

**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

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Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive  
Louise Harrison

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To: The Members of the Executive Committee

6 July 2026

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND  
PUBLIC**

Please note the content of Page 2  
of this Agenda Pack.

To contact our Communication  
Team, please email  
[cteam@bucksfire.gov.uk](mailto:cteam@bucksfire.gov.uk)

Dear Councillor

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** of the **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY** to be held in **MEETING ROOM 1, HEADQUARTERS, STOCKLAKE, AYLESBURY, BUCKS HP20 1BD**, on **WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2026 at 10.00 AM** when the business set out overleaf will be transacted.

Yours faithfully

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

Graham Britten  
Director of Legal and Governance

**Health and Safety:**

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

Councillors: Geary, Hall, Hughes, Hussain N, Khan, Monger, Rouse and Stuchbury



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## **Recording of the meeting**

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

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

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

## **Adjournment and Rights to Speak – Public**

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

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

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

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

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

## **Rights to Speak - Members**

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

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

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

## **Questions**

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

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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

## **AGENDA**

### **Item No:**

**1. Election of Chairman**

To elect a Chairman for 2026/27

**2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

To appoint a Vice-Chairman for 2026/27

**3. Apologies**

**4. Minutes**

To approve, and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 18 March 2026 (Item 4) **(Pages 7 - 14)**

**5. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes**

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

**6. 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.

**7. Questions**

To receive questions in accordance with Standing Order SOA7.

**8. Budget Monitoring Report April 2025 - March 2026 (Provisional Outturn)**

To consider Item 8 **(Pages 15 - 32)**

**9. Recruitment Update July 2026**

To consider Item 9 **(Pages 33 - 44)**

**10. 2026-2027 Annual Delivery Plan Update**

To consider Item 10 **(Pages 45 - 64)**

**11. Date of next meeting**

To note that the next meeting of the Executive Committee will be held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 at 10 am.

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

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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Minutes of the Meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY held on WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2026 at 10.00 AM.

**Present:** Councillors Bailey (Vice-Chair), Hall, Hussain N, McLean, Monger (Chair), Rouse and Stuchbury

**Officers:** L Harrison (Chief Fire Officer), S Tuffley (Deputy Chief Fire Officer), M Hemming (Director of Finance and Assets), R Davidson (Director of People), G Britten (Director of Legal and Governance), D Buchanan (Assistant Chief Fire Officer), A Hussain (Head of Finance and Assets), A Carter (Head of Service Improvement), A Collett (Head of People Services), A Burch (Head of Prevention and Protection) P Scanes (Head of Response and Resilience) Z Ahmed (People Business Partner) and K Nellist (Democratic Services Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillor Priestley

The Chairman advised that although members of the public were able to attend and observe in person, following the meeting, a video recording would be uploaded to the Authority's YouTube Channel.

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

## **EX33 MINUTES**

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday 4 February 2026 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## **EX34 MATTER ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Chairman advised Members of the following matters arising from the previous minutes: -

**EX26 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) 2026/27 TO 2030/31** - The Director of Finance and Assets would come back with the detailed movements across some of those lines mentioned. It may be to do with operational training moving from Service Delivery to the People Directory – The Director of Finance and Assets advised that this

information had been presented to Members at the Fire Authority meeting the following week.

The Head of Finance and Assets advised that it was approved by the Thames Valley Fire Control Service Joint Committee Members of all three Services back in December 2025. He was happy to share more details of what the budget consisted of and what the capital programme was – The Head of Finance and Assets advised that this information had been sent to Members.

**EX30 MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES 2026/27** - A Member asked if the allowance amount paid to Members was reported on the website - The Democratic Services Officer advised it was and shared the link with the Member after the meeting.

**EX35 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

None.

A Member felt there was not enough business being put through the Executive Committee as there were only two items on the agenda today, and therefore not enabling enough scrutiny. Should Group Leaders have a conversation with officers about how the Executive Committee could be doing more scrutiny.

The Chairman advised that he had discussed with officers his own views on the structure of committees and the scale of membership and would like to see a more radical review of the way in which the Authority worked in relation to the Service.

**EX36 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT APRIL 2025 – JANUARY 2026**

The Lead Member for Finance and Assets, Information Security and IT introduced the report and advised Members that this report represented the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as of 31 January 2026, together with the projected outturn position for the financial year. The forecast slippage on the capital programme had increased by £1m since the last report. Delays in obtaining planning consent for the new local training venue indicated that minimal spend would be incurred during the current year, with the majority of spend forecast for 2026/27 and the remainder in 2027/28.

The revenue underspend continued to be driven from additional investment returns and other one-off income. These were the reduced costs of the Airwave system following the ruling by the Competition and Markets Authority, and some support staff posts that had been vacant at various points during the year. The year end revenue underspend was forecast to be £311k. As per recommendation 2, it was recommended that £257k of this underspend was transferred to the future funding reserve to support resourcing the Annual Delivery Plan for 2026/27.

The Head of Finance and Assets highlighted to Members that it was not normal to be bringing a report as at the end of January, when there was already one presented to Members at the end of December 2025. However, there was a question asked about resources and how officers were going to utilise the underspend. The Director of Finance and Assets had said at the last meeting there was work being done in the background to identify resources that would be needed to help with the delivery of the Annual Plan and this report highlighted exactly what was needed for next year. £257k had been identified to put into reserves to fund one-off costs to help complete the Annual Delivery Plan for 2026/27 and further details were provided in table 8.

A Member asked why the Westcott project had not moved forward.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that apart from some badger issues, ecology surveys needed to be completed but could only be done at certain times of the year and they were being undertaken now. There had recently been some positive feedback from the Planning Officer around the air quality report that was undertaken, which showed there would be minimal impact on the air quality in the area. The planning feedback had been positive so far and officers should know further in the next few months.

A Member said they would welcome a standing item on the agenda for an update on the Westcott training centre, as verbal updates were not giving Members enough ability to scrutinise the work.

A Member felt it would be good to understand why Members were being asked to support the transfer from

reserves for back-office staff, and could Members have more details about the Industrial Action Planning Officer role and why Members were not having discussions about using that reserve to invest in frontline firefighter capability both Wholetime and On-Call.

The Director of Finance and Assets advised that at a previous Committee meeting, officers had committed to reviewing the wholetime establishment to work out what was the right number going forward. The roles proposed here were fixed term roles and obviously, it was very difficult to have fixed term wholetime firefighters.

The Industrial Action Planning Officer was a very short-term, three-month role, as the Service needed to periodically update its plans, given recent information around potential industrial action within surrounding services. In terms of back-office staff, a lot of the roles were supporting projects that were going to benefit the frontline as well. The IT Delivery Manager was primarily concerned with the Westcott Training Centre and the Command-and-Control replacement of the Thames Valley Fire Control system software. They were key roles to deliver the organisational objectives moving forward.

The Head of Finance and Assets advised with regard to the underspend; it was one offs and tended to go into the capital reserves. With the MTFP that was presented last month and capital investment, the reserves would drop down to £2m-£2.5m and it would be prudent to try and build it up.

Officers would be reviewing next year and would proactively look to bring in similar recommendations to try and push forward projects. Treasury was £700k and the Airwave costs had reduced about £350k, and next year's budget had been reduced by £350k. In terms of treasury, it depended on what the base rate was and how much the Authority had to invest to get the best possible return. As an organisation, officers would try and be more proactive to get some of that money spent.

A Member asked if there was a plan that Members would be taken through around industrial action, was it on the work plan for the Executive Committee.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that as the Committee would be aware, the Service had a resilience contract to support the risk and to help manage any threat of industrial action.

Officers know there was potentially a risk ramping up in bordering services at present. There was a large amount of work that needed to be done to ensure readiness and preparedness was in place.

A Member asked if there was a trend with bank shifts rising.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that officers monitor bank shifts on a monthly basis through internal boards. It was subject to fluctuation seasonally and peak leave periods. In quarter three there was quite high sickness absence, but January, February and March had been really positive in terms of both wholetime appliance availability and bank shift usage. What officers were working on was trying to iron out those fluctuations and this was something addressed to some extent in revisions to the leave policy. There was more work to be done in terms of impacts of training and other absences to keep it more predictable.

A Member asked if there had been a separate briefing on the industrial action risk and planning.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised there had been no briefing, but the Corporate Risk Register had been updated at the Overview and Audit Committee meeting last week, with the increased risk of industrial action.

RESOLVED –

1. That the provisional outturn forecast for the Authority as of 31 January 2026 be noted.
2. That a transfer of £0.257m to the Future Funding Reserve to support resourcing the Annual Delivery Plan 2026-27 as detailed in Appendix A – Table 8, be approved.

### **EX37 GENDER AND ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORT 2025**

The Lead Member for People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance advised Members that she was pleased to introduce the Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap Report for 2025. Whilst this report fulfilled the Authority's statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, it was also something more important, it was a reflection of how equitable and representative the Service was as an organisation and where it still needed to improve. The data showed that the gender pay gap had increased this year

with both mean and median figures rising. This was not about unequal pay for equal work. However, it does point to the ongoing structural issues, particularly around representation at senior levels and across key parts of the Service. There were very positive signs, the ethnicity pay gap had improved and that reflected progress in areas where focussed effort had been applied.

The introduction of the quarterly equality, diversity and inclusion dashboard was a welcome step, and it gave this Authority a stronger basis for oversight, but with that must come more clear expectations on measurable progress, leadership accountability and sustained delivery over time, because ultimately, this was about trust. Trust from the workforce and trust from the communities it served that it was serious about fairness, opportunity and representation.

