



# Auditor's Annual Report for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Year-ended 31 March 2025

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13 February 2026

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## Key Contacts

**Richard Walton**

Director

[Richard.Walton@KPMG.co.uk](mailto:Richard.Walton@KPMG.co.uk)

**Philip Kent**

Senior Manager

[Philip.Kent@KPMG.co.uk](mailto:Philip.Kent@KPMG.co.uk)

**Bilal Ahsan**

Assistant Manager

[Bilal.Ahsan@KPMG.co.uk](mailto:Bilal.Ahsan@KPMG.co.uk)

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Our audit report is made solely to the members of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (the Authority), as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Authority, as a body, those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the members of Authority, as a body, for our audit work, for our auditor's report, for this Auditor's Annual Report, or for the opinions we have formed.

External auditors do not act as a substitute for the Authority's own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

**01**

# **Executive Summary**



# Executive Summary



## Purpose of the Auditor’s Annual Report

This Auditor’s Annual Report provides a summary of the findings and key issues arising from our 2024-25 audit of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority (the ‘Authority’). This report has been prepared in line with the requirements set out in the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office (the ‘Code of Audit Practice’) and is required to be published by the Authority alongside the annual report and accounts. This Auditor’s Annual Report supersedes the version dated 5 November 2025 because our work over the financial statements is now complete.

## Our responsibilities

The statutory responsibilities and powers of appointed auditors are set out in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act). Our responsibilities under the Act, the Code of Audit Practice and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (‘ISAs (UK)’ ) include the following:



**Financial Statements** - To provide an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and of its income and expenditure during the year and have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2024/25 (‘the CIPFA Code’).



**Other information (such as the narrative report)** - To consider, whether based on our audit work, the other information in the Statement of Accounts is materially misstated or inconsistent with the financial statements or our audit knowledge of the Authority.



**Value for money** - To report if we have identified any significant weaknesses in the arrangements that have been made by the Authority to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are also required to provide a summary of our findings in the commentary in this report.



**Other powers** - We may exercise other powers we have under the Act. These include issuing a Public Interest Report, issuing statutory recommendations, issuing an Advisory Notice, applying for a judicial review, or applying to the courts to have an item of expenditure declared unlawful.

In addition to the above, we respond to any valid objections received from electors.

## Findings

We have set out below a summary of the conclusions that we provided in respect of our responsibilities.

<b>Financial statements</b>	<p>We issued a qualified opinion on the Authority’s financial statements on 13 February 2026. This means that we believe the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Authority, with the exception of the comparative information for the year ended 31 March 2024. Further details are set out on page 7.</p> <p>We have provided further details of the key risks we identified and our response on page 8.</p>
<b>Other information</b>	<p>We did not identify any material inconsistencies between the content of the other information, the financial statements and our knowledge of the Council.</p>
<b>Value for money</b>	<p>We identified no significant weaknesses in respect of the arrangements the Authority has put in place to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of its resources. Further details are set out on page 10.</p>
<b>Whole of Government Accounts</b>	<p>We are required to perform procedures and report to the National Audit Office in respect of the Authority’s consolidation return to HM Treasury in order to prepare the Whole of Government Accounts.</p> <p>As the National Audit Office has not yet informed us that we are not required to perform any further procedures, we are unable to confirm that we have concluded our work in this area.</p>
<b>Other powers</b>	<p>See overleaf. Note that, as we are still performing our procedures in relation to the financial statements, we may choose to exercise our other powers in relation to the 2024-25 audit in the future.</p>

# Executive Summary



There are several actions we can take as part of our wider powers under the Act:

## Public interest reports

We may issue a Public Interest Report if we believe there are matters that should be brought to the attention of the public.

If we issue a Public Interest Report, the Authority is required to consider it and to bring it to the attention of the public.

**As at the date of this report, we have not issued a Public Interest Report this year.**

## Judicial review/Declaration by the courts

We may apply to the courts for a judicial review in relation to an action the Authority is taking. We may also apply to the courts for a declaration that an item of expenditure the Authority has incurred is unlawful.

