes Council had undertaken an Article 4 Direction in central Milton Keynes to remove permitted development rights for office conversions from business and commercial premises into residential; concerns included fire safety as when work was undertaken to change the internal modelling of a building, it may compromise the original fire safety and protection within the building.

RESOLVED –

That the Building Risk Review (BRR) update be noted, and the draft Protection Policy statement be approved.

FA14

USAR TRAINING FACILITY AT AYLESBURY

The Station Commander Aylesbury and USAR advised Members that the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) programme was established following the 9/11 attack on New York in 2001. USAR formed part of the Government's New Dimension programme, which sought to enhance the capability to allow certain fire and rescue services to respond to a range of major emergencies. These could include acts of terrorism, natural disasters, incidents involving large scale transport collisions or attacks on national infrastructure. Aylesbury Fire Station was proud to be part of the national network of 20 bases for the people, vehicles and equipment needed to provide this National Resilience capability. To ensure staff were well equipped and trained to provide this enhanced technical rescue capability, crews were expected to engage in a wide range of additional training that was above and beyond that of the standard frontline firefighter.

The Station Commander Aylesbury and USAR advised Members that the Service needed to be able to demonstrate best value to the communities and to the Home Office who provide additional funding on an annual basis for delivering this capability. The inclusion of a USAR training facility at Aylesbury would not only assist in demonstrating best value but would also ensure the USAR crews were trained and prepared to the same level of other USAR crews nationally. The benefits to be had from the inclusion of the training facility were separated into three main areas:

Invest to Save - the financial cost to the Authority for providing the USAR capability could be significantly reduced if training could be

undertaken in house and on site. This would result in £10,800 savings in relation to current annual training costs. In addition to this, it would reduce overtime and bank cover costs;

Invest to Protect – having a dedicated training facility at the same location as the USAR crews would allow for a much higher frequency of training, ensure staff were safer whilst demonstrating the Authority's commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees;

Invest to Secure – A USAR specific training facility at Aylesbury would help demonstrate the Authority's commitment to the National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) for providing the capability. The provision of a rig at Aylesbury would also provide an opportunity for the Authority to demonstrate to NRAT that funding provided to support and purchase USAR specific training facilities had been effectively utilised.

A Member asked what were the expected lifespan of the USAR training rig and the ongoing maintenance and inspection costs and was advised that the maintenance costs would be 1 to 2 percent of the budget (£2k-£3k) and the equipment had a lifespan of twenty five years.

A Members asked whether the government had a plan to streamline USAR and would it affect this Authority, the Chairman advised that the investment in equipment showed government that the Authority wanted to keep USAR.

The Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the 'New Dimensions' review was currently underway, the government was currently replacing the DIM (detection investigating and monitoring) vehicles for hazardous materials and other areas around high-volume pumping. USAR would be looked at in 2024. The current view was that the asset refresh would take place and this training rig would put us in a stronger position and enhance our position nationally.

The Chairman advised Members that when Covid-19 restrictions allowed, there would be a Members visit to USAR which she hoped they would all attend.

RESOLVED –

That the business case be approved.

Before closing the meeting, the Chairman again thanked Milton Keynes Council for the use of their Council Chamber for this meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 12.16 PM

DRAFT

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Home Office

Giving Police and Crime Commissioners greater powers of competence

Government Consultation

This consultation begins on 1 September 2021

This consultation ends on 27 October 2021

Introduction

The Government's manifesto committed to strengthening the accountability of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and expanding their role. PCCs were introduced in 2012 to give the public a direct say over policing in their area. It is important that PCCs are strong, visible leaders in the fight against crime and have the legitimacy and tools to effectively hold their police force to account.

In July 2020, we announced a two-part review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. During Part One of the Review we collated views and evidence from stakeholders across policing, fire and local government as well as voluntary and community organisations. We heard from PCCs and their Chief Executives that they need greater powers of competence to help them get upstream of crime issues and form partnerships with local authorities, criminal justice agencies and health bodies to reduce crime as well as to drive efficiency and make better use of police estate.