The Chairman thanked the Lead Member for People, Equality and Diversity and Assurance as she was not standing for re-election in May in Milton Keynes and took the opportunity on behalf of the Executive Committee and the full Authority to thank her for her very active and valued contribution in the Lead Member Role over the past year.

The People Business Partner advised Members that as a public sector organisation, the Authority was required to publish its gender pay gap data each year using a snapshot date of 31 March. The figures for 2025 showed that the mean gender pay gap had increased from 9.6% to 11.5%, and the median from 7.5% to 8.7%. Despite this movement, this was lower than the UK average gender pay gap, which stood at 12.8% for 2025. All calculations had been completed using the prescribed UK Gender Pay Gap methodology set out by the Government Equalities Office, ACAS and the Local Government Association, ensuring consistency and compliance with statutory requirements.

This year's movement was largely explained by temporary structural factors, including a senior vacancy in the People Directorate, a director appointment during the reporting period, and the Chief Fire Officer's reclassification from support services to operational. In operational roles, women earned slightly more than men on average, with a mean gap of -2.8%, while in support services the gap was

higher at 17.7%, driven by more men in senior roles and more women working part time.

To support more timely monitoring, the Service was introducing quarterly gender pay gap reporting through the EDI Dashboard. Officers had also voluntarily published ethnicity pay gap data, which this year showed a mean gap of -1.32% and a median of 2.68%.

Alongside this, ongoing initiatives included the all-female firefighter intake, strengthened support networks, expanded mentoring and the THRIVE Leadership Programme. All were helping to build an inclusive culture and support long term progress.

From April 2026, employers with 250 or more employees would have the option to produce and publish a voluntary action plan alongside their gender pay gap data. These would become mandatory from spring 2027, subject to secondary legislation.

The purpose of action plans was to support employers to take effective action to improve workplace gender equality, advancing equality of opportunity between male and female employees.

A Member asked if there was scope to look at how the Service develops people returning from parental leave and effectively develops people working part time.

The Director of People advised Members that in terms of return to work after a period out of the business, or people who may want to get succession planning or talent management throughout the Service, this was something that was definitely driven hard over the last twelve months. This was a snapshot from March 2025. Part of the new approach to inclusion and making sure that the workplace was a pleasant one, was looking at how to develop staff and how to improve the skill set they had to maximise their benefit to the Service. This was still a work in progress.

The Director of People advised that in terms of monitoring and making sure officers were assessing staff needs and data, there were two parts to it. The governance aspects of it, reporting through the People Delivery Group, looking at metrics, but also locally, looking at people's personal circumstances which were taken into account as well.

Officers were very focussed on making sure that staff were supported when they needed it.

A Member asked about the support services gap, it highlighted the fact that the appointment of the Director of People was likely to have had an impact on it, but conversely, the appointment of the Chief Fire Officer, had not had an impact on the operational employee gap. Could officers confirm from the pay gap report they had really reviewed and challenged whether the pay rates that were being applied to females versus males in the support structure remained appropriate and that there was no bias or activity going on there that would give Members cause for concern.

The Director of People advised that the People Business Partner had done a lot of work over the last six months regarding support staff pay scales and looking at the appropriate level of pay for particular jobs.

A Member asked when the Service advertised job roles, was it transparent about pay levels for those roles in the advert.

The Director of People confirmed it was.

A Member asked about the plans which were being undertaken, and the one that was ensuring the 2025-30 CRMP supported more detailed annual departmental delivery plans, were these being actioned.

The Director of People advised that the local delivery plans go through the People Delivery Group, and the data was assessed there.

RESOLVED –

1. That the content of the Gender Pay Gap report 2025 is noted, and it is confirmed that the data will be submitted to the Government website (gov.uk) in line with statutory reporting requirements.
2. That the ethnicity pay gap 2025, as detailed in Appendix two, be noted.

THE CHAIRMAN CLOSED THE MEETING AT 10.44 AM



# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 15 July 2026

**Report title:** Budget Monitoring Report April 2025 - March 2026 (Provisional Outturn)

**Lead Member:** Councillor Niknam Hussain

**Report sponsor:** Mark Hemming

**Author and contact:** Asif Hussain, [ahussain@bucksfire.gov.uk](mailto:ahussain@bucksfire.gov.uk), 01296 744421

**Action:** Decision.

## **Recommendations:**

1. That the provisional outturn forecast for the Authority as of 31 March 2026 be noted.
  2. That the slippage of £7.479m on the capital programme is approved to be carried forward into 2026/27.
  3. That the underspend of £0.493m is transferred into Revenue Contribution to Capital Reserve (RCCO) to cover the following capital purchases. The split will be as follow:
    - £0.138m to cover the purchase of 5 white fleet vehicles.
    - £0.105m to cover the purchase of a telehandler and associated equipment.
    - £0.250m to be transferred into RCCO to fund future capital programmes.
  4. That a transfer of £0.098m into the future funding reserve be approved.
  5. That £0.501m be transferred from the Workforce planning reserve to RCCO reserve.
  6. That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer to authorise any late changes to the movements in reserves and capital slippage amounts resulting from accounting adjustments needing to be made during the year-end closedown process.
  7. That should any changes to the amounts referred to above be required, then the Chief Finance Officer will report these to Members at the next available meeting.
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## **Executive summary:**

The report in Appendix A sets out the Authority's revenue and capital spending position as at 31 March 2026, together with the provisional outturn position for the financial year.

The figures presented in Appendix A remain subject to final audit review and confirmation of any accounting adjustments prior to the final position being confirmed.

The provisional outturn position for the year is a net underspend of £0.493m. This reflects an underspend on income and expenditure of £1.103m, partially offset by a funding

variance of £0.610m. The favourable expenditure variance is primarily driven by vacancies across support roles and reduced on-call costs and reduction in Airwave costs, although partially offset by pressures within wholetime staffing and agency costs used to maintain service continuity. The underspend also reflects the release of provisions at year end totalling £0.340m, where amounts were either lower than originally anticipated or, following audit review, no longer required.

In addition, higher-than-budgeted investment income has contributed positively to the outturn position. Treasury performance exceeded expectations by £0.724m, reflecting stable market conditions and higher cash balances during the year, which also removed the need to draw £0.501m from reserves as originally planned.

The funding position includes a shortfall of £0.109m, arising mainly from reductions in central government grants, including the withdrawal of the Airwave grant and a reduction in pension grant funding. This was partially mitigated by additional income from business rates reconciliation at year end.

The capital programme for 2025–26 totalled £8.843m, with a provisional outturn of £1.335m, resulting in slippage of £7.479m into future years. This was largely attributable to delays in securing planning permission for the Westcott training centre project, which remained outstanding, delays in the delivery of vehicles, alongside other schemes awaiting the outcomes of strategic reviews and business cases.

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

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

**Legal implications:** None.

**Privacy and security implications:** None.

**Duty to collaborate:** None.

**Health and safety implications:** None.

**Environmental implications:** None.

**Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:** None.

**Consultation and communication:** None.

**Background papers:** Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2028/29, Fire Authority Meeting 12 February 2025 <https://bucksfire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/FIRE-AUTHORITY-AGENDA-AND-REPORTS-12-FEBRUARY-2025-INCLUDING-LATE-URGENT-ITEMS-1-2-AND-3.pdf> (pp.31-45) and [https://bucksfire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Item-8a\\_Revised-Appendices-1-and-2-Final.pdf](https://bucksfire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Item-8a_Revised-Appendices-1-and-2-Final.pdf)

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Protective Marking</b>
A	Appendix A – Budget Monitoring Report April 2025 – March 2026	None
B	Appendix B - Detail to Support Recommendation 3 and 4	None

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## Appendix A Service Overview

Table 1 | Budget and forecast outturn for the end of the 2025-26 financial year

Subjective Area	Full Year Budget £m	Actual Year to Date £m	Projected Year End Variance £m
Employee Costs	32.782	32.819	0.037
Non-Employee Costs	10.207	9.067	-1.140
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>42.989</b>	<b>41.886</b>	<b>-1.104</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-42.989</b>	<b>-42.379</b>	<b>0.610</b>
<b>Net Position</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-0.493</b>	<b>-0.493</b>

- The total approved expenditure budget is £42.989m, with a provisional outturn of £41.886m, resulting in an underspend of £1.104m.
- The funding budget is £42.989m, while the provisional outturn stands at £42.379m, resulting in a shortfall of £0.610m. This variance is primarily attributable to net reduced grant allocations of £0.110m and additional investment income has eliminated the need to draw the £0.501m from reserves that was originally planned.
- The underspend includes the release of certain provisions at year end that were either lower than originally allocated or, following audit review, requested to be taken out of provisions. The reversal of provisions totals £0.340m and represents the majority of the movement in underspend since the previous monitoring report.
- Taking both expenditure and funding into account, **the net position is a provisional underspend of £0.493m.**
- The service has plans to utilise this underspend to purchase several white fleet vehicles instead of leasing them (£0.138m) and purchase a telehandler (£0.105m) (see Appendix C) with the residual balance being transferred into capital reserves to fund the future capital programme.