**As at the date of this report, we have not applied to the courts.**

## Recommendations

We can make recommendations to the Authority. These fall into two categories:

1. We can make a statutory recommendation under Schedule 7 of the Act. If we do this, the Authority must consider the matter at a general meeting and notify us of the action it intends to take (if any). We also send a copy of this recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State.
2. We can also make other recommendations. If we do this, the Authority does not need to take any action, however should the Authority provide us with a response, we will include it within this report.

**As at the date of this report, we made no recommendations under Schedule 7 of the Act.**

**As at the date of this report, we have not raised any other recommendations.**

## Advisory notice

We may issue an advisory notice if we believe that the Authority has, or is about to, incur an unlawful item of expenditure or has, or is about to, take a course of action which may result in a significant loss or deficiency.

If we issue an advisory notice, the Authority is required to stop the course of action for 21 days, consider the notice at a general meeting, and then notify us of the action it intends to take and why.

**As at the date of this report, we have not issued an advisory notice.**

In addition to these powers, we can make performance improvement observations to make helpful suggestions to the Authority. Where we raise observations we report these to management and the Overview & Audit Committee. The Authority is not required to take any action to these, however it is good practice to do so and we have included any responses that the Authority has given us.

**02**

# **Audit of the financial statements**



# Audit of the financial statements



## KPMG provides an independent opinion on whether the Authority's financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25.

We conduct our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) ("ISAs (UK)") and applicable law. We also fulfil our ethical responsibilities under, and ensure we are independent of the Authority in accordance with, UK ethical requirements including the FRC Ethical Standard. We are required to ensure that the audit evidence we have obtained is a sufficient and appropriate basis for our opinion.

## Our audit opinion on the financial statements

We have issued a qualified opinion on the Council's financial statements on 13 February 2026. The reason for our qualified opinion is as follows:

*The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 (the "Amendment Regulations") require the Authority to publish its financial statements and our opinion thereon for the year ended 31 March 2025 by 27 February 2026 (the "Backstop Date").*

*With respect to the Authority's comparative income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024, we have been unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence over these figures. This is because we have been unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence over the Authority's net assets as at 1 April 2023 as we have been unable to perform the procedures that we consider necessary to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence on these balances ahead of the Backstop Date. As a result, we were unable to determine whether there were any consequential effects on its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024.*

*Any adjustments from the above matters would have a consequential effect on the Authority's income and expenditure, Firefighters' Pension Fund Account, and cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2024.*

*We disclaimed our audit opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 regarding this same limitation.*

The full audit report is included in the Authority's Annual Report and Accounts for 2024/25 which can be obtained from the Authority's website.

Further information on our audit of the financial statements is set out overleaf.

# Audit of the financial statements



The table below summarises the key financial statement audit risks that we identified as part of our risk assessment and how we responded to these through our audit.

## Management override of controls

Auditing standards require us to identify a significant financial statement audit risk linked to fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements.

This is because management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.

### Our procedures

We performed procedures including testing accounting entries posted into the ledger which meet a heightened risk profile.

### Our findings

We completed the procedures as described and we did not identify any material misstatements relating to this area.

## Valuation of post retirement benefit obligations

The Council is a member of the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund, a Local Government Pension Scheme, and the Firefighters Pension Scheme. Accounting standards require that the value of the liabilities to be paid to current and future pensioners.

The valuation of these liabilities is subject to complex actuarial judgements and assumptions. This means that a small change in an assumption or judgement can have a significant impact on the valuation reached.

### Our procedures

We performed procedures including:

- Challenging, with the support of our own actuarial specialists, the key assumptions applied in the calculation of the liability, such as the discount rate used, and
- Considering the adequacy of the disclosures concerning the key judgements and degree of estimation involved in arriving at the valuation.

### Our findings

We completed the procedures as described and we did not identify any material misstatements relating to this area.