PCCs currently have a functional power of competence which enables them to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the exercise of their functions¹. However, we have heard that PCCs feel constrained because the existing powers limit their ability to undertake innovative activity; particularly where that activity might only be indirectly linked to policing.

In concluding Part One of the Review, the Home Secretary announced in March 2021 that we will consult on giving a general power of competence to PCCs. We intend to use this consultation to seek views on the benefits and risks of giving PCCs (including Mayors with PCC functions) greater powers of competence to improve the levers they have to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour and give them greater flexibility to drive efficiency.

¹ Paragraph 14, Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

Approach

This is a targeted consultation that will run for 8 weeks from 1 September 2021 to 27 October 2021. We will specifically invite views from the following organisations, although welcome views from any other individuals or bodies:

- PCCs (including PFCCs and Mayoral PCCs)
- Chief Constables
- Fire and rescue authorities
- Principal local councils in England and Wales
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
- National Police Chiefs' Council
- National Fire Chiefs' Council
- Local Government Association
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Independent Office of Police Conduct
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioner Chief Executives
- Police and Crime Commissioner Treasurers' Society
- Mayoral Combined Authorities and Greater London Authority
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)
- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services
- College of Policing
- Chief Police Officers' Staff Association
- Police Federation
- Police Superintendents Association
- Police Staff Council

Legislative Background and Existing Powers

Existing PCC Powers

PCCs must act within their statutory powers. These powers are set out in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act (PRSRA) 2011 and are principally; the power to appoint, re-appoint and dismiss the chief constable; the power to set the force's budget; and the power to establish local priorities for the force through the police and crime plan. PCCs also have the functional power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of their functions. That includes entering into contracts and other agreements (whether legally binding or not), acquiring and disposing of property (including land) and borrowing money.

A PCC's ability to charge for services is also determined by statutory provisions. Section 25 of the Police Act 1996 gives chief officers a power to charge for special police services (such as concerts and football matches) and section 15 of the PRSRA 2011 provides PCCs a power to charge for the supply of goods and services by referring to the power Local Authorities have in section 1 of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970.

The powers of PCCs are limited to these purposes. If a PCC did anything that they did not have the specific power to do, this would be deemed to be *ultra vires* – or acting beyond one's legal power, which could be subject to legal challenge. In using their functional power, PCCs therefore have to judge what "facilitates" or is "conductive" or "incidental" to the exercise of their functions.

General power of competence held by local authorities

Historically, local authorities were also constrained by the specific statutory powers granted to them in legislation, but in 2011, a general power of competence (GPC) was provided to local authorities through section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This gives local authorities the legal capacity to do anything that an individual can do that is not specifically prohibited by law. This puts beyond doubt a local authority's ability to undertake activity and was introduced to encourage innovation as well as facilitate efficiency and best value.

The general power of competence afforded to local authorities has some limitations such as it cannot be used to raise taxes or precept, nor does it expand authorities' powers to make byelaws. It also cannot be used to do things like change the political structure of an authority. The Secretary of State also has broad powers to restrict (subject to consultation) what local authorities can do under the general power or to provide conditions under which the power can be used. Usual public law constraints (rationality, relevant considerations, procedural fairness, disregard of irrelevant considerations) would also be applied by the courts to the exercise of the power of general competence were they to be challenged.

Under the general power of competence, local authorities are able to charge for discretionary services where a person has agreed to them being provided, but only on a cost recovery basis and only when they are not under a statutory duty to provide them. Local authorities are also able to undertake commercial activities, but this must be done through a trading company so that the authority does not have a tax advantage over other businesses. Charging beyond cost recovery is also deemed to be trading and must be done through a company. Authorities cannot trade in services that they already have a statutory duty to provide; for example, collecting household rubbish.