## Employee Costs

Table 2| Direct and indirect employee subjective budgets

Subjective Area	Full Year Budget £m	Actual Year to Date £m	Projected Year End Variance £m
Wholetime	22.758	23.096	0.338
On-Call	1.505	1.436	-0.069
Support	6.807	6.441	-0.366
Technicians	0.499	0.431	-0.068
Sessional	0.084	0.075	-0.009
Agency	0.025	0.133	0.108
Indirect Staff costs	1.104	1.206	0.102
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>32.782</b>	<b>32.819</b>	<b>0.037</b>

- **Wholetime £0.338m Overspend** - The overspend reflects current staffing levels exceeding the budgeted establishment. Since Q1, we have had several retirements/leavers that have reduced the overspend forecast for the year. A detailed workforce plan is provided on page 5 to illustrate the anticipated staffing trajectory.
- **On-Call £0.069m Underspend** - primarily attributed to vacant posts and associated allowances, which are activity and training-dependent.
- **Support £0.366m Underspend** - currently under budget due to vacant posts that were in the process of being advertised and recruited. To mitigate service disruption, some roles have been temporarily filled via agency contracts.
- **Agency £0.108m Overspend** - Agency costs have exceeded budget expectations, largely due to the temporary filling of vacant support roles. While this ensures continuity of service, it represents a short-term financial pressure. These costs are expected to decline as permanent recruitment is completed.
- **Indirect Staff Costs £0.102m Overspend** – The overspend relates to individuals receiving a refund of their reform pension contributions which have been fully funded from central government and the income received is captured in table 3.

**Table 3 | Non-Employee subjective budgets**

Subjective Area	Full Year Budget £m	Actual Year to Date £m	Projected Year End Variance £m
Supplies and Services	5.221	5.217	-0.003
Premises	2.378	2.449	0.072
Transport	1.337	1.330	-0.007
Capital Financing	2.922	2.965	0.043
Income	-1.650	-2.895	-1.244
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>10.207</b>	<b>9.067</b>	<b>-1.140</b>

- **Additional income of £1.244m** was achieved, primarily driven by higher-than-budgeted investment returns. This reflects the Bank of England base rate remaining relatively stable during the year, which supported stronger investment yields.
- This additional income also includes income from seconded officers and one-off pension grant funding. These have been applied to offset salary and indirect staff costs.

**Table 4 | Ringfenced Grant Funding**

Subjective Area	Full Year Allocation £m	Actual Year to Date £m	Residual Grant Remaining £m
Protection Uplift	0.305	0.221	0.084
New Burdens Remediation	0.117	0.000	0.117
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.421</b>	<b>0.221</b>	<b>0.200</b>

Ringfenced funding is allocated for specific Protection related activity purposes and received during the financial year. The Protection Uplift Grant is intended to enhance services’ protection capability and delivery, in alignment with locally agreed Corporate Risk Management Plans and risk-based inspection programmes. In November, the Service successfully secured additional protection grant funding to support remediation efforts for residential buildings identified with unsafe cladding. The funding is predominantly used to fund additional posts and training in order to facilitate and enhance protection capability. Any residual balances are carried forward into 2026/27 financial year.

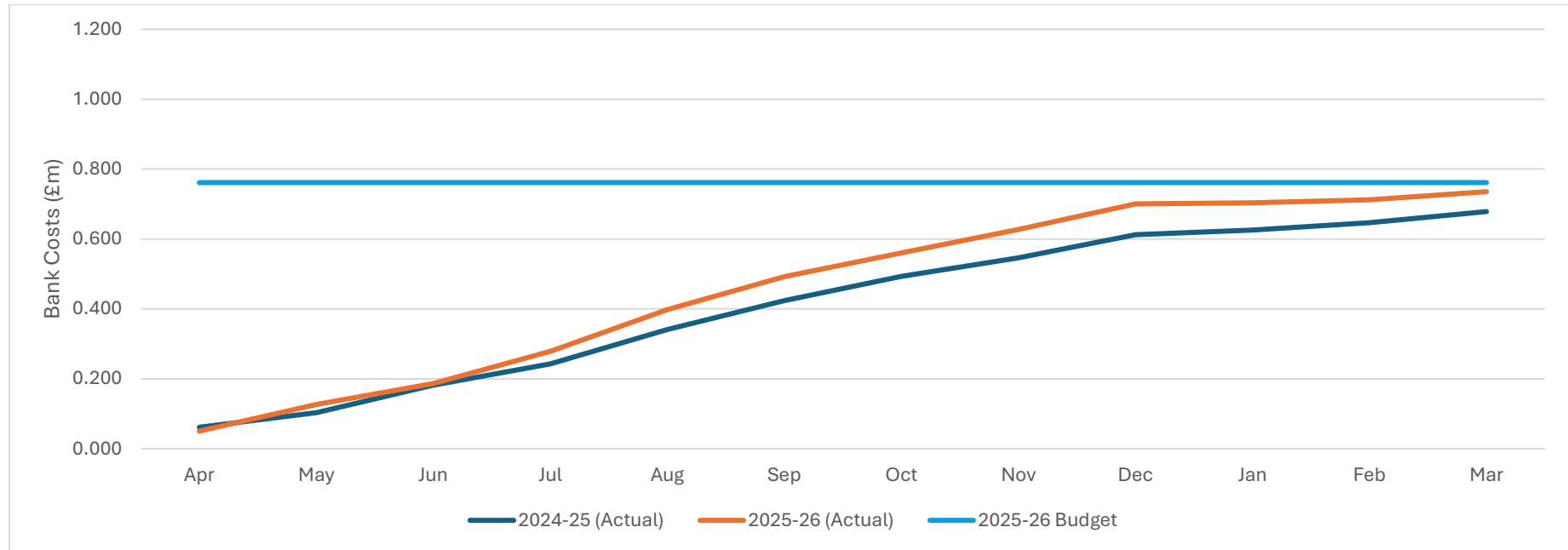
**Table 5 | Treasury**

Investment Type	Investment Portfolio Amount (as at 31 March 2026) £m	2025/26 Average Investment Portfolio Amount £m	2025/26 Average Interest Rate	Total Interest Received for 2025/26 £m
<u>Fixed Term Investments:</u>				
- Banks	11.000	12.151	4.39%	0.533
- Local Authorities	5.000	3.679	4.73%	0.174
- Building Societies	4.000	4.384	4.14%	0.182
<u>Variable Term investments:</u> <i>(Money Market Funds (MMF) / Call Accounts, cash available same day / within 24hrs)</i>	6.907	7.082	4.32%	0.305
Bank Current Account	0.050	0.174	0.41%	0.001
Other Income <i>(Airwaves credits interest / PWLB early repayment discount)</i>				0.130
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.957</b>	<b>27.469</b>		<b>1.324</b>
<b>Budget</b>				<b>0.600</b>
<b>(+) Over / (-) Under Achievement</b>				<b>0.724</b>

Treasury overachieved by £0.724m, driven by a slower-than-anticipated reduction in market rates and the availability of higher-than-usual balances for investment, reflecting the upfront receipt of pension remedy grant funding and slippage on the capital programme. As a result, the Service did not need to utilise the planned £0.501m transfer from reserves.

## Bank Costs

Chart 1 | Bank costs and forecast vs. budget



*Note: The figures presented above exclude National Insurance (NI) contributions.*

Chart 1 presents a comparative analysis of bank costs incurred in 2025-26 against the corresponding period in 2024-25. Bank costs for 2025/26 are slightly higher than the previous year's costs for the same period. The operational leave policy has been revised which should see a reduction in bank costs in the future.

## Wholetime Establishment

Chart 2 | Wholetime Establishment Roadmap

### Global Establishment Actual and Planned

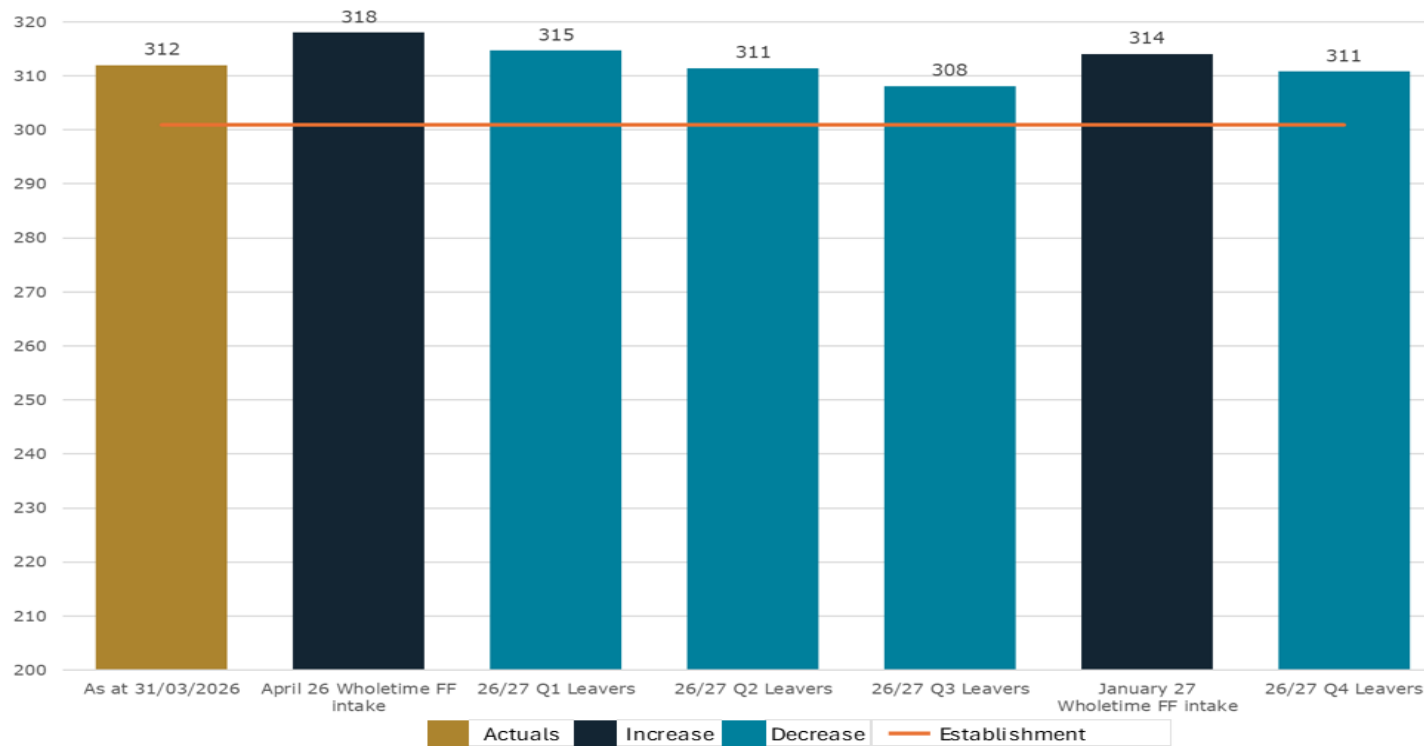


Chart 2 illustrates the wholetime operational establishment as of 31 March 2026 through to March 2027 taking into consideration projected retirees, leavers, transfers and recruitment of apprentices.

