



BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

Members of Fire and Rescue Authority.

Bedford Borough Councillors: C Atkins, J Gambold and M Headley

Central Bedfordshire Councillors: R Berry, J Chatterley, P Duckett, D McVicar and I Shingler

Luton Borough Councillors: J Burnett, K Choudhry, D Franks and Y Waheed

A meeting of **Fire and Rescue Authority** will be held at **Lecture Theatre, Dunstable Community Fire Station, Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable LU6 1AA / Hybrid via MS Teams** on **Tuesday, 2 November 2021** starting at **10.00 am**.

John Atkinson
Monitoring Officer

A G E N D A

Item	Subject	Lead	Purpose of Discussion
1.	Apologies	Secretary/ Monitoring Officer	
2.	Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests	Chair	Members are requested to disclose the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and any other interests as required by the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct (see note below).
3.	Communications	Chair	

Item	Subject	Lead	Purpose of Discussion
4.	Minutes	Chair	To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021. (Pages 5 - 16)
5.	Public Participation	Chair	To receive any questions put to the Authority under the Public Participation Scheme
6.	Executive Committee Minutes from 7 October 2021	Chair	To receive Executive Committee Minutes held on 7 October 2021. (Pages 17 - 24)
7.	ASC Minutes from 21 September 2021	Councillor Atkins	To receive Audit and Standards Committee minutes held on 21 September 2021. (Pages 25 - 54)
8.	2021/22 Budget Monitoring	ACO	To consider a report (Pages 55 - 64)
9.	Mid-Year Treasury Update	ACO	To consider a report (Pages 65 - 80)
10.	Portfolio Leads Update: Workforce & OD/Digital & Data	CFO	Verbal update
11.	Programme Board Update	ACO	To consider a report (Pages 81 - 96)
12.	Collaboration Update	CFO	Verbal update
13.	Horizon Scanning Workshop Update	HSSA	Presentation
14.	Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures	ACFO	To consider a report (Pages 97 - 100)
15.	Work Programme	CFO	To consider a report (Pages 101 - 112)

Item	Subject	Lead	Purpose of Discussion
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Local Government Act 1972: Schedule 12A (as amended) - Exclusion on the Public **Chair**

To consider whether to pass a resolution under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that consideration of the following items of business is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended.

Item	Subject	Lead	Purpose of Discussion
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16.	HMICFRS Inspection Update	CFO	Verbal update
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	Next Meeting	10.00 am on 14 December 2021 at Lecture Theatre, Dunstable Community Fire Station, Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable LU6 1AA	
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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

From 1 July 2012 new regulations were introduced on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs). The interests are set out in the Schedule to the Code of Conduct adopted by the Fire Authority on 28 June 2012. Members are statutorily required to notify the Monitoring Officer (MO) of any such interest which they, or a spouse or civil partner or a person they live with as such, have where they know of the interest.

A Member must make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and any other interest as defined in paragraph 7 of the Fire Authority’s Code of Conduct at any meeting of the Fire Authority, a Committee (or Sub-Committee) at which the Member is present and, in the case of a DPI, withdraw from participating in the meeting where an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

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BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

held on 7 September 2021 at 10am at Dunstable Community Fire Station

PRESENT

Councillors J Chatterley (Chair), R Berry, K Choudhury, M Headley, D McVicar, I Shingler and Y Waheed

Councillor C Atkins was present via MS Teams

Chief Fire Officer A Hopkinson, Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer D Norris, Assistant Chief Fire Officer A Kibblewhite, Assistant Chief Officer Chambers and Mr J Atkinson were also present

21-22/fa/030 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Burnett, P Duckett and D Franks.

21-22/fa/031 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests.

21-22/fa/032 COMMUNICATIONS

Memorial Service for the late Paul Fuller

The Chair advised that the memorial service for the late Paul Fuller would be held on 28 October 2021 at 1830hrs at Woburn Church. Invitations were due to be sent out shortly.

Appointment of new Inspector for Fire and Police Services

Roy Wilsher, most recently Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council and former Chief Fire Officer at Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, had recently been appointed as a new inspector for the police and fire services at HMICFRS.

Consultation giving Police and Crime Commissioners greater powers of competence

A targeted consultation on giving Police and Crime Commissioners a general power of competence was being conducted. The Chair reported that the response from the Authority would reiterate the previous views of Members in support of maintaining the independence of the Fire and Rescue Service and its governance arrangements from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Fit for the Future – Next Steps

The Chief Fire Officer reported on progress made in relation to the work of the National Fire Chiefs Council to establish a common vision for the future of fire and rescue services in England.

20th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks in New York

The Chair encouraged Members to attend their local whole-time Community Fire Stations to observe a minute's silence at 13.46 on Saturday, 11 September in remembrance of the firefighters who lost their lives in the terror attacks.

The Chief Fire Officer advised that on-call stations had also been encouraged to hold a minute's silence but that this was dependent on availability.

Additional Information on the work of the Service

The Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service Communications and Engagement Team was preparing a summary of media coverage for submission to future Authority meetings.

Following discussion with the Chair, it had also been agreed that a summary of core messages from each Authority meeting would be prepared to be circulated with the Record of Decisions to the constituent authorities.

Police and Crime Commissioner Visit

The newly elected Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, Mr Festus Akinbusoye, would be visiting Fire and Rescue Headquarters on 14 September 2021.

21-22/fa/033 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 be confirmed as a true record.

21-22/fa/034 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Members noted that no questions had been received in accordance with the public participation scheme approved at the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 5 April 2000 (Minute 99/fa/94 refers).

21-22/fa/035 AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE 14 JULY 2021

In response to the Chair's query as to whether the Audit and Standards Committee was still able to meet remotely, the Secretary and Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Committee could meet remotely if it was an informal meeting as there was a requirement for in person meetings if decisions were being made on behalf of the Authority. Therefore, in addition to receiving the Minutes of the meeting, as was standard practice, the Authority would also have to ratify the decisions made at the meeting of this or any other Committee meeting held remotely before they could be implemented.