**03**

# **Value for Money**

# Value for Money



## Introduction

We are required to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources or ‘value for money’. We consider whether there are sufficient arrangements in place for the Authority for the following criteria, as defined by the Code of Audit Practice:



**Financial sustainability:** How the Authority plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services.



**Governance:** How the Authority ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.



**Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness:** How the Authority uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

We do not act as a substitute for the Authority’s own responsibility for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that public business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. We are also not required to consider whether all aspects of the Authority’s arrangements are operating effectively, or whether the Authority has achieved value for money during the year.

## Approach

We undertake risk assessment procedures in order to assess whether there are any risks that value for money is not being achieved. This is prepared by considering the findings from other regulators and auditors, records from the organisation and performing procedures to assess the design of key systems at the organisation that give assurance over value for money.

Where a significant risk is identified we perform further procedures in order to consider whether there are significant weaknesses in the processes in place to achieve value for money.

We are required to report a summary of the work undertaken and the conclusions reached against each of the aforementioned reporting criteria in this Auditor’s Annual Report. We do this as part of our commentary on VFM arrangements over the following pages.

We also make recommendations where we identify weaknesses in arrangements or other matters that require attention from the Authority.

## Summary of findings

Our work in relation to value for money is complete.

	Financial sustainability	Governance	Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness
<b>Commentary page reference</b>	12 – 13	14	15 – 16
<b>Identified risks of significant weakness?</b>	x No	x No	x No
<b>Actual significant weakness identified?</b>	x No	x No	x No
<b>2023-24 Findings</b>	No significant risks identified	Risk of significant weakness noted but did not materialise into significant weakness	Risk of significant weakness noted but did not materialise into significant weakness
<b>Direction of travel</b> Upwards: Decrease in risks or weaknesses	↔	↗	↗

# Value for Money

## National context

We use issues affecting Fire Authorities nationally to set the scene for our work. We assess if the issues below apply to this Fire Authority.

### Financial performance and demand

Fire Authorities are generally funded through council tax, business rates and other government grants. Over recent years, Fire Authorities have been expected to do more with less, experiencing a real-term decrease in funding over the years when compared to inflation. This has caused Fire Authorities to change the way that services are delivered in order to remain financially viable and affordable.

As part of the 2021/22 Spending Review, the National Fire Chiefs Council and the Local Government Association proposed that across Fire and Rescue Authorities in England, the fire and rescue sector could create 2% of non-pay efficiencies and increase productivity by 3% by 2024/25. It is a requirement that all Fire Authorities publish their Efficiency and Productivity Plan on the Authority's website, explaining how they intend to plan and report on efficiencies and outline the savings they plan to deliver, as well as the plan to increase productivity outputs and their commitment to increasing efficiency where possible to enable reinvestment and maintain a sustainable financial position.

At the same time, Fire Authorities are seeing continued pressure from increased demand. This includes weather-related events, where dry conditions cause an increased number of wildfires, and severe floods increase in number.

### Culture and workforce

Culture in the Fire and Rescue Service has faced significant national scrutiny in 2023/24 following adverse media at some authorities and a focus on culture as part of inspections performed by HM Inspectorate of Fire and Rescue Services. The Inspectorate continues to focus on professional standards as part of their routine inspections.

Fire Authorities are very people-intensive organisations, with circa 77% of total expenditure being made up of staff costs. The culture a Fire Authority embeds across the organisation therefore plays a big part in how successfully the Authority is able to provide and deliver services and achieve their priorities. This requires an effective strategy and culture to be established to ensure a highly-skilled, motivated and diverse workforce are in place to deliver services to the communities they serve, without feeling discriminated or harassed within the workplace.

## Local context

Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authority is a provider of fire and rescue services across the two unitary authorities of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

The Authority has received positive feedback from its regulator and has been stood down from enhanced oversight. This is on account of improvements made following an adverse inspectorate outcome in a prior period.

The Authority has worked hard to increase its whole-time (i.e. not volunteer) headcount and has exceeded its target of 300, giving the authority greater ability to respond to incidents in a robust manner.