The general power of competence applies to the 333 local authorities in England (including county councils, unitary authorities, district councils and London borough councils) and also applies to parish councils where that council has resolved that it meets the relevant conditions (including a minimum number of elected members). When the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 come into effect in November 2021, a general power of competence will also be conferred on Welsh local authorities, which largely replicates the general power granted to English local authorities.

Functional Power of Competence held by fire and rescue authorities

Where a fire and rescue authority (FRA) is embedded in a county council in England (a “county FRA”), the council holds the general power of competence in respect of their fire functions as it falls within the definition of a local authority under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act 2011 also inserted section 5A into the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to give relevant FRAs² in England and Wales wider functional powers that are broader than the power currently held by PCCs, although not as wide as the general power of competence provided to local authorities under the Localism Act.

Under the power provided by section 5A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act, a relevant FRA is able to do anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of carrying out any of its functions, as well as anything incidental or ‘indirectly incidental’ to those functions. The section 5A power of competence also enables an FRA to do anything it considers to be connected with any of its functions or connected to activity that is incidental to its functions. Fire and rescue authorities can also act for a commercial purpose under the section 5A powers, although section 5B of the 2004 Act provides that any commercial activity must be done through a trading company and FRAs cannot act commercially in respect of functions they have a statutory duty to provide. All FRAs can also charge for services, and have a separate power set out in section 18A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (also inserted by the Localism Act 2011). This ability to charge is subject to limitations in section 18B which includes not being able to charge for extinguishing fires, except at sea. Charges must also not exceed the cost to the authority of taking the action.

² “relevant fire and rescue authorities” are defined in section 5A(3) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. This includes metropolitan county fire and rescue authorities, combined fire and rescue authorities, police fire and crime commissioners (in respect of their fire functions), the London Fire Commissioner and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority

Where a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC) is created in England under section 4A of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, they fall within the definition of a relevant FRA and have the general power under section 5A FRA in relation to their fire functions but not in respect of their PCC functions. There are currently four PFCCs with this responsibility. The Government will shortly consult on further proposals to mandate the transfer of fire governance to other PCCs across England. Fire and rescue services in Wales are a devolved matter for which the Welsh Government is responsible.

Powers of Mayors of Combined Authorities

The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016 (the 2016 Act), amends the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) to provide for the establishment of mayoral combined authorities as well as providing these authorities with extra powers. Section 113D of the 2009 Act provides that the general power of competence can be given to combined authorities, including mayoral combined authorities (MCA), and section 107D(8)(b) of the 2009 Act further provides for the general power of competence to be exercised by the mayor for that authority as well as the combined authority itself. The mayors of the West of England and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough mayoral combined authorities are currently the only two mayors that have been conferred the power to use the general power of competence. The mayor of a combined authority can only be conferred this power with the consent of the combined authority and its constituent authorities, as well as that of the mayor.

Other combined authority mayors (including those who exercise PCC functions in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire) hold a wide functional power of competence that is equivalent to the power held by standalone fire and rescue authorities. This is set out in section 113A of the 2009 Act. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) also retains a wellbeing power under section 2(1) of the Local Government Act 2000, which permits local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area. This was specifically preserved in relation to the GMCA by virtue of a saving provision in article 8(3) of the Localism Act 2011 (Commencement No 5 and Transitional, Savings and Transitory Provisions) Order 2012. The Greater London Authority also holds a functional power under section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (the 1999 Act) to do anything which will further any one or more of its principal purposes, which is exercisable by the mayor acting on behalf of the Authority.

The Government's proposed changes

In order to ensure PCCs have more of the tools and levers they need to prevent and tackle crime, the Government intends to provide PCCs with greater powers of competence.