Councillor Atkins introduced the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 14 July 2021 for information and highlighted a number of areas including the following:

- Thanks had been recorded for the work of the previous Chair of the Committee, Councillor M Headley.
- The audit of the accounts had been delayed by EY from September to November 2021. It was not anticipated that any significant value for money risks would be identified during the audit as the Authority had demonstrated a good level of financial control.
- The external audit fees were discussed and it had been noted that the contract with EY, which had been agreed through the PSAA, was in place until 2023.

- The internal auditors had issued an overall positive audit opinion although there had been some areas for enhancements to the framework of risk management.
- The follow-up audit had identified that 14 of the 19 actions had been implemented, 3 were in progress and 1 had not yet been implemented.
- A review of the Corporate Risk Register had been undertaken at the meeting.

In response to a question, the Assistant Chief Officer advised that in most cases, fees required for additional audit work were agreed beforehand in principle, as the final fee was often not known until the work was completed. In relation to the annual audit fee, the fee increase proposed by EY for the previous year had still not been agreed and representations had been made to PSAA accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the submitted Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 be received and the decisions made by the Committee informally be ratified.

21-22/fa/036 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 15 JULY 2021

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 July 2021 for information. The Chair reported that the main item of business had been the allocation of areas of responsibility to Members of the Executive and these were set out in the Minutes. The Committee had also received an update on the firefighters' pensions immediate detriment position and a further report on this matter would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

There was no further update on the abatement discussion.

RESOLVED:

That the submitted Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15 July 2021 be received.

21-22/fa/037 2022/23 REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING

The Assistant Chief Officer and Treasurer presented his report outlining the current planning arrangements for the 2022/23 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.

The programme included two Member Budget Workshops on 23 November 2021 and 25 January 2022.

The Assistant Chief Officer and Treasurer suggested it was unlikely that the provisional settlement would be made before the end of December. An additional budget meeting may therefore be required in January 2022. He also expressed concern that a one-year settlement would be made again, which makes medium-term planning much more difficult.

The Chair proposed that the 14 December FRA meeting be brought forward to earlier in December to follow the first Member Budget Workshop and allow more time for public consultation.

The view was expressed that any additional dates should be circulated to Members as far in advance as possible.

RESOLVED:

That the report, and timescales within it, be agreed, subject to consideration being given to changing the dates of the meetings of the Authority in December 2021 and January 2022 as a result of the likely delay of the local government settlement announcement.

21-22/fa/038 2020/21 ANNUAL REPORT

The Chief Fire Officer commented that this was the first time an annual report of the Service's work had been produced for several years.

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer introduced the Annual Report which set out a summary of activities across the organisation from 1 April 2020 to 1 April 2021.

The report included a tribute to the late Paul Fuller and set out the achievements of the Service on a month-by-month basis and Members attention was drawn to the following:

- The Service had completed 6,835 Safe and Well visits during the year. This was the highest number of visits recorded and was in the context of a national pandemic.
- The Service ran active safety campaigns during the year with topics including safeguarding, arson reduction, road safety and water safety. This was important risk reduction activity designed to keep local residents safe.
- Virtual visits to schools had been developed to continue to engage with children and young people in a Covid secure way.

- Additional posts had been recruited to in order to expand the Fire Safety Team so that more audits and other building safety work could be completed in accordance with the audit programme.
- 92% of the Service's programme and projects for the year had been completed or were on course to meet targets.
- The work to support the East of England Ambulance Service was highlighted.

Members praised the layout of the report and the high level of performance achieved. It was noted that not all the charts displayed the years in the same order and it would be easier to compare performance if these were presented in the same way.

It was suggested that the Annual Report should be circulated to the Service's partners for information.

RESOLVED:

1. That the activities and performance that have contributed to the delivery of the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan in the previous year be acknowledged.
2. That the publication of the report on the Service's website be approved, subject to the charts being amended so that the order of the years was consistent throughout the report.

21-22/fa/039 FIRE PROTECTION STATISTICS – NATIONAL BENCHMARKING COMPARISON

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer submitted a comparative analysis of national fire protection statistics, as published by the Home Office, against local Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service performance for the period up to the end of March 2020.

Members were reminded that a Member Development Day had been arranged on 17 September 2021 which would cover building safety and that they should advise the Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer of any topics in this area that they wished to be explored in more detail.

It was noted that nationally, there had been a reduction in the number of fire safety audits completed since 2010/11 as resources were directed to other areas of work. This was gradually changing post-Grenfell and additional funding was being made available for building safety which would result in a corresponding increase in the number of fire safety audits completed. Grant funding had recently been provided by the Government to support protection activity and three Fire Safety Advisers had been employed by the Service with the intention of providing them with the required training to enable them to become qualified Fire Safety Inspectors in due course.

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that the Service took a “firm but fair” approach and sought to work with landlords and partners in order to improve compliance rather than rely solely on enforcement activity.

At present, there were eleven active enforcement cases open. These were predominately related to housing. Cases could be very complex and the Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer referred to one case in which the landlord was responsible for more than 20 properties with differing levels of non-compliance across several fire and rescue service areas. The Service often had to work across boundaries in relation to these cases and case studies would be provided to Members at the workshop on 17 September.

Fires in non-domestic buildings continued to reduce and the number of these incidents was below the national average. There were two areas within the County where there were spikes of incidents. One of these was at HMP Bedford, and the Service was working closely with the management there to improve fire safety standards.

Fire related casualties also remained relatively low.

In response to a question, the Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that, due to the large number of cases, these were risk assessed to prioritise those cases involving the highest risk, for example, where there were blocked means of escape or dangerous cooking arrangements. Many of these were in Houses of Multiple Occupation.

The Chief Fire Officer added that the Service was working closely with its partners with the intent of strengthening data and intelligence sharing arrangements towards developing a pan-Bedfordshire data hub, as many individuals were known to a number of partner organisations.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

21-22/fa/040 PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 1 2021/22

Members received a summary of organisational performance at the end of the first quarter of the financial year 2021/22. The majority of targets were being met despite the challenging circumstances. The Principal Officers provided updates for their areas of responsibility as follows:

Prevention

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service had undertaken over 2,600 Safe and Well visits during the quarter. As there had been a number of incidents relating to cooking activities, the Prevention Team had emphasised cooking safety in their campaigns.