The Authority has benefitted from several successful year-end outturns. In particular, the Authority has experienced significant returns from having invested surplus cash. The returns, both from these investments and more broadly, has allowed the Authority make greater investment in services.

In particular, the Authority has been able to invest in fleet without resorting to borrowing. Looking forward, the Authority is now considering how to invest in premises, in particular the fire station at High Wycombe which is falling into disrepair.

The Authority is not significantly impacted by planned reorganisation of local government due to a lack of significant changes planned in Buckinghamshire. However, the authority is expecting to have funding withdrawn as part of the national funding review and is considering its options on how to remain financially sustainable in the future.



# Financial Sustainability



## How the Authority plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services.

We have considered the following in our work:

- How the Authority ensures that it identifies all the significant financial pressures that are relevant to its short and medium-term plans and builds these into them;
- How the Authority plans to bridge its funding gaps and identifies achievable savings;
- How the Authority plans finances to support the sustainable delivery of services in accordance with strategic and statutory priorities;
- How the Authority ensures that its financial plan is consistent with other plans such as workforce, capital, investment, and other operational planning which may include working with other local public bodies as part of a wider system; and
- How the Authority identifies and manages risks to financial resilience, e.g. unplanned changes in demand, including challenge of the assumptions underlying its plans.

## Budget setting

The Authority was able to set a balanced budget for 2024/25. The Authority prepared its budget by taking its 2023/24 position, and updating for inflation, pay rises, and known changes to costs (for instance the authority might decide to make a decision to invest in the services provided). The largest cost for the Authority is in staff, and therefore the staff budget is based on the establishment list held by HR, adjusted for any approved changes to salary and headcount. This budget setting process is typical for local authorities.

The Authority, as with all local authorities, is under financial pressure however it did not experience significant difficulty in setting its financial plan. The Authority benefits from a reasonable balance of financial reserves, which are broadly earmarked for specific purposes such as mitigating financial risks. Notable, the Authority does not need to borrow to finance its capital plan because the Authority, over several years, has been able to set aside funds to purchase capital assets such as fire appliances.

As with many authorities, the impact of worsening economic conditions (such as inflation, pay demands, and the impact of tax increases) as well as planned reforms to local government funding means that the Authority will be subject to heightened financial pressures in the future. To mitigate this, the Authority has shifted to a “zero based” budgeting approach for 2025/26, the budget for which was planned during the latter part of 2024/25.

A zero based budget requires additional management effort due to the work required to establish what the essential costs to run the Authority are. However, zero based budgets can bring benefits by effectively stripping out inefficiencies and unnecessary costs, making it a reasonable response to the financial pressures faced by the Authority.

## Savings

As with all local authorities, the Authority has had to implement a savings plan in order to achieve a balanced budget. For the Authority, it set itself a target of identifying savings equal to 2% of the non-pay budget (with no planned savings for the pay budget). Actual savings of 2.2% were achieved.

The Authority has, in recent years, experienced resourcing pressures due to there being an insufficient number of whole-time (i.e. non volunteer) firefighters. Therefore, the Authority has prioritised investment in recruitment, meaning that savings were focused on non-staff costs. This is consistent with the Authority’s strategic objective of ensuring a whole-time establishment of 300 firefighters.

# Financial Sustainability

## Financial performance

The Authority's financial performance is set out on the right. As can be seen, the Authority experienced a significant favourable performance against budget on account of c. £1m. This was driven by two factors:

- As noted, the Authority has been investing in whole-time headcount over the course of 2024-25. As the Authority still needs to attend fires and other calls, it has previously been utilising bank staff and overtime to ensure it can meet demand. As more staff are hired, it has been possible to reduce use of sustained bank and overtime costs. Consequently, a saving was generated.
- Like other local authorities, the Authority invests surplus cash not required for operational purposes. The Authority does this primarily through deposits with reputable financial institutions and other authorities, and the Authority is advised by treasury advisors to assist in making appropriate and prudent use of its funds. Economic conditions, and effective investing by the Authority in particular has allowed the Authority to generate a substantial return on its funds, which have been set aside to meet costs that may arise in the future.