## Funding

Table 6 | Funding by source and forecast outturn position

Funding	Full Year Budget £m	Actual Year to Date £m	Projected Year End Variance £m
Government Funding	-4.111	-4.111	0.000
Fire Specific Grants	-2.237	-2.038	0.199
Business Rates	-5.995	-6.085	-0.089
Top-up Grant	-1.615	-1.615	0.000
Council Tax	-28.530	-28.530	0.000
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	-0.501	0.000	0.501
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-42.989</b>	<b>-42.379</b>	<b>0.610</b>

A funding shortfall of approximately **£0.110m** was recorded for the 2025–26 financial year. This arose from changes in central grant allocations, namely:

- **Airwave Grant:** A reduction of approximately £50k following the full withdrawal of this funding stream.
- **Pension Grant:** A decrease of approximately £150k compared to the previous year’s allocation.
- **Business Rates Reconciliation:** This was partially offset by additional funding of £90k, primarily resulting from the year-end reconciliation of business rates collections from prior years.

The pension grant shortfall is primarily attributable to an update in the data used within grant allocation methodology, which resulted in a lower overall award. Importantly, notification of these changes was received only after the annual budget had been set, limiting the opportunity to adjust financial plans in advance. The revised pension grant allocations have been factored into future medium term financial plans.

**Transfer from Reserves** - It was originally planned to transfer £0.501m from reserves to support planned expenditure for 2025/26. However, due to the significant overachievement of treasury returns, this transfer is no longer required. It is recommended to transfer this into the revenue contribution to capital reserve to fund future capital projects (see Recommendation 5).

## Reserves

Table 7 | Reserves (including capital funding)

Reserve	Opening Balance (31 March 2025) £m	Use Of / (Contribution To) £m	Transfers Between Reserves £m	Projected Year End Balance £m
General Fund Balance	-2,040	0	0	-2,040
<b>Non-earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>-2,040</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-2,040</b>
Control Room Reserve (*)	-479	-22	0	-501
Future Funding Reserve	-205	-150	0	-355
Transformation Reserve	-3,298	0	3,298	0
USAR Reserve	-817	0	817	0
Workforce Planning Reserve	-1,175	0	935	-240
<b>Earmarked Reserves (Revenue)</b>	<b>-5,974</b>	<b>-172</b>	<b>5,050</b>	<b>-1,096</b>
Usable Capital Receipts Reserve	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	-6,894	-1,861	-5,050	-13,805
<b>Earmarked Reserves (Capital)</b>	<b>-6,894</b>	<b>-1,861</b>	<b>-5,050</b>	<b>-13,805</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>-14,908</b>	<b>-2,033</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-16,941</b>

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

The projected balance in the Workforce Planning Reserve will be fully utilised during 2026-27 to fund temporary roles that will continue into that year as per the approved medium term financial plan.

## Capital Monitoring

Table 8 | Capital forecasts

Subjective Area	Full Year Budget £m	Provisional Outturn £m	Projected Year End Variance £m	Projected c/fwd to 2026-27 £m
Property	7.408	0.462	0.000	6.946
<b>Total Property Portfolio</b>	<b>7.408</b>	<b>0.462</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>6.946</b>
Operational Red Fleet Vehicles	0.928	0.677	0.000	0.250
Operational White Fleet Vehicles	0.114	0.027	0.000	0.087
<b>Total Fleet Vehicles</b>	<b>1.042</b>	<b>0.704</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.337</b>
Operational Equipment	0.185	0.085	-0.005	0.095
ICT Equipment	0.208	0.084	-0.023	0.101
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<b>0.393</b>	<b>0.169</b>	<b>-0.028</b>	<b>0.196</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>8.843</b>	<b>1.335</b>	<b>-0.028</b>	<b>7.479</b>

- **Property:** £6m was carried forward into 2026–27 in respect of the Westcott project, reflecting the phasing of expenditure across financial years. The remaining slippage related to other capital projects that were awaiting the outcome of the On-call review and the business case for High Wycombe.

Details of planned delivery for Property Works and Operational Red Fleet Vehicles can be found on pages 11 and 12.

## Capital Monitoring – Property and Operational Red Fleet

Table 9 | Delivery progress

Complete
  On track
  Risk to progress
  - Not due to be started

Project	Start Date	End Date	Status	Commentary <i>(mandatory if risk to progress)</i>
<b>Property – b/fwd from 2024-25</b>				
Drill tower refurbishment	Apr-25	Mar-26		Chesham, Princes Risborough & Brill 'Complete'. Gerrards Cross completed and Beaconsfield Drill Tower will not proceed.  All Other Towers are deferred to 2026/27 & 2027/28.
Broughton – repair and resurface drill yard	Apr-25	Aug-25		
Multiple sites – fire door replacement programme	May-25	Apr-27		All sites surveyed with programme of works being developed, End Date changed to Apr-27
<b>Planned Property Works 2025-26</b>				
Newport Pagnell – Appliance bay Asbestos Removal & New Ceiling, Fire Door Replacement plus, Guttering & Downpipes.	Apr-25	Mar-26		
Amersham – roof, guttering and downpipes	Apr-25	Mar-26		Works will be completed in 2026/27
Stokenchurch – roof, guttering and downpipes	Apr-26	Mar-27	-	Will not proceed at this stage "on call review"
Chesham – Roof Repairs, M&E replacement plus general refurbishment.	Apr-25	Mar-26		
Brill – drainage	May-25	Jun-25		

Various sites – EDI/contaminants improvements	Jun-25	Mar-26		
<b>Additional Works 2025-26</b>				
Remodelling works - Winslow, Olney & Princes Risborough	-	-	-	Princes Risborough - M&E works completed. Other works subject to outcome of oncall consultation followed by options appraisals with contractors.
Emergency Property Works 2025-26				
West Ashland – male shower block and wall failures	Apr-25	Jul-25		
Broughton – drainage	Apr-25	May-25		
<b>Broughton – Heater / Air-con Unit</b>	<b>Nov-25</b>	<b>Dec-25</b>		
Various Sites – DSEAR improvements	Jun-25	Jun-25		
Major Projects 2025-26				
<b>Westcott – construction of new training centre</b>	<b>Apr-25</b>	<b>Mar-27</b>		
High Wycombe – Options appraisal	Aug-25	Jan-26		Options to be presented to Authority July 26
Operational Red Fleet				
Rural Firefighting Vehicle (x 2)	Apr-25	Sep-25		
Water Carier (x 2)	Apr-25	Feb-26		Delays in build of vehicles, delivery expected in Q1 2026/27

## Appendix B - Detail to Support Recommendation 3 and 4

### Proposed Transfer to the Future Funding Reserve and Purchase of white and red fleet assets

- **Purchase of White Fleet Vehicles** - Workshops undertook a review of leasing arrangements for white fleet vehicles compared to outright purchase. The analysis concluded that purchasing vehicles is now more financially viable, as leasing costs have increased significantly in recent years. Ownership enables the Service to utilise vehicles over a longer period, maximising value for money, and provides the added benefit of realising a residual value upon disposal at the end of their useful life. However, a blended approach will be adopted for officer cars, combining both leasing and purchasing, as procuring all vehicles outright would not be financially viable. This will fund the purchase of five vehicles, providing forecast savings of £70k over the next five years.
- **Telehandler (Red Fleet)** - this will introduce a specialist heavy-lifting and multi-terrain capability, primarily addressing risks and operational limitations currently experienced during large animal rescue incidents, as well as broader technical rescue scenarios including structural fire incidents and unstable environments.
- **Transfer to Future Funding Reserve** – The £0.098m predominantly relates to carried forward training, lease of a crew welfare vehicle, and associated equipment.

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

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**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee 15 July 2026

**Report title:** Recruitment Update July 2026

**Lead Member:** Naseem Khan – Lead Member for People

**Report sponsor:** Ronnie Davidson – Director of People

**Author and contact:** Anna Collett – Head of People / acollett@bucksfire.gov.uk

**Action:** Noting.

**Recommendations:**

That the content of this report and appendix be noted.

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**Executive summary:**

This report provides an overview of recruitment activity across the Service, demonstrating continued progress in supporting workforce resilience, operational capacity and longer-term workforce planning. Recruitment activity is being managed within the context of affordability, organisational risk and future service requirements.