The total number of fires in other buildings had only marginally missed its target. This was subject to seasonal variation and it was anticipated that performance would improve over the reporting year. As previously discussed, there were two repeat locations with six of the fires having occurred at Bedford Prison and two fires in derelict buildings on a site in Barton Le Clay. Work was ongoing to improve fire safety at these locations.

The total number of secondary fires had also missed its target but was subject to seasonal variation and the target was anticipated to be met by year end.

Response

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer reported that a refreshed project to improve on-call availability would commence this year, with more innovative solutions to recruitment and retention being considered, acknowledging that there was not a “one size fits all” solution and different methods would need to be developed for the different stations.

The whole-time global crewing availability target had been missed by 2.2% due to several factors including extra leave to be taken after a carry-over of annual leave, people shielding or isolating and providing EEAST with Ambulance drivers. This was being addressed by additional recruitment and the secondment of drivers to EEAST was coming to an end.

Improvements were anticipated to the call handling time following the introduction of a new mobilising system by the end of October 2021 with up-to-date mapping, gazetteer and advanced mobile location which would further reduce response times and allow the Service to provide a more efficient response.

In response to a question, the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the call handling time target was due to be reviewed as it was not in line with other fire and rescue services. The intention was to set a target for 2022/23 following the implementation of the new system.

Empowering

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer reported that the trauma care training target had not been met as these courses had only just resumed and, due to the practical nature of the course requiring close physical contact, courses have only been able to resume at 50% of the normal class size. Improvements were expected in future quarters as national restrictions relaxed.

The delivery of Working at Height training had been impacted by cancellations of courses as instructors had been required to self-isolate.

The 3 health and safety indicators were RAG rated as Red against target at the end of the first quarter. There had been one serious accident that resulted in an over 28 day injury. The 60 working days/shifts lost related to seven workplace accidents. However, 56 days of these were as a result of accidents occurring in the previous reporting year.

The number of 24 hour periods lost to accidents for on-call personnel was still being impacted by the long-term injury of one individual who had sustained a burn injury during hot fire training in October 2019 as previously reported to the Authority.

Utilising

All the fleet indicators were green. Members were reminded that this was in the context of the Service providing additional support to EEAST through the servicing of its vehicles.

Maximising

The Assistant Chief Officer and Treasurer advised that all finance and ICT indicators were meeting their targets with the exception of the percentage of uncontested invoices paid within 30 days. The Finance Team continued to work with budget managers in areas where there had been delays in payment.

RESOLVED:

That the Service's performance against the delivery of the Authority's Community Risk Management Plan at the end of Quarter 1 be acknowledged.

21-22/fa/041 RETURN ON INVESTMENT ANALYSIS OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE'S SUPPORT TO EAST OF ENGLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE (EAST) IN 2020-21

The Chief Fire Officer submitted the return on investment analysis of the Service's support to the Ambulance Service in 2020-21. The Service had been the second in the country, following London Fire Brigade, to second firefighters in support to the local Ambulance Service. No other fire and rescue service had undertaken a return on investment analysis of this support. The analysis completed indicated that there was a return on investment of £5.09 million in social value, or £7 for every £1 invested. EEAST had also achieved its target for responding to the most serious Category 1 incidents for the first time on record during this period.

The Chief Fire Officer emphasised that, as this was not mainstream activity, and had been funded largely through Covid grants, it was important that the value of the activity was demonstrated. Now that this had been completed, the Service was liaising with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), as the commissioners of the Ambulance Service, to determine how this could be taken forward following the cessation of Government grant funding. Meetings with the new Chief Executive of EEAST are also planned.

In response to a question relating to the Service's support of vaccination centres, the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service had been involved in running the vaccination centres. The Service had offered to train its staff to administer the vaccines themselves and was awaiting a response from the CCG on whether this offer would be accepted.

RESOLVED:

That the report and how this type of activity can positively raise the profile of Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service nationally be acknowledged.

21-22/fa/042 COLLABORATION UPDATE

The Temporary Deputy Chief Fire Officer advised that, following the cancellation of the Blue Light Collaboration Strategic Board meeting, a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Authority.

21-22/fa/043 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the proposed arrangements for Member Development in 2021/22. Two additional Member Development days had been added to the programme, one on 17 September 2021 on building safety and one on 29 October 2021 on the Code of Conduct and Fire Standards Board Core Codes.

In addition, following discussions between the Chairman and Chief Fire Officer, a showcase event had been arranged on 22 September 2021 at Dunstable Community Fire Station to which the local MP and local Councillors would be invited. If successful, similar events would be hosted at other stations, with the MPs and Councillors local to the station invited to attend.

There had been no notification of a Combined Fire Authorities Conference. This was usually held in October and Members would be advised if any communications were received in this respect.

Members agreed that the Development Days should be held as hybrid events for the foreseeable future.

RESOLVED:

That the arrangements for Member development in 2021/22 be approved.

21-22/fa/044 WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the updated Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be received.

The meeting ended at 11.36 am.

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REPORT AUTHOR: COUNCILLOR J CHATTERLEY
SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

For further information on this Report contact: John Atkinson
Secretary/Monitoring Officer

Background Papers: None

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL			FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES			EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL			POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	✓	OTHER (please specify)	
	New			

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To report on the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 7 October 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the submitted minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021 be received; there were no recommendations to be considered.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 7 October 2021 are appended for Members' consideration.

**COUNCILLOR JOHN CHATTERLEY
CHAIR**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
HELD AT FIRE AND RESCUE HEADQUARTERS ON 7 OCTOBER 2021 AT 10am**

Present: Councillors J Chatterley (Chair), K Choudhury and D McVicar
CFO A Hopkinson, Mr J Atkinson and ACO G Chambers
Councillor Headley, Ms S Fecondi and Mrs S Green were present via Teams

15. Apologies

15.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Y Waheed.

16. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

16.1 There were no declarations of interests.

17. Communications

17.1 The Chair advised that, as was his usual practice, he continued to circulate all communications to Members of the Authority via email.

17.2 The Chair reported that he had received an anonymous complaint regarding the conduct of an Officer in the Service and this had been forwarded to the Monitoring Officer for further advice.