As it currently stands, the narrow functional powers which PCCs hold mean that they can do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of their functions. However, this means that they have to judge what facilitates, or is conducive or incidental to the exercise of their functions. This can create some doubt about their ability to act to prevent crime, particularly where those actions might be upstream of immediate police activity. Whilst PCCs can charge for certain police services (such as specialist police services like policing a concert or a football match), they also lack flexibility in their ability to act commercially by charging for discretionary services and cannot trade for profit. Regardless of which power of competence might be granted, if any, it would be drafted to retain the existing position that a PCC cannot charge for operational policing. Giving PCCs greater powers of competence would give them the confidence to act where there may be doubt. A wider power would also encourage greater ambition, innovation and creativity in their approaches to tackling crime and public safety issues.

The key areas where PCCs have identified wider powers of competence would support their objectives include;

- **Putting beyond doubt their ability to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour** – allowing PCCs to invest in activity that benefits the community and gets upstream of crime e.g. services to reduce offending, tackling mental health, youth diversion schemes.
- **Collaborative working** – the ability to take part in initiatives which are not current statutory responsibilities, for example with other emergency services or criminal justice partners; the opportunity to be a partner in local authority-private sector commercial arrangements.
- **Property regeneration and development** – the ability to borrow to invest in regeneration of existing land and property; generating long-term revenue streams (rather than one-off capital receipts).
- **Commercial ventures and initiatives** – the ability to develop innovative commercial opportunities, which yield additional revenue.

Through this consultation, we are interested in views on the benefits, opportunities and risks of granting PCCs either:

- (i) a wider functional power of competence as held by fire and rescue authorities, which will include giving them the power to do anything indirectly incidental to their functions; **or**
- (ii) a general power of competence as held by local authorities, which will give them the power to do anything that an individual can do so long as it is not prohibited by legislation.

Wider Functional Power of Competence

The functional power of competence held by fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) is a wide-ranging power which means that, even if the proposed action is a number of steps removed from their core functions, they can still act as long as the action can ultimately be traced back sufficiently to their functions. FRAs can do anything which is related directly or indirectly incidentally to their functions and can enter into commercial arrangements. Under separate powers, they can also charge for services. For example, the powers have been used by FRAs to provide road traffic accident prevention courses, or mobility training for elderly members of the public. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) used the powers to form an insurance mutual across a number of fire services, known as the Fire and Rescue Indemnity Company (FRIC); attempts to establish this under previous powers were challenged due to lack of vires. A number of fire and rescue services now also have contracts with the Ambulance Service for the provision of medical response services (co-responding) which provide immediate life-saving intervention, which would not have been possible without the FRA functional power. The functional powers held by FRAs therefore enable greater freedoms, whilst maintaining their single purpose status.

Where a PCC takes on fire and rescue functions, they hold this wider FRA power of competence in relation to their fire functions, but only the narrower PCC one in relation to their policing functions. At the minimum, we therefore believe we should level up the functional powers that PCCs and FRAs hold so that there is no longer a disparity in the PFCC model. This would mean giving all PCCs more generally a wider functional power of competence. This would allow PCCs to fully explore any commercial collaborative ventures without worrying about vires and ensure that for PFCCs in particular that collaboration between police and fire can be maximised.

These powers would also extend the breadth of activity PCCs could undertake, enabling them to get further upstream of crime as well as support them to co-commission and achieve shared outcomes with other emergency services, Criminal Justice System partners, local authorities and other public and private partners. PCCs also argue that wider powers to charge for discretionary services, and to trade would provide them with greater scope to act in the interests of their forces, in particular by raising revenue through innovative commercial practices. For example, some PCCs have identified that the powers would enable them to set up a police mutual, similar to the FRIC mutual established by fire services and others have indicated that they could use wider powers to make more effective use of estates, for example investing in renovation of police property to provide key worker housing and charging third parties to make use of premises, such as the police firearms range, when not in use for police purposes.

PCCs do not possess the wide-ranging responsibilities that local authorities have and therefore a wider functional form of powers, as held by FRAs is likely to enable PCCs to undertake most of the activity they would need to be able to undertake to deliver their priorities in the interests of local communities. However, it could still create doubt about vires in circumstances where a link to PCC functions is difficult to prove.