Key highlights include:

- Wholetime recruitment has attracted 541 applications for firefighter roles and 23 transferee applications, supporting the development of a sustainable talent pipeline to inform future workforce planning decisions. Final intake numbers will be determined through evidence-based workforce planning, taking account of potential vacancies, retirements, operational demand, organisational requirements and financial considerations.
- On-Call recruitment remains a workforce challenge; to address ongoing attraction and conversion issues, a redesigned recruitment model is proposed from September 2026, aimed at simplifying the recruitment process, reducing candidate attrition and improving time-to-hire.
- Support staff recruitment continues to progress, with key appointments made across several critical service areas including fleet, public safety, business fire safety, ICT and operational support. These appointments have strengthened organisational capacity and service resilience.
- Recruitment processes remain efficient, with an average Time to Hire of 27 days for support staff vacancies, reflecting effective collaboration between hiring managers and the People Directorate and supporting timely vacancy filling. However, external appointments can create extended temporary vacancies within the establishment due to candidate

notice periods and the time required to complete pre-employment checks, including DBS clearance and medical assessments.

Overall, recruitment activity across all workforce groups continues to support the Service's strategic objective of maintaining a capable, resilient and sustainable workforce. Current activity is helping to build sustainable talent pipelines to support future workforce planning decisions, with future recruitment recommendations continuing to be informed by workforce planning analysis, operational requirements, financial sustainability and organisational priorities.

**Financial implications:**

Recruitment activity continues to be managed within the context of affordability, workforce risk and the Service's longer-term resource planning assumptions

**Risk management:**

Recruitment activity continues to be managed within the Service's wider workforce planning. Current recruitment campaigns are designed to mitigate the risks associated with workforce shortages, skills gaps and reduced operational resilience. The Wholetime recruitment campaign is supporting the development of a sustainable talent pipeline, providing greater flexibility to respond to future vacancies, workforce movements and emerging operational requirements. Ongoing recruitment activity continues to support workforce planning and organisational resilience.

The proposed On-Call recruitment re-design seeks to address a key workforce risk by improving candidate attraction and conversion rates within an area of longstanding recruitment challenge.

**Legal implications:**

All recruitment activity must continue to comply with employment, equality and health and safety legislation, and with the Service's recruitment and selection procedures.

**Privacy and security implications:**

There are no anticipated privacy and security risks arising directly from this proposal beyond normal recruitment data handling requirements.

**Duty to collaborate:**

The paper has been informed through engagement with operational colleagues and benchmarking conversations with other fire and rescue services to understand common recruitment challenges and potential approaches.

**Health and safety implications:**

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – Recruitment and onboarding must continue to ensure safe systems of work, appropriate supervision, and suitable training for candidates.

Risk assessments will need to be reviewed and updated to reflect any changes to training, Have a Go days, assessment activity, and induction processes.

**Environmental implications:**

No environmental implications have been identified.

**Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:**

The On-Call recruitment re-design is expected to improve accessibility and inclusion by simplifying the recruitment process, reducing unnecessary barriers, and introducing more flexible and efficient approaches such as rolling recruitment and consolidated assessment activity. These changes are anticipated to support a broader and more diverse range of applicants, particularly across protected characteristics including sex, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and religion or belief.

Overall, the approach to recruitment supports improved workforce diversity, enhance operational resilience, and promote equality of opportunity within the recruitment process.

ED&I data from all recruitment campaigns is monitored and analysed to assess the effectiveness of attraction and selection activity, identify any barriers to participation or progression, and inform future recruitment and positive action initiatives to support a more diverse and representative workforce.

**Consultation and communication:**

Ongoing communication and engagement with stakeholders will support continuous improvement and ensure recruitment activity remains aligned with organisational needs and strategic objectives.

**Background papers:**

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Protective Marking</b>
1	Recruitment Update July 2026	None

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**Executive Summary**

Recruitment activity across Wholetime, On-Call and Support Staff workforces continues to support the Service's strategic workforce objectives and operational resilience. Recent campaigns have supported the development of a sustainable talent pipeline for Wholetime recruitment, helping to inform future workforce planning decisions, subject to organisational requirements and affordability. Work is also underway to enhance the effectiveness of On-Call recruitment through a revised recruitment model designed to improve candidate attraction and conversion. Support staff recruitment has continued to progress, with a number of key appointments secured across operational support functions and average Time to Hire remaining efficient. Future recruitment recommendations will continue to be informed by workforce planning analysis, financial considerations and organisational requirements. Recruitment activity continues to be managed within the context of affordability, workforce risk and the Service's longer-term resource planning assumptions.

**Recruitment Activity Dashboard:**

Recruitment Area	Current Position	Key Message
Wholetime	541 applications received	Sustainable talent pipeline to support future workforce planning decisions
Transferees	23 applications received	Provides access to experienced operational applicants for future workforce planning considerations.
On-Call	Establishment 59.75 FTE against 96 FTE budgeted	Re-design proposed to improve attraction and conversion
Support Staff	Key appointments made across operational support functions	Organisational capacity strengthened
Time to Hire	27-day average	Recruitment processes remain efficient

## **Wholetime Recruitment Update**

To support delivery of current and future operational requirements, the Service has taken a proactive and strategically aligned approach to Wholetime recruitment. Recruitment activity has been progressed for both Wholetime Firefighters (Apprentices) and competent Wholetime Transferees, enabling the Service to respond flexibly to establishment pressures, emerging workforce demand any potential vacancies within the current operational workforce.

The final number of appointments to be made through this campaign will be determined through an evidence-based workforce planning process. This will take account of current vacancy levels, forecast workforce movements, operational intelligence and wider resourcing risks. Recommendations will be presented to the People Delivery Group in July for consideration and approval, ensuring that recruitment decisions are aligned to both organisational need and available workforce planning data.

Both campaigns have now closed and are progressing through the relevant assessment and selection stages. The People Directorate continues to work closely with the Communications Team to ensure that targeted attraction activity and positive action measures are embedded throughout the recruitment process, supporting the Service's commitment to strengthening workforce resilience and broadening the reach of its applicant pool.

### **Application Volumes and Campaign Progress**

The Wholetime campaign has generated an encouraging level of market response, with 541 applications received. Of these, 410 applicants have been shortlisted to progress to the next stage of testing - the online Situational Judgement Test - supporting the development of a sustainable talent pipeline to inform future workforce planning decisions, subject to organisational requirements and affordability.

A total of 131 applicants were not shortlisted. These applicants did not meet one or more of the essential criteria required at the point of application. The primary reasons for non-shortlisting included not residing within the required 20-mile boundary of the service area, not holding the mandatory qualifications, or declaring an unspent criminal record. These criteria form part of the core eligibility standards for the Wholetime role and ensure that all candidates progressing in the process meet the baseline requirements for operational suitability and organisational policy compliance.

Transferee - The transferee recruitment campaign received a total of 23 applications from individuals seeking to join the organisation through direct entry. Following the

initial assessment of eligibility and competence, 18 applicants were successfully shortlisted to progress to the next stage of the process.

Five applicants were not shortlisted. These candidates did not meet the essential criteria required for transferee entry, which includes being fully competent in their current Wholetime role and currently serving within a recognised UK Fire and Rescue Service. In several cases, applicants were employed by other organisations, such as airport fire services, where operational competencies, training frameworks, and role expectations cannot be directly mapped across to national FRS standards. As a result, these applicants were not able to demonstrate the required equivalence for progression within the transferee process.

The transferee applications shortlisted include former BFRS employees seeking to return to the Service, providing a potential opportunity to bring existing organisational knowledge and operational experience back into the workforce.

The team are now working with Operational Training to schedule the next stage of role-related and behavioural workshop assessments. This coordinated approach will ensure that progression through the campaign remains aligned to operational need, assessment capacity and the wider workforce planning timetable.

### **Positive Action and Inclusion**

Positive action activity has continued throughout recruitment campaigns to support the attraction of applicants from under-represented groups and ensure recruitment opportunities are promoted as widely as possible. This includes targeted communications, engagement activities with “have a go days” and the provision of information to support applicants throughout the recruitment process. Outcomes from current campaigns will be analysed upon completion to assess the effectiveness of attraction activity and inform future workforce planning and inclusion initiatives.

### **Recruitment Attraction and Engagement Activity**

Recruitment attraction activity for the Wholetime campaign was supported by the Communications and Marketing Team, who co-ordinated an approach designed to promote firefighting as a purposeful, achievable and inclusive career. Activity was delivered through a range of channels, including digital content, targeted social media, email engagement, applicant information materials, community-facing activity and employee-led storytelling. This approach aimed to broaden awareness of the opportunity, support applicant understanding and encourage interest from a wider and more diverse audience.

Campaign performance indicates strong levels of reach and engagement. Between the initial teaser activity on 6 April 2026 and the close of applications on 7 June 2026, targeted social media advertising generated 144,596 impressions and directed 4,222

users to recruitment landing pages, with a cost per landing page view of between £0.07 and £0.10. This demonstrates that the campaign achieved cost-effective visibility and successfully directed prospective applicants towards further recruitment information.

During the same period, the dedicated Wholetime Firefighter recruitment webpage received 7,007 views from 3,661 active users, with an average engagement time of 1 minute and 44 seconds. This level of interaction suggests sustained audience interest throughout the campaign period and provides a useful evidence base for assessing the effectiveness of future attraction activity.

Targeted recruitment email campaigns also achieved click-through rates of 12.2% and 15.3%, significantly exceeding typical public sector benchmarks of around 5%. This indicates that the campaign content was effective in prompting recipients to seek further information and engage with the recruitment opportunity.