17.3 Communications had also been received in relation to the Green Book pay award, a letter from the Policing and Fire Services Minister, a letter from HMICFRS on marauding terrorist attack capability and an update on the Emergency Services Network (ESN).

- 17.4 The Chief Fire Officer reported that the transfer from Airwave to the ESN had resulted in an additional £2 million cost which the Home Office was unwilling to fund and would therefore be divided amongst the 43 Fire and Rescue Services. The cost to this Service was not yet known.
- 17.5 In relation to the recommendations arising from the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Minister had indicated that a RAG system would be implemented to demonstrate the progress made by Fire and Rescue Services throughout the country in implementing the recommendations. Internal reviews had indicated that this Service had made good progress and a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Authority regarding this.
- 17.6 A public letter had been issued by the Chief Inspector of HMICFRS commenting on proposals by the London Fire Brigade and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service to provide a 2% uplift in pay to firefighters undertaking duties relating to marauding terrorist attacks. The view of the Chief Inspector was that all firefighters should receive a standard level of training on responding to such incidents, as it could be the Fire and Rescue Service was the first service arriving at the scene of the incident and, as such, this should be part of their duties for which they were already being paid.
- 17.7 It was noted that the pre-publication report of the HMICFRS inspection was still awaited.

18. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2021 be confirmed as a true record.

19. Public Participation

- 19.1 Members noted that no questions had been received in accordance with the public participation scheme approved at the meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority held on 5 April 2000 (Minute 99/fa/94 refers).

20. Scheme of Delegation Review

- 20.1 The Chief Fire Officer submitted his report requesting Executive Members to provide a basis upon which to commence discussions on the scope and timeline for a review of the Scheme of Delegations to the Chief Fire Officer and its Officers. The Scheme of Delegation was structured as follows: Part 1 – ‘Delegation of Powers to the Chief Fire Officer’; Part 2 – ‘General Delegations to the Chief Fire Officer’ (Fire Service Issues, Land, Personnel & General); Part 3 – ‘Delegation to Other Officers of the Fire and Rescue Authority’; and Part 4 – ‘Treasurer’.

- 20.2 The Chair suggested that, as it was common practice for such schemes to be reviewed on an annual or biannual basis at local authority level, it was right that the Executive should request a regular review of the Scheme of Delegation.
- 20.3 Councillor Headley requested that Part 4 be updated to include the powers and responsibilities delegated to the Treasurer. He also requested clarification of delegations to the Chief Fire Officer under the Fire Services Act 2004 and how this was worded in other Authorities' Schemes of Delegation.
- 20.4 The Chief Fire Officer circulated additional information on duties under the Fire Services Act 2004.
- 20.5 Mr J Atkinson, the Secretary and Monitoring Officer advised that the Scheme of Delegation had last been reviewed in 2016. At that time, it was agreed that the Scheme reached the correct balance between broad delegations, which allowed the Chief Fire Officer to have operational control and overall management of the Service, with specific delegations relating to particular matters.
- 20.6 Councillor Choudhury emphasised the importance of a system of checks and balances and expressed the view that it was the role of the Authority Members to hold the Chief Fire Officer to account.
- 20.7 In response to a comment from Councillor McVicar, it was noted that the Secretary and Monitoring Officer roles were both undertaken by the same individual and that it may be prudent to remove Secretary from the post title to avoid confusion.

RESOLVED:

That the Monitoring Officer be asked to undertake a review of the Scheme of Delegation, with particular focus on the delegations to the Chief Fire Officer under the Fire Services Act 2004 and the delegations to the Treasurer as set out in Part 4, and report back to a future meeting of the Executive Committee.

21. Home Office Immediate Detriment Guidance Update

- 21.1 The Chief Fire Officer introduced a report providing an update on the guidance released by the Home Office in respect of immediate detriment. The latest informal guidance proposed a methodology for removing the age discrimination suffered by some Firefighters who were members of the 1992 or 2006 Firefighter Pension Scheme (FPS) when the Government introduced public sector pension changes on 1 April 2015.

- 21.2 Having carefully balanced the risks and benefits of applying the informal guidance, the report recommended an approach that would allow eligible Firefighter Pension Scheme members, due to retire before October 2023, a choice of retiring under their legacy pension scheme regulations. Each case would be assessed and signed off by the Assistant Chief Officer.
- 21.3 Due to the change in guidance, the recommendation set out in (d) of the report to include within the proposals to the Local Pension Board the agreement to offer those members who have yet to lose their tapered protection the option to remain within their legacy scheme if they so chose, was no longer required.
- 21.4 There were currently 8 individuals in the Service that were deemed to be Immediate Detriment cases (likely to retire before October 2023) with one of those being eligible to retire during October 2021.
- 21.5 The Chief Fire Officer advised that one complaint had been submitted via the Internal Disputes Resolution process. This may result in appeal to a Member panel.
- 21.5 The Voluntary Scheme Pays Policy would need to be updated if the proposals were agreed.
- 21.6 In response to questions about the Local Pension Board, the Executive was advised that the Board's role was to scrutinise the proposals. The implementation of the proposals, if agreed, would be conducted internally, with the Assistant Chief Officer responsible for making decisions on a case by case basis.
- 21.7 Both Ms S Fecondi and Mrs S Green supported the proposals.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report and supporting appendices be noted, giving particular note to the risks and benefits identified.
- 2. That the Chief Fire Officer be supported to progress proposals to enable the Authority to implement the updated HO Immediate Detriment informal guidance and offer those FPS members in scope a choice of retiring under their legacy scheme regulations provided that any member who wished to take up this option in advance of the required additional guidance(s) becoming available, must sign a personal 'waiver statement' to acknowledge they understand the risks involved.
- 3. That the Chief Fire Officer submit the final proposals to the FPS Local Pension Board for review and sign off.
- 4. That the Chief Fire Officer be authorised to sign the administrative waiver required by the Authority's pensions administrator, Local Pensions Partnership Administration Limited (LPPA).

22. Portfolio Lead Updates

- 22.1 The Chief Fire Officer suggested that each Portfolio Lead be given a five minute slot at full Authority meetings to provide an update on their Portfolio areas. A brief slideshow could be prepared by the Lead Officer to assist. It was hoped that these could form the basis of additional information to provide to the constituent authorities along with the Record of Decisions and Information Bulletin.
- 22.2 In response to a comment about the number of Blue Light Collaboration Board meetings that had been cancelled, the Chief Fire Officer provided an update on discussions that had taken place at and after the recent Bedfordshire Chief Executives Forum and with the new Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire. There was a renewed emphasis to work more closely together.