General power of competence

The general power of competence goes further than a functional power of competence in removing the need for a link between statutory functions and the exercise of powers. It provides greater freedoms to act, and therefore encourages greater innovation and creativity in the use of powers.

For local authorities, the general power of competence has enabled them to work in new ways to meet the needs of local communities, and to develop new services and partnerships. It has also been seen as a symbolic statement that promotes innovation and frees up thinking, whether or not the power is used to provide the specific legal basis for the actions taken. Some councils have used the power to set up companies for commercial purposes, including for the development and sale of land, and in relation to the setting up of shared services with other councils.

A general power of competence would put beyond doubt a PCC's ability to take action to help prevent crime and to strengthen their role in the wider criminal justice system. It would remove the requirement for there to be a demonstrable link to existing statutory functions and reduce the risk of legal challenge thus giving PCCs increased confidence in their legal capacity to act. It would also allow individual commissioners to innovate and develop bespoke local approaches to meet local needs and priorities. Some PCCs have argued that a general power of competence would allow them to enter into increasingly ambitious joint plans with combined authority and council partners. Depending on how such a power is drafted, it could also allow them to generate income beyond cost recovery and generate new revenue streams.

We recognise that there are some risks in granting PCCs a general power of competence. In giving PCCs the widest powers to innovate and act creatively, there are also greater risks that PCCs are distracted from their core focus on crime and policing or that they are engaged in activity that creates financial risk or cuts across other local mandates.

The PCC model places checks and balances on the actions of PCCs. PCCs are elected to represent local needs and are directly accountable to the public for the efficient and effective use of public funds. To ensure the public have the information they need to hold the PCC to account, PCCs are required by law to publish certain information, including their total budget, revenue sources, proposed and actual expenditure and details of their annual investment strategy. Police and Crime Panels also have powers to scrutinise the actions and decisions of PCCs, providing an additional layer of public scrutiny.

PCCs are also required by statute to appoint a Chief Financial Officer, whose duties include ensuring the proper administration of the PCC's financial affairs, reporting any actual or foreseen unlawful expenditure and advising whether particular decisions are contrary to policy or budget. There is also a statutory requirement for a PCC to have a Monitoring Officer, whose main role is to report to the PCC if it appears that any proposal, decision or failure within their

organisation constitutes, has given rise to, or is likely to break the law or a code of practice.

Further, there are existing limitations on the use of the general power which are applied to local authorities, and which could be mirrored for PCCs; namely we would not permit PCCs to do anything that is specifically prohibited in legislation, to raise taxes (other than in relation to existing policing precept) or to trade in services that they already have a statutory function to provide. The Secretary of State also has the power to apply further limitations to the general power of competence provided to local authorities, subject to consultation.

Through this consultation, we are also interested in any further safeguards or limitations that respondents consider might be necessary to ensure a proper use of any new powers granted to PCCs.

Mayoral PCCs

It is our intention that mayors who hold PCC functions (such as in London, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire) would have the same power of competence as other PCCs to maintain consistency of powers in the police governance model. Mayors of combined authorities currently hold wider functional powers of competence, in line with those held by FRAs. At a minimum, we therefore propose to level up the powers that PCCs and Mayors hold. This could be either by granting to the PCCs the wider functional power which Mayors currently have (except Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and West of England Mayors who have a general power of competence) or by extending the general power of competence to both PCCs and Mayoral PCCs. If we were to extend the general power of competence to PCCs and therefore to mayoral PCCs, we would need to consider whether this power of competence should also be exercisable by the combined authority and whether any such extension should be dependent on the consent of the constituent authorities. The Government will give further consideration to the powers of Mayors and combined authorities through the Levelling Up White Paper.

Implementation

Subject to the outcomes of this consultation, we would require primary legislation to provide PCCs with either a wider functional or general power of competence. We would seek to implement the measures through the next appropriate legislative vehicle following Part 2 of the PCC Review.