Overall, initial evaluation indicates that the campaign met its core attraction objectives, significantly exceeding the target range of 180–240 applicants and generating strong audience engagement. Analysis of applicant demographics is still being finalised; however, early indications show an increase in the volume of female applicants compared with previous campaigns.

This provides an opportunity to further understand the factors that influence applications from under-represented groups and to refine future attraction activity. Mechanisms such as the Community Insight Panel, once established, could provide valuable insight from communities, support the testing of campaign messaging and help identify whether any perceived or practical barriers may be influencing application decisions.

The learning from this campaign will inform future recruitment and attraction activity, supporting a more evidence-led approach to developing a diverse and sustainable talent pipeline. Future recruitment decisions will continue to be guided by workforce planning, operational demand, affordability and organisational need.

## **On-Call Firefighter Recruitment Update**

On-Call Firefighters play a critical role in maintaining emergency response capability across Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.

Sustaining an effective On-Call workforce remains a key workforce and operational resilience priority for the Service. In recent years, attraction and recruitment into On-Call roles has continued to be challenging, with intake levels remaining below the level required to support the establishment. The most recent recruitment cycle resulted in four new On-Call Firefighters joining the organisation, despite the significant organisational capacity required to deliver the full recruitment and assessment process.

A separate paper is being developed for presentation to July's People Delivery Group for approval of a redesigned On-Call Firefighter recruitment model, proposed to go live in September 2026. The revised process is intended to strengthen attraction, improve candidate conversion and support operational availability by modernising the recruitment journey and reducing avoidable barriers to progression.

This will be subject to ongoing evaluation to assess its impact on applicant conversion, time-to-hire and operational establishment levels, with findings informing future recruitment strategy.

The current recruitment model is lengthy and fragmented, with high levels of early-stage attrition. A significant number of applicants either do not access the online situational judgement tests, disengage before completion, or do not achieve the required pass mark. This limits conversion from initial interest to appointment and reduces the effectiveness of attraction activity.

Collectively, these challenges increase time-to-hire, reduce candidate conversion and create additional demand on recruitment, operational and On-Call teams. They also constrain the Service's ability to build a sustainable pipeline to address existing and forecast establishment gaps.

The redesigned model proposes a rolling, streamlined and candidate-centred recruitment process, with fewer early barriers and more consolidated assessment activity. The anticipated benefits include faster time-to-hire, improved candidate experience through fewer touchpoints and reduced scheduling burden, lower candidate drop-out by removing non-predictive early tests, and greater operational efficiency through simplified scheduling and reduced administrative overhead. Collectively, this approach is intended to improve accessibility, maintain a more consistent recruitment pipeline, better align recruitment activity with operational need, and strengthen the Service's employer brand by signalling a modern, professional and candidate-focused approach.

### **Support Staff Recruitment Update:**

Support staff recruitment activity has continued at a steady pace during the reporting period, supporting the organisation's broader workforce and service delivery objectives. The People Directorate has maintained close engagement with hiring managers to facilitate timely and compliant recruitment processes, ensuring vacancies progress efficiently through the recruitment pipeline. Current activity reflects a healthy mix of campaigns at various stages, including advertisement, assessment, and appointment.

A number of appointments have been secured across key support and specialist functions, including roles within fleet, public safety, business fire safety, ICT, and operational support. These appointments contribute to strengthening organisational capacity, enhancing service resilience, and ensuring the organisation is well positioned to meet current and future demands. Recruitment activity remains focused on attracting and retaining talent in critical roles, while supporting workforce sustainability across the Service.

### **Time to Hire Performance**

Time to Hire remains an important indicator of recruitment effectiveness, providing insight into the organisation's ability to attract and secure talent in a competitive labour market. During the reporting period, support staff recruitment campaigns achieved an average Time to Hire of 27 days, measured from vacancy advertisement to offer. This reflects a positive level of efficiency and demonstrates the effectiveness of current recruitment processes, however, external appointments can create extended temporary vacancies within the establishment due to candidate notice periods and the time required to complete pre-employment checks, including DBS clearance and medical assessments.

Performance during the period has been supported by a combination of streamlined recruitment activity, effective collaboration between recruiting managers and the People Directorate, and opportunities for internal progression. The recruitment approach has also maintained sufficient flexibility to ensure candidates are considered for roles where their skills and experience are most closely aligned to organisational requirements.

Overall, recruitment outcomes continue to support workforce sustainability and organisational resilience. While appointments to generalist and internally filled roles have progressed at pace, recruitment to more specialist positions has appropriately prioritised securing the best fit for the organisation and the individual. Ongoing monitoring of recruitment metrics, alongside engagement with hiring managers, will continue to inform workforce planning and identify opportunities to further enhance recruitment performance in alignment with organisational needs.

## **Conclusion**

Recruitment activity across all workforce groups continues to support the Service's strategic objective of maintaining a capable, resilient and sustainable workforce. Activity across Wholetime recruitment, planned improvements to the On-Call recruitment model and continued progress in filling support staff vacancies are helping to build sustainable talent pipelines to support future workforce planning decisions. Workforce planning activity will continue to inform recruitment recommendations, ensuring future decisions remain aligned to operational demand, financial sustainability, organisational risk and the delivery of strategic priorities.

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# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

**Meeting and date:** Executive Committee, 15 July 2026

**Report title:** 2026-2027 Annual Delivery Plan Update

**Lead Member:** Councillor Llew Monger, Chairman

**Report sponsor:** Simon Tuffley, Deputy Chief Fire Officer

**Author and contact:** Anne-Marie Carter, Head of Service Improvement

**Action:** Noting

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the 2026-2027 Annual Delivery Plan Update be noted.

**Executive summary:** This report provides Members with an overview of progress against the Annual Delivery Plan for 2026/27, viewed from a PMO assurance perspective. It focuses on our major projects, setting out what has been delivered this period, what is planned next, and where there are any emerging risks.

As this is the first quarter of the year, delivery activity is at an early stage. The focus during this period has been on mobilising projects, confirming scope and governance, and ensuring that plans are in place to support delivery over the year ahead.

There are currently 24 projects within the Annual Delivery Plan. This is the status of those projects as at the end of May 2026:

	Complete/ Evaluation	On Track	Risk to Progress	Not due to be started
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>

Overall, the projects are progressing as expected for this stage of the year. The On-Call Improvement Programme has moved into delivery and remains on track. The High Wycombe Station Redevelopment/Restoration has moved to green status and is progressing through early planning and due diligence activity. The Local Training Facility continues to face challenges in relation to planning and timelines, and this remains an area of focus.

The report also highlights a number of collaborative programmes; PPE renewal has moved to an amber status due to a delay in the delivery of the national framework.

**Financial implications:** The Medium term financial plan (MTFP) factored in the 26/27 Annual plan so there are no direct financial implications arising from this paper.

Financial positions for individual major projects are set out within the attached highlight reports, and any future requests for additional funding or approval will be progressed through the established governance.

**Risk management:** Risks, issues and dependencies are actively managed through the PMO's project controls and are summarised in each major project highlight report. The report provides Members with visibility of any material exceptions and the mitigating actions in place.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Any project-specific legal considerations will be addressed as part of the relevant procurement, contracts and business case.

**Privacy and security implications:** There are no privacy and security implications arising directly from this report. Any project-specific privacy/security assessments (e.g., DPIAs) will be completed where required within the scope of individual projects.

**Duty to collaborate:** A number of Annual Plan initiatives are delivered collaboratively, including the Thames Valley Fire Control replacement and national programmes (PPE framework and ESN). This supports interoperability and value for money across partner services.

**Health and safety implications:** There are no health and safety implications arising directly from this report. Any project-level health and safety impacts will be assessed and managed within the scope of individual projects and enabling works.

**Environmental implications:** There are no new environmental implications arising directly from this report. Any project-level health environmental impacts will be assessed and managed within the scope of individual projects.

**Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications:** There are no direct equality, diversity and inclusion implications arising from this report, which is provided for assurance purposes.

However, a number of projects within the Annual Delivery Plan have specific EDI considerations embedded in their development, including the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) where appropriate and ongoing engagement with affected staff and communities. This ensures that equality considerations are reflected in decision-making and service delivery as projects progress.

**Consultation and communication:** Major project work with the Marketing and Communications team to build a communication plan that takes into account the appropriate level of stakeholder engagement needed.

**Background papers:**

Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2030: [Community Risk Management Plan 2025-2030 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Annual Delivery Plan 2026-2027: [Annual Delivery Plan 2026-2027 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Fire Authority Meeting, 12 February 2026: 2026-27 Annual Delivery Plan: [FIRE AUTHORITY MEETING - 11 FEBRUARY 2026 - Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service](#)

Previous Update

Fire Authority Meeting, 10 June 2026: 2026-27 Annual Delivery Plan Update: [FIRE-AUTHORITY-ANNUAL-MEETING-AGENDA-AND-REPORTS-10-JUNE-2026-min.pdf](#)

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	2026-2027 Annual Delivery Plan Update – July 2026	N/A

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**Buckinghamshire  
Fire & Rescue Service**

*Making a difference together*

# 2026-2027 Annual Delivery Plan Update

PMO Assurance

July 2026

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# INTRODUCTION

This review provides Members with a view of progress across the Annual Plan's strategic objectives, Prevention, Protection, Response & Resilience and the enabling work across People, Finance & Assets, and Digital, Data & Technology.

It is written from a Portfolio Management Office (PMO) perspective, using a consistent, exception-based reporting approach to provide assurance on delivery.