RESOLVED:

That it be agreed that Portfolio Leads be given a five minute slot at full Authority meetings to provide an update on their areas of responsibility.

23. Work Programme

- 23.1 The Executive received its updated work programme.
- 23.2 It was agreed to receive the outcome of the Monitoring Officer's review of the schemes of delegation at the 20 January 2022 meeting of the Committee.
- 23.3 The Chief Fire Officer suggested that the Executive may wish to discuss any implications of the forthcoming White Paper prior to the submission of a report to the full Authority.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Work Programme be received and the cyclical agenda items be noted.
2. That the outcome of the Monitoring Officer's review of the scheme(s) of delegation be added to the Work Programme for the 20 January 2022 meeting.

24. Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 1 of Part 1: Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to Sections 100A(2) and 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the discussion of the following item on the grounds that the matters to be discussed involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended):

Item

Abatement Discussion

The meeting closed at 11.02 am

REPORT AUTHOR: COUNCILLOR C ATKINS
SUBJECT: AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

For further information on this Report contact: Nicky Upton
Service Assurance Manager

Background Papers: None

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL			FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES			EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL			POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	✓	OTHER (please specify)	
	New			

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To report on the informal meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 21 September 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the submitted minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 be received and the decisions made by the Committee, informally, be ratified.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The draft minutes of the informal meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee held on 21 September 2021 are appended for Members' consideration.
- 1.2 The Audit and Standards Committee requests the decisions it made, be ratified by the Fire Authority; specific reference is made to the recommended approval of the Statement of Assurance for 2020-2021.

**COUNCILLOR C ATKINS
CHAIR OF AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 10.00am**

Present: Councillors C Atkins (Chair), R Berry, P Duckett, J Gambold and I Shingler

Councillor J Chatterley was present as an observer

Mr J Atkinson, ACO G Chambers, ACFO A Kibblewhite, Ms R Barker and Mr P Hughes

Ms L Davies, RSM

Ms J Kriek, Ernst & Young

Please note: any decisions made by the Committee at this meeting need to be ratified by the Fire and Rescue Authority to take effect as the meeting was held informally.

21-22/AS/017 Apologies

17.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor J Burnett.

17.2 Mr N Harris from Ernst & Young was unable to attend the meeting. Ernst & Young was represented at the meeting by Ms J Kriek.

17.3 Ms S Rowlett from RSM was unable to attend the meeting. RSM was represented at by the meeting by Ms L Davies.

21-22/AS/018 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21-22/AS/019 Communications

19.1 The Committee received the Emergency Services News Briefing from RSM for August 2021.

19.2 The Assistant Chief Officer reported on the launch of the Community Risk Management Planning Fire Standard, which sought to ensure a consistent approach to the development and use of Community Risk Management Plans (CRMPs) across the fire sector. The Service's adherence to the Standard would be demonstrated over the next few months as the CRMP was updated.

RESOLVED:

That the communication be received.

21-22/AS/020 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2021 be confirmed as a true record.

21-22/AS/021 Public Participation

21.1 There were no members of the public present.

21-22/AS/022 Internal Audit Progress Report

- 22.1 Ms L Davies of RSM introduced the report on progress made against the internal audit plan for 2021/22. There was currently one audit being undertaken and the results of this would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.
- 22.2 In response to a question from Councillor Duckett, Ms Davies confirmed that the audit plan was flexible so could respond to any changes in legislation or other major issues that arose during the year as necessary.
- 22.3 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer added that the Service also had its own internal assurance process through which developments, such as actions arising from the Grenfell Inquiry, were considered.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

21-22/AS/023 Statement of Assurance 2020-21

- 23.1 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented the 2020-21 Statement of Assurance to the Committee for approval. The Statement of Assurance reported on performance in regard to financial, governance and operational assurance arrangements.
- 23.2 The Committee was advised that some of the performance information had been included in the Annual Report that had been presented to the last meeting of the Fire and Rescue Authority, and that in future, consideration would be given to the consolidation of reports for ease of access.
- 23.3 The format of the document had been revised, with hyperlinks included to other documents and the inclusion of more infographics and less text.
- 23.4 In response to questions about national resilience, the Assistant Chief Fire Officer reported that the Service was a Category 1 responder and could be called to provide equipment or personnel in the event of regional and/or national emergencies. The Service held a number of assets, such as the mass contamination unit, that were classified as national resilience assets,

or specialist personnel, such as the line rescue team, that could be called upon in emergencies. In addition to this, the Chief Fire Officer was now the Chair of the Local Resilience Forum, and this would be reported in the Statement of Assurance for 2022-23.

- 23.5 The Service's support for partner organisations during the COVID pandemic, especially in relation to the East of England Ambulance Service, had been highlighted as an area of notable practice. The Assistant Chief Fire Officer advised that details of the above could be included in the final version of the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the Statement of Assurance for 2020-2021 be acknowledged.
2. That the Statement of Assurance for 2020-2021 be recommended for approval by the Fire and Rescue Authority.

21-22/AS/024 Audit and Governance Action Plan Monitoring -Exception Report and Summary Analysis

- 24.1 The Assistant Chief Officer introduced the report which provided a summary statistical analysis of actions arising from internal audit reports over the last three financial years to date and from the Fire and Rescue Authority's current Annual Governance Statement; together with any exception report on those actions currently in progress, progress to date on current action plans and proposals to extend the original timing for completion.
- 24.2 The Committee was advised that extension requests were being sought for actions arising from the audit of Human Resources – Wellbeing. These related to the revision of the Service's current Wellbeing Policy and a benchmarking exercise against the Oscar Kilo portal for self-assessment and benchmarking. The original completion dates for these actions was August 2021.
- 24.3 Ms R Barker reported on progress made regarding the revision of the current Wellbeing Policy. This had been submitted to the Service Mental Health and Wellbeing Steering Group, which consisted of representatives across the Service. The view had been expressed that the document was too lengthy and required further review and, as such, a Working Group had been formed and a report back was expected later in the year. The results of the HMICFRS inspection were also awaited and the Committee was advised that it would be prudent to wait for the outcomes of this before the Policy was updated and recirculated to staff. Therefore an extension was being sought to the end of March 2022

24.4 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer expressed the view that the Oscar Kilo portal may not be the most appropriate form of benchmarking as it related primarily to risks associated with the Police service. It may be more appropriate to benchmark against Fire and Rescue Services with strong performance in this area. A meeting with HR and Occupational Health would also be required and a discussion with RSM to revisit this action and completion date was being proposed.