Our intention would be to provide both English and Welsh PCCs with the same wider power of competence.

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Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Fire Authority, 13 October 2021

Report title: People Strategy 2020-2025 – Year One Update

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

Report sponsor: Mick Osborne, Chief Operating Officer (Deputy Chief Fire Officer)

Author and contact: Paul Casey, Station Commander Human Resources Projects
pcasey@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Decision

Recommendations:

That the People Strategy 2020-2025 staff engagement plan be approved.

Executive summary:

The People Strategy 2020-2025, which was approved at the October 2020 Fire Authority meeting sets out a framework for engaging and developing employees of Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (the Service). The strategy will support cultural changes which will help the Service to better deliver its vision and strategic priorities, while ensuring behaviours, values and standards are adhered to.

The framework maintains the existing five key areas; however, they were reworded to better reflect our values;

- Key area one – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Key area two – Employee Engagement
- Key area three – Organisational Development and Resourcing
- Key area four – Training, Learning and Development
- Key area five – Employee Health and Wellbeing

Each key area has objectives which support the overarching strategy, these are further expanded within the document.

In order to achieve the objectives as detailed within the strategy, output and impacts will be reviewed on a regular basis and reported through the governance process.

The strategy has been reviewed and updated following stakeholder engagement and feedback from the formal consultation process, where the potential impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have been captured.

The new strategy was effective from November 2020, succeeding the previous 2016-2020 People Strategy, then published on the Service's Intranet with a public facing version published on the external website. Development of the external website continues and will complement the new strategy as it evolves.

The current strategy can be found on the Service's external website link below:
<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/authority/people-strategy/>

The strategy has now been in place for ten months (November 2020 - September 2021) and the planned launch and station roadshow plan to engage and consult with staff was affected by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Now that government restrictions have been reviewed by the service and station visits can once again commence the planned launch and station roadshow can, with approval, go ahead.

This report is to update Members and key stakeholders on progress made on the strategy and detail the plan to raise its profile both internally and externally.

The plan in Appendix 1 details an internal staff engagement plan and an external public engagement plan.

Financial implications:

Whilst there are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the strategy contributes to achieving benefits and savings that have been identified in the Public Safety, Corporate and Medium Term Financial Plans.

Cost and benefits implications for each initiative outlined in the strategy will be considered as part of the supporting individual business cases. People Strategy updates will be delivered from existing budgets.

Risk management:

A significant identified risk is the Service's ability to deliver a more diverse workforce within funding and recruitment constraints, and against a background of changing demographics.

The Organisational Development (OD) Risk Register highlights our current and future employee resourcing risks. Control measures are in place to mitigate the risks, where the People Strategy is one.

The strategy complements our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) objectives, and arrangements are in place to ensure that language and content are inclusive.

The successful implementation of the People Strategy depends on the buy-in and energetic support of everyone concerned, therefore employee engagement will continue to enable the development of the strategy.

Quality assurance arrangements are in place which ensure the Service can govern the content of the strategy and how it is used. For example, this will allow opportunities for further development through collaborative working.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications arising from the update report.

Privacy and security implications:

No personally identifiable information is contained within the overarching People Strategy. Data Protection Impact Assessments exist for each key area of the strategy, these will be revised and updated where required.

Duty to collaborate: The Policing and Crime Act 2017 requires the service to consider opportunities for collaboration with the police and ambulance services.

Collaboration opportunities arising from the People Strategy will be reviewed as they present themselves.

The three Thames Valley Fire Services are progressing common approaches to operational On-Call Firefighter recruitment. This joint working initiative is an opportunity to promote fire service careers and raise awareness across community groups with the aim of improving employee diversity.

Collaboration with Thames Valley Police (TVP) on apprenticeships and promoting careers for young people is well established. The Service continues to support the Armed Forces Covenant and promise to actively champion the armed forces community. It acknowledges that we recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families can bring to our Service.