This quarter focuses on our major projects, summarising what we have delivered, and the key priorities for the next quarter. It also highlights any material risks, issues, or dependencies that could affect delivery, alongside the actions being taken to manage them through established governance arrangements and performance monitoring.

The PMO exists to strengthen delivery assurance and organisational grip. It does this by applying consistent standards for planning and reporting, tracking delivery against milestones and measurable indicators, maintaining a transparent record of risks, issues, and dependencies, and ensuring timely escalation where delivery confidence reduces.

The PMO allocates appropriately trained project management professionals to priority workstreams and projects, providing day-to-day delivery support and strengthening governance, pace and consistency across the portfolio.

## SUMMARY

Across the 26-27 Annual Delivery Plan there are 24 projects. Following reporting at the end of May the current status of these projects are:

	Complete/ Evaluaition	On Track	Risk to Progress	Not due to be started	Total Actions
<b>Prevention</b>	0	3	0	1	4
<b>Protection</b>	0	1	0	3	4
<b>Response</b>	0	3	0	0	3
<b>People</b>	0	2	0	2	4
<b>Finance &amp; Assets</b>	0	2	2	0	4
<b>Digital, Data &amp; Technology</b>	0	4	0	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24</b>

To strengthen oversight and ensure resources are aligned to risk and complexity, projects have been split into different tiers based on cost, impact, or risk to ensure they have the appropriate support and governance.

The current split of projects is:

Tier 1 - Major	Tier 2 – Medium	Tier 3 – Small
5	7	12

## Major projects – position this quarter

This quarter's reporting focuses on the Service's major projects, with highlight reports outlining delivery confidence, progress to date, and planned next steps.

**On-Call Improvement Programme (Years 2–5)** is currently reported as **Green** overall, with PMO activity completed (mandate/objectives agreed, governance established, kick-off activity completed, and initial staff engagement underway). Delivery planning continues, including finalising workstream requirements and commencing Fleet and HR workstreams. Timescale is flagged Amber to reflect the programme's multi-year implementation profile and the need to maintain pace through year-two planning and consultation activity.

**Local Training Facility** remains **Red** overall, reflecting ongoing planning process delays and associated timeline pressure. The project continues to be monitored closely, with emerging cost risks noted (including wider market pressures affecting materials, logistics and fuel). Spend-to-date is reported as in line with the current phase, and the latest forecast position is described in the report, including the drivers behind variance and contingency use.

**High Wycombe Redevelopment/Restoration** has moved to **Green** overall. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with staff. A structural survey is underway to support options appraisal, alongside discussions with private landlords and public sector partners regarding temporary sites. This will inform the full business case being drawn up to come to Members late Q2/early Q3.

# OUR ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2026/2027

The Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service Annual Plan 2026–2027 sets out how we will translate our strategic priorities into the everyday decisions and actions required to keep our communities safe, building on the progress already made and targeting resources where they add the most value. The actions below are supported by measures of success and detailed team plans.

<p><b>Prevention</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan, resource, and deliver local and national road and water safety initiatives and campaigns.</li> <li>Develop a Youth Inclusion Programme</li> <li>Deliver the Prevention Community Engagement Communications Plan, ensuring consistent messaging across all Service Delivery Areas (SDA's)</li> <li>Embed the Domestic Dwelling Fire Targeting Methodology across all nine SDAs, monitoring and reporting on its effectiveness</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to ensure effective management, enforcement, and ongoing implementation of fire safety remediation plans for multi-occupied residential properties</li> <li>Utilise station-based crews for targeted fire safety and protection initiatives</li> <li>Upgrade PRMS workflows and processes to achieve measurable efficiency improvements</li> <li>Transition the FFSIU and Thames Valley Fire Investigation team into business-as-usual delivery</li> </ul>
<p><b>Response &amp; Resilience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define and deliver year two of our On-Call Improvement Programme</li> <li>Review our water rescue capacity &amp; capability to understand long term requirements</li> <li>Complete a review of Working at Height (W@H) provision defining service needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a refreshed People Directorate structure &amp; function that enhances service delivery and meets future needs</li> <li>Develop advanced people analytics capabilities to provide real-time workforce insights and support data-driven decision-making</li> <li>Evaluate how newly introduced people frameworks and processes have been adopted and the difference they have made for staff and the service</li> <li>Implement a communication skills development initiative to improve internal collaboration and external engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Finance &amp; Assets</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Year 2 of the property standards programme by investing £360k in station facilities</li> <li>Complete build of local training facility (subject to agreement)</li> <li>Secure funding and finalise plans for the redevelopment or refurbishment of High Wycombe Fire Station</li> <li>Commence scoping of Firefighting PPE and develop an implementation plan, to support delivery</li> </ul>
<p><b>Digital &amp; Data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other Thames Valley fire &amp; rescue Services for the replacement of the Command &amp; Control system (Year 1)</li> <li>Review provision of risk data within the current Command &amp; Control system</li> <li>Embed branding standards across all departments and monitor compliance to ensure consistency in digital and physical assets</li> <li>Collaborate with national and regional partners to ensure operational and technical readiness for the Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme</li> <li>Develop a roadmap for AI integration across key functions and define next steps for implementation</li> </ul>

# MAJOR PROJECTS HIGHLIGHT REPORTS

## On Call Improvement Programme

**Sponsor:** Assistant Chief Fire Officer

<b>STATUS – This period:</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Last period</b>	<b>Green</b>
<b>Agreed Project completion date:</b>	Implementation 2026-2030		

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Green</b>
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<b>Overall Project Objective</b>
The On-Call Improvement Programme (Years 2–5) aims to build on the foundations established during its first year to create a more resilient, reliable, and sustainable On-Call service model across Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service. The programme will take forward the Fire Authority-approved changes to the number and location of On-Call appliances and develop a modernised approach to staffing, training, mobilisation, and operational support.

<b>Key activities completed in this reporting period</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme mandate and objectives agreed, with governance arrangements established (including Terms of Reference) to support effective oversight and decision-making</li> <li>• Programme mobilisation completed, including Sponsor and On-Call Programme tactical kick-off meetings to align leadership, priorities and ways of working.</li> <li>• Staff consultation has completed with new contracts starting 01/07/2026.</li> </ul>

<b>Activities planned in next period</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Initiation Document (PID) to be submitted for approval, defining scope and delivery approach for year 2 (26/27).</li> <li>• Finalise the programme plan and confirm detailed workstream requirements, ensuring alignment on scope, milestones and resource needs across all delivery areas.</li> <li>• Initiate Fleet and HR workstreams moving from planning into delivery and progressing initial priority actions, including a full On-Call recruitment review and suggested changes.</li> <li>• Continue building options appraisal for future use of Great Missenden &amp; Stokenchurch proposal.</li> <li>• Work with Members to agree the Terms of Reference for an On-Call Improvement Programme Members Advisory Group</li> </ul>

<b>Approved Project Spend:</b>	N/A	<b>Project Spend to date:</b>	N/A
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**Finance Update:**  
Any business cases needed for the project will be brought through governance.

R / I NO	DESCRIPTION	TREATMENT	OWNER	ORIGINAL SCORE	CURRENT SCORE
	There are no identified risks that push the project into amber but we continue to work				

with the workstream leads to ensure all risks have been identified, documented and mitigated as needed.

## Recommendation progress

	RECOMMENDATION	TARGET DATE	STATUS RAG	LATEST UPDATE
<b>1</b>	<b>Removal of the following On-Call crewed fire engine</b>			
1a	Amersham	Jul '26		Staff consultation complete. Appliance removal being planned.
1b	Beaconsfield	Jul '26		Staff consultation complete. Appliance removal being planned.
1c	Great Missenden	Jun '26	Complete	No staff consultation required Appliance removed
1d	High Wycombe	Jul '26		Staff consultation complete. Appliance removal being planned.
1e	Stokenchurch	Jul '26		Staff consultation complete. Appliance removal being planned.
1f	West Ashland (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Jul '26		Staff consultation complete. Appliance removal being planned.
<b>2</b>	<b>Closure and decommissioning of</b>			
2a	Great Missenden	Mar '27		Turnout system to be removed
2b	Stokenchurch	Mar '27		Turnout system to be removed
<b>3</b>	<b>Provision of a dual purpose 4x4 lightweight fire engine</b>			
	Buckingham	Sept '26		Staff training booked in for July
<b>4</b>	<b>Move the following specials</b>			
4a	Rural Firefighting Vehicle at Amersham	Sept '26		Staff Training to be confirmed as part of BAU
4b	Crew Welfare unit to Beaconsfield	Sept '26		Awaiting delivery of vehicle
4c	Rural Firefighting Vehicle at West Ashland	Jul '26		
<b>6</b>	<b>Recommendations for the future of Great Missenden and Stokenchurch sites will be brought to the Executive Committee</b>			
		TBC		Valuations complete, awaiting report. Options appraisal being drafted Paper to come to future Exec

Note: Recommendation 5 was "The timing and phased implementation of the approved changes be delegated to the Chief Fire Officer"

# Local Training Facility

**Sponsors:** Director of Finance & Assets & Director of People

<b>STATUS – This period:</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Last period</b>	<b>Red</b>
<b>Agreed Project completion date:</b>	March 2027		

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Green</b>
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<b>Overall Project Objective</b>
The development of a dedicated Technical and Training Centre at Westcott Venture Park. This bespoke solution will deliver the functions of a Training school. USAR Technical Training Centre, and Logistics Hub.