RESOLVED:

1. That progress made to date against action plans be acknowledged.
2. That the extension requests for the outstanding actions arising from the audit of Human Resources - Wellbeing be approved.

21-22/AS/025 Cyber Security Update

25.1 Mr P Hughes, the Head of ICT and Programmes, introduced his report which provided an update on cyber security.

25.2 In introducing the report, he highlighted the following:

- The threat landscape was constantly changing and the Service had to update its processes and defence mechanisms accordingly.
- The Shared Service had been successful in its Cyber Essentials Plus re-accreditation.
- A Cyber Security course would be offered for all staff to complete via the LearnPro system. The content was being provided by the National Cyber Security Centre.
- A third party review of cyber security defences was being undertaken and would result in a gap analysis report that would enable the Service to strengthen both its reactive and proactive processes.
- An insurance review was being conducted to ascertain the costs of Cyber Security insurance.

25.3 The Assistant Chief Officer referred to the infographic in the report which illustrated the number of cyber threats encountered during August 2021. Out of 134,677 inbound messages, 12% had been rejected.

- 25.4 Mr Hughes added that 6 inbound malware had been detected. This demonstrated the constant efforts to defend the service against attack. The Shared Service also conducted an annual system penetration test and this was due in November 2021.
- 25.5 In response to a suggestion from the Chair that the Cyber Security course be made available to Members, Mr Hughes advised that he would be able to signpost Members to the training available via the National Cyber Security Centre.

RESOLVED:

That the good progress to date be acknowledged and the thanks of the Committee to the ICT Shared Service for the progress made be recorded.

21-22/AS/026 Firefighter Pension Schemes Local Pension Board Report 2020/21

- 26.1 The Assistant Chief Officer presented the Annual Report of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority Local Pension Board (the Board), covering the period from 1 April 2020 until 31 March 2021.
- 26.2 The Board had been established in 2015 and had been chaired by the Assistant Chief Officer since its inception. There had originally been two employer and two employee representatives appointed to the Board. At the last meeting, the Board's terms of reference had been amended to increase representation to three from each side and the current membership was set out in the report for information.
- 26.3 The Board was supported by Sally Green, HR Operations Manager and acting Scheme Manager and Fiona Beck, Assistant HR Operations Manager. Meetings were also attended by Neil Lewins from the Service's Pension Administrators LPP.
- 26.4 The report detailed the governance arrangements, relevant policies and training requirements. The training for Board members was provided by LPP. The Board's work programme, a standard agenda and meeting dates were also included in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and the progress made by the Local Pension Board be acknowledged.

21-22/AS/027 Corporate Risk Register

- 26.1 The Assistant Chief Fire Officer presented a report which provided an update on the progress of the Service's Corporate Risk Register. As of 30 June 2021, one risk was categorised as very high, two as high and five as moderate. There had been no updates to the overall risk scores and the Committee was provided with specific risk updates.
- 27.2 Corporate Risk 2, failure to meet service delivery legislative prevention and protection requirements: an in-house risk analysis capability was being developed for risk based inspections. Three additional posts had been created for Fire Safety Advisors as previously reported and the Service was on track to deliver its target of 10,000 Safe and Well visits.
- 27.3 Corporate Risk 4, insufficient funds to deliver the Service's Community Risk Management Plan: the main risks were a poor funding settlement from the Government and the impact of pensions and pay awards. The impact of pensions and pay awards was being monitored by the Executive Committee.
- 27.4 Corporate Risk 7, ensure that our data management systems are robust: Information Management & Assurance Board (IMAB) meetings continued and phishing scam reminders were placed in the Blue Bulletin to improve staff awareness.
- 27.5 Corporate Risk 8, the Service fails to effectively record, track and maintain its key assets and business critical equipment: the fleet system had been successfully tested with General Ledger upgrades. The roll out of WiFi would support connectivity of agile working tablets for technicians. It was anticipated that all stations would be transferred to the full system by the end of the fourth quarter 2021/22.

RESOLVED:

That the effective development and application of the Corporate Risk Register be acknowledged.

21-22/ASC/028 Review of Work Programme 2021/22

- 28.1 The Committee considered the proposed work programme for 2021/22. The Assistant Chief Officer reported that Members would need to discuss whether to proceed with the Review of Effectiveness of the Committee, which was scheduled for the

next meeting of the Committee on 2 December 2021. The Statement of Assurance could be removed from the Work Programme for the next meeting as it had been submitted to this meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's Work Programme for 2020/21 be received.

The meeting finished at 11.06am



BEDFORDSHIRE FIRE
& RESCUE SERVICE

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE

2020-21



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1.

The Government sets out the high level expectations and requirements for Fire and Rescue Authorities through the [Fire and Rescue National Framework \(England\) 2018](#).

The Framework is issued under Section 21 of the [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#) with the stated purpose to give Fire and Rescue Authorities the freedom and flexibility to deliver services to their communities, moving accountability away from Central Government and placing responsibility with local communities.

Under the National Framework, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority (BFRA) have a responsibility to publish an Annual Statement of Assurance which provides a report on the Service's performance in the previous year with regard to:

- 🔥 **Financial:** How BFRA ensures that public money is properly accounted for, managed, audited and reported along with management of financial assets and the production of the Annual Statement of Accounts which is produced in line with accounting codes of practice.
- 🔥 **Governance:** How BFRA ensures that it conducts its business lawfully and that public money is properly accounted for and managed economically, efficiently and effectively and that an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is published.
- 🔥 **Operational:** How BFRA operates within a clear defined statutory framework including key documents such as National Framework and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 etc.