The Station Commander Human Resources Projects collaborates and consults with the EDI group and ensures key information is raised that could influence or effect the People Strategy 2020-2025.

Health and safety implications

The Service has implemented a range of measures to comply with Government guidance for *Working Safely with COVID-19* in terms of social distancing, maximum occupancy of rooms, personal hygiene and cleaning regimes which are audited and monitored. Staff are kept informed of all changes via a robust communications programme in the ever-evolving situation.

The global Covid-19 pandemic continues to present risks, which the Service adapts to in order to ensure the safety, wellbeing and productivity of our staff as well as the safety and wellbeing of the public, visitors, contractors and our partner agencies.

Covid-19 measures will continue to be adopted when visits to station and authority premises are facilitated to engage and consult with staff.

Environmental implications:

There are no environmental implications.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:

The Service has a statutory obligation under equality legislation to eliminate unlawful discrimination. The People Strategy, policies, and procedures aim to support the meeting of these requirements.

If we have greater representation of our diverse communities, then we will be able to find solutions to barriers in relation to employment and accessing services.

Diversity is one of our core values and a key area in this strategy. The dedicated EDI section is now fully embedded.

The strategy aligns to and complements our EDI Policy and objectives.

Consultation and communication:

The People Strategy provides a framework, along with the governance arrangements for controlling the Service's workforce development over the next five years and is aligned to the Public Safety Plan and Corporate Plan 2020 - 2025.

The strategy sets out a framework which supports delivery of the Service's strategic objectives over the next five years. The priorities and objectives within the strategy will be cascaded to directorate, team and individual levels and resourced from within the establishment and budgets set by the Workforce and Medium-Term Financial Plans.

This paper was presented at the 9 September 2021 Business Transformation Board and the 21 September 2021 Strategic Management Board and will be reviewed and considered for approval at the 13 October Fire Authority meeting.

Background papers:

Fire Authority report 16 June 2021. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives 2020 – 2025 Year one update.

[Fire Authority Annual Meeting - 16 June 2021 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://www.bucksfire.gov.uk)

Fire Authority report 14 October 2020. People Strategy 2020 – 2025.

[Fire Authority Meeting - 14 October 2020 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk)

Fire Authority report 10 June 2020. The Authority's People Strategy 2016 – 2020 Annual Update.

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2020/06/fire-authority.pdf/>

Public Safety Plan 2020 - 2025

[New five-year Public Safety Plan launched - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk)

Corporate Plan 2020 – 2025

<https://bucksfire.gov.uk/documents/2021/06/fa-160621-item-14.pdf/>

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion objectives 2020-2025.

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service \(bucksfire.gov.uk\)](https://bucksfire.gov.uk)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	People Strategy 2020-2025 – Raise the profile plan	

Appendix 1

People Strategy 2020-2025 – Raise the profile plan

Introduction

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (BMKFA) is fully committed to Equality and Diversity. The service recognises fairness and inclusion is fundamental to everything it does, to achieve its vision of making Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes the safest areas in England in which to live work and travel.

The service believes a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the local working population will create a stronger, more enriched and well-informed organisation, able to meet the expectations of a modern Fire and Rescue Service. This is a key aspect of our People Strategy. The service objective is to embed Equality and Diversity into everything it does internally and externally.

The service recognises having a diverse flexible workforce, which better reflects the community it serves, can enhance performance as well as improve its service to the community. These core values underpin the strategy.

The recommendation is for the following action:

1. That the People Strategy 2020-2025 staff and public engagement plan be approved.

Raising the profile plan internally

The plan over the next 6 months (November 2021 - April 2022) is to visit each fire station and shift system, including support staff to engage and consult on the People Strategy 2020-2025. The roadshow will include a presentation to staff on the strategy and highlight through discussion, how the service will meet any challenges and identify risks and opportunities. This is with the intention to raise the profile of the strategy, encourage engagement and ensure staff from across the entire organisation are made aware of how their work contributes and supports the five key areas.