<b>Key activities completed in this reporting period</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current target date for the planning application to be determined is 23 June 2026, with an agreed expiry date of 30 June 2026.</li> <li>Wescott have submitted the final ecology surveys and the Planning Officer has confirmed no further ecology information is required.</li> <li>Due to <b>delays in the planning process</b>, we have reassessed the risk ratings for <b>timelines</b> and this remains Red.</li> <li>A review of the current Financial Budget Forecast has been completed, and several emerging risks have been identified. The most significant relates to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East and its continued impact on raw material availability, contractor overheads, logistics, and rising fuel costs.</li> <li>We have now gone beyond the secured fixed pricing deadline, 12 June 2026, with 2 key suppliers and are awaiting updated quotations for both parties.</li> <li>WVP are currently in the market, with contractors tendering for the groundworks package. This will support contractor selection and ensure sufficient lead-in time for mobilisation on site once planning approval is secured.</li> </ul>

<b>Activities planned in next period</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to Support Planning Officer and application</li> <li>WVP Final Agreement to Lease completion</li> <li>Site Construction Office Set Up</li> </ul>

<b>Approved Project Spend:</b>	£5.5m	<b>Project Spend to date:</b>	£179k
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<b>Finance Update:</b>
The forecast cost is now £5.682m, which is 3% over budget (including the contingency amount). There is a risk of further increases due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

## SUMMARY OF KEY RISKS AND ISSUES

R / I NO	DESCRIPTION	TREATMENT	OWNER	ORIGINAL SCORE	CURRENT SCORE
3	Planning approval not granted to Westcott Venture Park or process takes longer than envisioned	Training programme under review to see what can be rescheduled or undertaken via an interim provider	Property Manager	15	20

# High Wycombe Station Redevelopment/Restoration

**Sponsor:** Head of Finance & Assets (Deputy Director)

<b>STATUS – This period:</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Last period</b>	<b>Amber</b>
<b>Agreed Project completion date:</b>	March 2027		

<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Risk</b>	<b>Green</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Green</b>
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## Overall Project Objective

The High Wycombe fire station redevelopment/restoration project aims to ensure the station remain fit for purpose, safe and capable of supporting modern emergency response requirements across the service area.

## Key activities completed in this reporting period

- Equality Impact Assessment completed, ensuring that equality considerations are embedded within the development of the new station requirements.
- Project mandate approved, providing formal authority to proceed; development of the PID is underway to establish detailed delivery and governance controls.
- Options appraisal undertaken for the existing site, outlining potential scenarios ranging from a full internal refurbishment to complete demolition and redevelopment of the site.
- Decant strategy initiated, with early assessment of location options and operational impacts (including response times) to support informed decision-making.
- Meeting held with Estates lead at Buckinghamshire Council to understand opportunities to utilise some of their estates for decanting purposes in High Wycombe.
- Business Case planning advanced, with a structured timeline being developed to support timely submission to SLT and Fire Authority.
- Structural survey has been commissioned supported by a completed asbestos survey, these will confirm baseline condition and inform design assumptions.

## Activities planned in next period

- Confirm the scope and implications of the existing tank at the current site, including survey findings, options, and impacts on programme approach.
- Update design documentation for compliance: adjust station plans to reflect EIA requirements so the project remains compliant and future stages are not delayed.
- Complete the PID for approval, confirming scope, roles, milestones, risks and controls.
- Prepare the Business Case for SLT/Fire Authority consideration, including options appraisal, affordability, benefits and deliver plan.

<b>Approved Project Spend:</b>	N/A	<b>Project Spend to date:</b>	N/A
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**Finance Update:**  
 Will be updated once business case approved.  
 Current Project costs are being funded/resourced from business as usual budgets.

## SUMMARY OF KEY RISKS AND ISSUES

R / I NO	DESCRIPTION	TREATMENT	OWNER	ORIGINAL SCORE	CURRENT SCORE
R1	There is a risk that a suitable decant location may not be within close proximity of the current station, which could impact response times.	Current options are being agreed by SLT to ensure the tolerances of a decant location are acceptable.	Head of Response & Resilience	12	10
R3	There is a risk that the business case may not accurately reflect the true condition of the site if it is submitted to the Fire Authority before a structural survey is completed	The sponsor has agreed a delay to the business case to allow the structural survey to be completed, enabling it to fully consider the issues and determine the most appropriate solutions.	Head of Finance & Assets	12	12

## COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

A number of key initiatives within the Annual Plan are being delivered collaboratively with partner organisations. These programmes are typically complex, high-value and high-impact, and collaboration enables the Service to share expertise, reduce duplication, improve interoperability and consistency across services, and strengthen value for money through collective procurement and common standards. Where programmes are national in nature, our local focus is on ensuring we remain prepared to adopt new capabilities safely and effectively, without disrupting operational delivery.

### **Thames Valley Fire Control replacement**

Current Status: **GREEN**

We are working with our Thames Valley partners on replacing the current Fire Control System. This is a significant and critical technology investment which will modernise the systems that provide for call handling and mobilisation. The programme is currently in the procurement phase, with implementation expected to begin in October 2026 and a planned go-live in April 2028. Our focus during this phase is to ensure the selected solution is operationally fit for purpose, resilient, and provides a robust platform for future improvements.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) renewal**

Current Status: **AMBER**

This project has moved to Amber for this reporting period due to a delay in the national framework being released. We will continue to progress the PPE renewal through a national programme which provides an approved procurement framework. This supports consistent standards, reduces procurement risk and enables the Service to access compliant PPE while achieving value for money. Locally, activity is focused on planning for implementation, ensuring operational requirements are met, and supporting adoption through appropriate engagement and readiness activity.

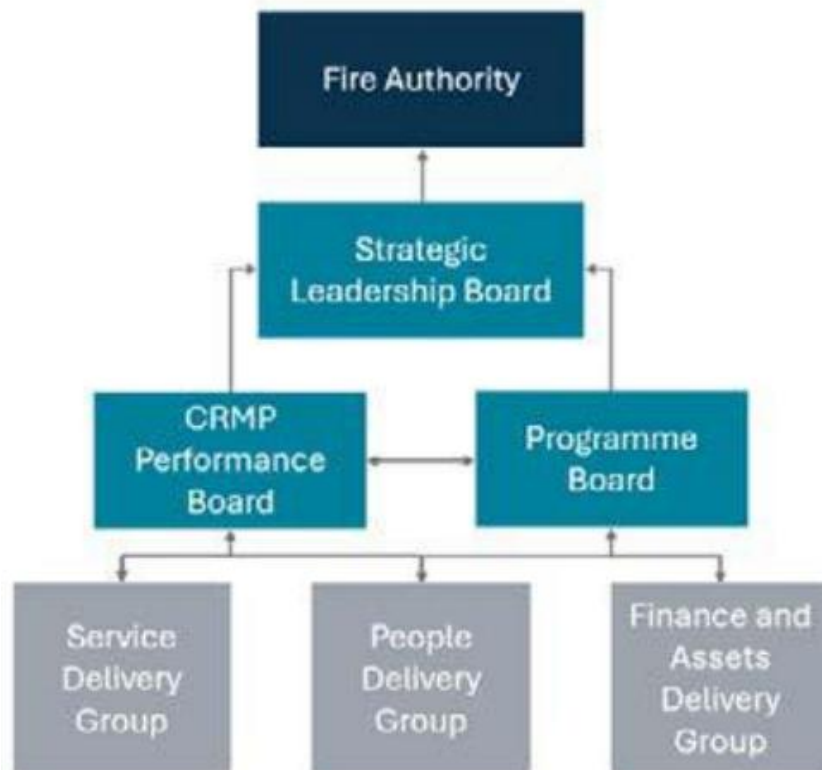
### **Emergency Services Network (ESN) transition**

Current Status: **GREEN**

The transition from Airwave to the Emergency Services Network is a long-term national programme affecting all emergency services. BFRS continues to play an active role, working with Thames Valley fire partners and wider emergency service stakeholders. Our focus is on maintaining operational continuity, understanding readiness requirements, and managing dependencies (technical, operational and training) as national timelines and delivery plans develop.

# GOVERNANCE

BFRS uses a structured governance framework to monitor progress and manage risk against the Annual Delivery Plan



## Delivery Groups

Delivery groups report monthly to the CRMP Performance and Programme Boards, ensuring that performance and risk are coordinated and that progress against objectives is reviewed routinely.

## CRMP Performance Board

The Community Risk Management Plan Performance Board (CRMP Performance Board) monitors performance across objectives and enablers monthly.

## Programme Board

Programme Board provides strategic direction and oversight of change delivery aligned to the CRMP and Annual Plan.

## Strategic Leadership Board

Provides strategic oversight and assurance prior to reporting to the Fire Authority and its committees.

# SUPPORTING INFORMATION

## RAG Status



- Major problems identified which mean the project is unlikely to be delivered on time, on budget or to the required standard.
- Remedial plans are not proving effective.
- Escalate to the next level with costed options.



- Significant problems identified which may put the project timetable, costs and/or benefits at risk.
- Remedial plan is in place and is being monitored closely to ensure that risk is mitigated.
- Escalate to the next level.



- Project is proceeding according to plan.
- Risks / issues are being managed within the project.

## Risk reporting approach (exception-based)

In line with established public-sector programme reporting practice, this quarterly update is an exception report, designed to give Members clear oversight without overloading the paper with operational detail.

Accordingly, the risk and issues sections highlight only:

- items above the agreed risk score threshold (or those judged “material” due to impact on time/cost/scope/benefits), and
- items that require Member visibility because they may affect delivery confidence, tolerances, or future decision points.

All other risks are tracked and treated within project and programme risk registers, reviewed routinely through governance arrangements, and escalated if they become significant.

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