INTRODUCTION

The Statement of Assurance is required to be published annually and where possible form part of the existing governance reporting arrangements. This Statement of Assurance is subject to normal scrutiny arrangements which comprise of:

- 🔥 Approval by the Audit and Standards Committee, who oversee the production of the Annual Statement of Assurance;
- 🔥 Presented to the Full Fire and Rescue Authority Meeting by the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee; and,
- 🔥 Published on the Service's website.

In summary this Statement of Assurance aims to provide information to the Communities, Government, Local Authorities and Partners in an easy and accessible way, so a valid assessment can be made of their local Fire and Rescue Authority's performance during 2020/21.

2. FINANCIAL ASSURANCE

BFRA is a precepting authority; this means that its net cost, after receiving a Government Grant and a proportion of local business rates, is met by all council tax payers in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire Borough and Luton as a proportion to the valuation band of their home. The precept accounts for 65% of BFRA income. A precept leaflet is published each year on [our website](#) detailing our revenue and expenditure for the year.

BFRA has the responsibility for ensuring that public money collected by way of grant and council tax is properly accounted for and managed appropriately in accordance with Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999. This responsibility extends to securing the continuous improvement in which BFRA's functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

As part of managing the financial arrangements of the Authority, BFRA has robust control measures in place for protecting the public purse, which is supported by accurate budget monitoring processes and internal controls, which are subject to annual scrutiny and reporting.

The Treasurer to the BFRA has the responsibility for ensuring that the right measures are in place to manage the Authority's financial assets and that the financial reporting arrangements are sound and that the Annual Statement of Accounts is prepared in accordance with statutory requirements.

The [Statement of Accounts](#) for the year ending 31 March 2021 is a document that summarises BFRA's transactions for the previous financial year detailing how the funding was used to provide a Fire and Rescue Service to the communities of Bedfordshire and includes:

- a] The Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts which sets out the responsibilities of the FRA and the Treasurer to the FRA;
- b] The Annual Governance Statement (AGS);
- c] The Movement in Reserves Statement which summarises the FRA's spending against the council tax it raised, taking into account the use of reserves during the year;
- d] The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement which summarises the income and expenditure of the FRA;
- e] The Balance Sheet which displays the financial position of the FRA as at 31 March 2021;
- f] The Cash Flow Statement which summarises the changes in the FRAs funds; and,
- g] The Pension Fund Account for the year together with the Net Assets Statement at the year end.

The Accounts are supported by a Statement of Accounting Policy and Core Financial Statements and these are prepared by the Finance Team under the direction of the Assistant Chief Officer and Treasurer to the BFRA.

The Statement of Accounts is signed off by the Chairperson of the Audit and Standards Committee who oversees the audit activity, regulatory framework, accounts and standards of the Service and these are prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices that include:

- 🔥 [Accounts and Audit \(England\) Regulations 2015](#) ;
- 🔥 [The Local Authorities \(Capital Finance and Accounting\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2015](#); and,
- 🔥 [International Financial Reporting Standards](#) (IFRS).

BFRA are subject to independent external audit and scrutiny to ensure that appropriate and effective financial arrangements are in place. The external audit on the 2019/20 accounts was completed in December 2020 and are available on our website. It is the opinion of the external auditors that 'Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2020.' The draft accounts for 2020/21 are also available on our [website](#) and were presented to the Audit and Standards Committee in July 2021. They are due to be audited in late 2021.



3. GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

BFRA is made up of twelve elected members who are appointed in proportion to the number of local government electors in each constituent Authority area with Members from the three Local Authorities of Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council comprising:



Three members from **Bedford Borough Council**



Five members from **Central Bedfordshire Council**; and,



Four members from **Luton Borough Council**

The responsibility for ensuring proper governance arrangements and controls rests with BFRA who enable the effective exercise of the Authority's functions and the management of risk. The Governance Framework includes systems, processes, culture and values to enable BFRA to monitor the achievement of strategic objectives and consider whether the objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost effective services to the communities of Bedfordshire and stakeholders.

BFRA's governance framework derives from seven core principles identified in the International Framework: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: [Framework \(CIPFA/SOLACE\) Review of Annual Governance Statements](#).

3.1. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2020/21 explains how the BFRA manages its governance arrangements and internal control measures. It is an open and transparent account of how the BFRA ensures its financial management systems are adequate and effective, as well as ensuring there is a robust and sound system of internal control.

The AGS also explains how BFRA has complied with the Code and meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of an Annual Governance Statement. BFRA's financial arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA – Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. The Treasurer to the BFRA reports in this role directly to the Chief Fire Officer.

3.2. INTERNAL AUDIT

The role of internal audit is to review the internal control framework that governs the operations of the BFRA and, in so doing, provide an independent opinion to both Management and Members of the BFRA on the robustness of the Authority's internal control environment. Each year an Internal Audit Plan is produced and developed by the auditors, in conjunction with the Assistant Chief Officer – Finance and Corporate Services and Treasurer to the BFRA and is based on a risk assessment of all the services/systems of the Authority. Members and Service Managers are directly involved in the development of the plan and it is subject to input and review by the Corporate Management Team (CMT), prior to being approved by the Audit and Standards Committee. In summary, the plan identifies the audits to be completed each year, including core fundamental systems and other operational systems.

The appointed Internal Auditors also work with both Essex and Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) as part of a joint contract and where possible are able to audit on areas of commonality and shared service areas across all three FRAs. The work of the audit team complies fully with the requirements of CIPFA's Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the UK.

For the 12 months ended 31 March 2021, the Head of Internal Audit's opinion for the Authority was as follows:

"The organisation has an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control.

However, our work has identified further enhancements to the framework of risk management, governance and internal control to ensure that it remains adequate and effective."

3.3. EXTERNAL AUDIT

BFRA remains committed to continuing to improve its performance towards achieving excellence in all areas. Value for Money (VFM) is still part of an annual review carried out by the Service's external auditors with an opinion whether the BFRA is delivering VFM as part of the external auditor's annual report and whether the BFRA has proper arrangements for:

- 🔥 Securing financial resilience; and,
- 🔥 Challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

An integral part of this assurance is the role of the external auditor in the annual review report which complies with the statutory requirements governing audit and inspection work, in particular:

- 🔥 National Audit Office's 2015 Code of Practice, International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland);
- 🔥 The 2020/21 Code of Practice; and
- 🔥 Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

On the 23 December 2020, our external auditors Ernst & Young LLP (E&Y) issued an unqualified opinion on the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts. In the auditor's opinion, the Statement of Accounts provided a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority and have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20.