To assist in securing a positive financial outturn, the Authority has a robust approach to monitoring financial performance. As well as monitoring costs against budget, the Authority monitors a variety of operational KPIs which have a bearing on financial performance. These include bank staff cost, actual staff vs establishment, turnover, and absence (as high absence can drive an increase in agency costs or overtime for other permanent staff).

Key financial and performance metrics:	2024-25	2023-24
<b>Planned surplus/(deficit)</b>	0	0
<b>Actual surplus/(deficit)</b>	954k	189k
<b>Usable reserves</b>	14,908k	13,140k
<b>Year-end borrowings, excluding leases</b>	4,615k	4,615k
<b>Year-end cash and investments position</b>	26,721k	18,069k



# Governance



## How the Authority ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.

We have considered the following in our work:

- how the Authority monitors and assesses risk and how the body gains assurance over the effective operation of internal controls, including arrangements to prevent and detect fraud;
- how the Authority approaches and carries out its annual budget setting process;
- how the Authority ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control; to communicate relevant, accurate and timely management information (including non-financial information where appropriate); supports its statutory financial reporting requirements; and ensures corrective action is taken where needed, including in relation to significant partnerships;
- how the Authority ensures it makes properly informed decisions, supported by appropriate evidence and allowing for challenge and transparency; and
- how the Authority monitors and ensures appropriate standards, such as meeting legislative/regulatory requirements and standards in terms of management or Board members' behaviour.

## Risk management

The Authority has a reasonable approach to risk management. The Authority maintains a risk register which contains the features we would expect to see, including risk grading, actions, and tracking of risks over time. The Authority has identified a variety of risks reflecting ongoing sectoral issues meaning the risk register appropriately reflects ongoing sectoral developments. These include the impact of funding reform on financial sustainability and any impact from local government reorganisation at Milton Keynes City Council.

The Authority does also set a risk appetite, which allows the Authority to take on a greater degree of risk where it may result in better outcomes for service users, whilst also continuing to act in a prudent and balanced manner. Some authorities enhance their risk appetite by setting different risk appetite statements for different parts of their operations – for instance some authorities might wish to take a greater degree of financial risk if reserves are healthy whilst being more risk adverse in respect of service quality. A more granular risk appetite may help the Authority to make more targeted and significant investment decisions to improve services.

## Decision making

The Authority's decision making process is adequate and in line with our expectations. There is a range of committees considered proportionate to the size and complexity of the Authority. Decision making policy papers require officers to clearly set out the risks proposed by decisions in terms of both financial and operational risk. Notably, the Authority considers the equality and environmental impact of its decisions, ensuring that the Authority complies with the various statutory duties imposed on it.

One of the most significant decisions made by the Authority during the year was a decision to stop automatically attending the activation of automatic fire alarms. We noted that the papers submitted to the Authority meeting set out in detail the case for change and the outcome of consultations held with stakeholders. This meant that members had an adequate base of information with which to make their decision. It is not the role of External Audit to comment on the merit of any decisions made.

	2024-25	2023-24
<b>Control deficiencies reported in the Annual Governance Statement</b>	None	None
<b>Head of Internal Audit Opinion</b>	Reasonable Assurance	Reasonable Assurance
<b>HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services rating</b>	Under default phase of monitoring 'Scan'	Under enhanced monitoring 'Engage'
<b>Local Government Ombudsman findings</b>	None	None

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness



## How the Authority uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services

We have considered the following in our work:

- how financial and performance information has been used to assess performance to identify areas for improvement;
- how the Authority evaluates the services it provides to assess performance and identify areas for improvement;
- how the Authority ensures it delivers its role within significant partnerships and engages with stakeholders it has identified, in order to assess whether it is meeting its objectives; and
- where the Authority commissions or procures services, how it assesses whether it is realising the expected benefits.