- Key area one – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Key area two – Employee Engagement
- Key area three – Organisational Development and Resourcing
- Key area four – Training, Learning and Development
- Key area five – Employee Health and Wellbeing

This plan underpins key area two, Employee Engagement and aims to ensure the workforce has the information required to undertake roles effectively and efficiently through appropriate communication channels.

The development of this strategy will continue to be supported by engagement with:

Organisational Development, Joint Consultation Forum, Leadership Group, EDI group, Human Resources, Health and Safety, Operational Training and Assurance and all employees.

Raising the profile plan externally

The strategy is public facing on the service's external website. Work is ongoing to refresh this to ensure it remains engaging, accessible and practical.

A robust communication plan has been established to ensure information from within the strategy that has influenced the five key areas is published. This information will be published across our internal and external communication channels and platforms.

The chart on the next page details the staff engagement timetable and key dates.

People Strategy 2020-2025 – Raising the profile plan

Six-month Raising the profile plan						
Who's Coordinating?	November 2021	December 2021	January 2022	February 2022	March 2022	April 2022
Station Commander HR Project manager	Staff engagement plan - Objective: To raise the profile of the strategy and encourage engagement from operational and support staff.					
	High Wycombe (red)	Beaconsfield (red)	Aylesbury (red)	West Ashland (red)	Broughton (red)	Support staff working group
	High Wycombe (white)	Beaconsfield (white)	Aylesbury (white)	West Ashland (white)	Broughton (white)	
	High Wycombe (blue)	Beaconsfield (blue)	Aylesbury (blue)	West Ashland (blue)	Broughton (blue)	Support staff working group
	High Wycombe (green)	Beaconsfield (green)	Aylesbury (green)	West Ashland (green)	Broughton (green)	
						Flexi Duty Officers, Group Commanders and Principal Officers
	Gerrards Cross (red)	Amersham (red)	Buckingham (red)	Newport Pagnell (red)	On-Call working group	
	Gerrards Cross (blue)	Amersham (blue)	Buckingham (blue)	Newport Pagnell (blue)	On-Call working group	Flexi Firefighters
	On-Call working group	On-Call working group	On-Call working group	On-Call working group		Flexi Firefighters
						Resource Management Team – based in Service Headquarters



Covid-19

BFRS Response, Recovery and Renewal



Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
we save lives

Repatriation of UK Nationals to Milton Keynes

February 2020



Response phase one

(March-June 2020)

- Pandemic response group
- Local Resilience Forum
- Becoming Covid-secure
- PPE logistics (internal and external)
- Testing
- Community hubs
- Delivery of essential items and food to the vulnerable
- PPE training in care homes
- SCAS driver deployment



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Recovery phase one

(June–September 2020)

- Welfare and wellbeing
- Return to a new normal
- Opportunities for improvement
- Finance
- Communication
- Organisational learning



Response phase two

(October 2020 – April 2021)

- Providing a safe and supportive workplace for all our staff
- Maintain core functions
- Extended support to our communities and partners
- Effective communication across the Service and with our communities



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we save lives

HMICFRS Covid Inspection

November 2020

“BFRS responded well to the Pandemic. This meant the people of Buckinghamshire were well supported”



Recovery and Renewal

(April 2021 – July 2021)

- Health and wellbeing of our staff remains central to our renewal and recovery activity.
- We will continue to provide innovative support to partners and the public.
- We will continue to enable innovative ways of working for all our staff.
- We will enable and introduce necessary change at pace, and with appropriate controls.



Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
we save lives

Covid-19 Summer 2021

- Reinforce the country's vaccine wall of defence
- Enable the public to make informed decisions
- Retain proportionate test, trace and isolate plans
- Manage risks at the border and support a global response
- Retain contingency measures



Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
we save lives

Managed Quarantine and Bridging Hotels



Our support to the wider community continues





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we save lives

Thank you

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