## Savings plans

As with all authorities, the Authority has identified savings plans of 2.2% of the non-pay budget. This compares to 3.1% of the non-pay budget in 2023/24 and both are in excess of the 2% target saving. The Authority has decided not to identify savings in respect of the pay budget because of continued plans to invest in workforce and reach target establishment of 300 wholetime firefighters. Therefore, the focus on non-pay savings is appropriate and consistent with the Authority's business plan.

The Authority has been able to generate substantial savings through recruiting wholetime firefighters. This is because the Authority has been incurring significant sustained costs from overtime and bank staff where the target establishment had not been met. Consequently, the bulk of the positive financial performance, and improvements in the efficiency and economy of the service more broadly, has been achieved through investment in permanent headcount.

## Operational performance

The Authority monitors its operational performance through a quarterly performance KPI dashboard. This gives a holistic view of the Authority's operations aligned to the Authority's four strategic priorities (Public Impact, Response, Great Place to Work, and Public Value), meaning it covers financial performance, quality, human resources, and risk. Each KPI is monitored monthly and is given a colour-grading, including highlighting metrics exceeding target so positive performance can be understood and learnt from.

In our Auditor's Annual Report for 2023-24, we reported that the KPI dashboard was not reported on a timely basis meaning the Authority was unable to take timely action to mitigate deteriorating performance. During 2024-25 performance was reported on a more timely basis.

Our review of the dashboard did not identify any indication of the Authority's operational performance significantly deteriorating.

## Procurement

The Authority has implemented procurement arrangements to assist in ensuring compliance with procurement regulations and we have not identified any concerns in respect of procurement arrangements as part of our work. Tender waivers, where authority to bypass these procurement regulations, can be an indication that arrangements are ineffective. At the Authority, there was a singular new tender waiver for a small value during 2024-25 for a fire training simulator on the basis that there was only a single supplier of the required product (ordinarily three quotes would be required for spend of this magnitude).

The low number of waivers, and the low value as a proportion of overall expenditure is indicative of a positive compliance culture, and effort to secure efficient use of resources.

# Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness



## Inspection outcomes

In our Auditor's Annual Report in the prior period, we identified a significant risk that value for money arrangements may be inadequate, but did not identify an actual weakness in arrangements. This was linked to the Authority's inspection outcome from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS).

In 2023 HMICFRS moved the Authority into an enhanced monitoring process known as Engage. This was in response to serious causes of concern identified by HMICFRS in respect of a lack of improvements in equality, diversity and inclusion; and a lack of improvement in ensuring its teams can prioritise work according to risk. At the time, we did not identify a significant weakness in arrangements as we were satisfied that the Authority had an appropriate action plan and governance in place to ensure its successful implementation.

In January 2025, HMICFRS re-inspected the Authority and was able to close these causes of concern. That meant that, in March 2025, HMICFRS was able to move the Authority into its default phase of monitoring known as Scan. This evidenced that the Authority has satisfied the factors driving the adverse regulatory inspection and improved the quality of its services; and is now moving to a "business as usual" relationship with its regulator.

## Estates

The Authority operates its services out of a range of fire stations located across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. There is an ongoing programme of refurbishment and upgrade to these fire stations to ensure they continue to support the delivery of high-quality services.

As we reported in the 2023-24 Auditor's Annual Report, the Authority has identified that its fire station in High Wycombe is of a poor standard, and has been determined to be the poorest condition fire station across its portfolio as part of a stock condition exercise.

In response to this, the Authority is considering what options it has to improve the condition of the station. In the short term the Authority is considering minor refurbishment work in order to rectify the most significant deficiencies.

The Authority will need to consider its longer-term options to bring this station up to an adequate standard. This might include either a substantial refurbishment, or the replacement with a new fire station on the same or different site.

The Authority should ensure that it continues to monitor the condition of this fire station, and reports on options for rectification to members so they may make an informed decision on what path to take.

For the remainder of the estate, whilst no specific concerns in respect of estate quality were identified, the Authority continues to invest in its estate, with refurbishment work over drill towers being the main area of capital investment during 2024-25.



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