Additionally E&Y confirmed that in their opinion, in all significant respects the Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2020. As noted above, the audit of the 2020/21 accounts will be in late 2021 due to the availability of E&Y's audit team.

In July 2017 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) gained the statutory responsibility of the inspection of Fire and Rescue Services in England and Wales and became Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS). In 2020/21 HMICFRS inspected Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service were inspected twice. The first inspection was in October 2020 and looked specifically at how the Service had responded and adapted to the COVID pandemic. HMICFRS published their findings from this inspection in the form of a narrative judgement in [a letter to the Chief Fire Officer in January 2021](#).

The letter from HMICFRS states that '*the service reacted quickly and proactively to give additional support to partners and the community during the initial phases of the pandemic. It continued to provide the level of activity expected in its response and prevention functions.*' As well as recognising the work undertaken in response to the pandemic. HMICFRS identified four areas for the Service to focus on as it continues to respond to the pandemic.

HMICFRS returned in February 2021 to conduct a full inspection covering the areas of Effectiveness, Efficiency and People. A report will be published in December 2021 with graded judgements against the inspection criteria.

3.4. COMMITTEE & GROUPS

BFRA has adopted a Constitution which sets out how the Authority operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people and stakeholders.

All areas of the Service are covered to ensure that the Service is functioning efficiently and effectively. This is achieved by providing checks and challenges, monitoring performance and approving associated policy and activity. The Executive and Audit and Standards Committees make recommendations on matters within their terms of reference to the Authority according to their area of concern.

The Chairs of these Committees report any recommendations arising from these meetings to the meeting of the full FRA. Reporting will also include on-going policy and decision making, which is facilitated by a clear framework of delegation set out in the Authority's Constitution, including details of delegated authorities to officers.

All reports are reviewed for legal, human resource, financial and risk considerations prior to being presented to Members of the BFRA for formal decision-making. This, together with an appropriate level of delegation to both the Authority Executive and Senior Managers, enables prompt decision making.

In 2020/21 the BFRA appointed each member of the Executive Committee with a special responsibility for the following portfolios:

- 🔥 Prevention and Protection;
- 🔥 Operational Performance and Preparedness;
- 🔥 Corporate Risk, Health and Safety;
- 🔥 People Board, Staffing and Diversity; and,
- 🔥 Collaboration.

3.5. REVIEW OF AUTHORITY EFFECTIVENESS

In 2010, the Authority agreed a recommendation of the Audit Committee that it publishes an Annual Review of the Fire Authority's Effectiveness and Record of Member Attendance. A Form of Review Questionnaire was thereafter prepared and annually sent out to all Members for consideration and completion. In prior years, this was discussed in each Policy and Challenge Group and the Audit and Standards Committee. It was agreed for 2018/19, in light of a new authority commencing in June 2019 and that the process had been repeated over a number of years, that the review would not take place during 2019/20. During 2021/22 it was agreed that a Fire and Rescue Authority Governance structure review will take place in 2021/22.

3.6 INTERNAL CONTROL FRAMEWORK

BFRA has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

The Internal Auditors provide an annual opinion on the internal control framework and operate to standards set out in the Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the UK. The key features of the Authority's internal control framework, which directly contribute to the review of effectiveness are:

- 🔥 The Fire and Rescue Authority;
- 🔥 The Audit and Standards Committee;
- 🔥 Internal Audit;
- 🔥 External Audit;
- 🔥 Assurance Statements; and,
- 🔥 Internal Performance Management Framework.

BFRA has a robust Performance Management Framework in place for securing continuous improvement in its services and where the quality of service to the communities can be measured using local performance indicators.

An integral part of the performance framework includes the setting of organisational key performance indicators. These are agreed and monitored on a quarterly basis by senior managers of the Service with performance being reported through the Corporate Management Team, the Authority's Policy and Challenge Groups, and to full FRA Meetings.

Corporate indicators are established annually by the FRA alongside local indicators set by the Service. These are monitored continuously using a data toolkit and reported and scrutinized quarterly by senior managers of the Service with performance being reported through the Corporate Management Team and to full FRA Meetings.

For the year ending 2020/21 the Annual Internal Audit report advised that the Auditors were satisfied that sufficient internal audit work had been undertaken to allow them to draw a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Authority's arrangements.

3.7 DATA TRANSPARENCY

In accordance with the *Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency*, BFRA is committed to greater openness and financial transparency through the publication, on the [Authority's website](#), of information regarding how public money is spent. This includes payments for goods and services to external bodies and suppliers above £500, and details of salaries and allowances paid to staff and Members.

In doing so, BFRA utilise a number of information sources and data sets to improve the delivery of service to the communities and reports its performance accordingly. The performance data and information is published in the form of reports against targets and outcomes showing the performance of BFRA.

4. OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE

The National Framework does not prescribe operational firefighting matters; this is determined locally by respective FRAs.

However, it does set out the government's priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities in England that include:

- 🔥 Identifying and assessing the full range of foreseeable fire and rescue related risks in the respective areas;
- 🔥 Making provision for prevention and protection activities and responding to incidents appropriately;
- 🔥 Working with partners within the communities both locally and nationally to deliver their services; and,
- 🔥 Being accountable to communities for the service they provide through the 'Statement of Assurance'.

FRAs operate within a defined boundary of a statutory framework that has a number of key documents that outline responsibilities, these include:

- 🔥 [The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#);
- 🔥 [The Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#);
- 🔥 [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#);
- 🔥 [The Fire and Rescue Services \(Emergencies\) \(England\) Order 2007](#);
- 🔥 [The Localism Act 2011](#);
- 🔥 [The Fire and Rescue National Framework](#);
- 🔥 [Local Government Act 2010](#); and,
- 🔥 [Health and Safety & Work Act 1974](#).

In addition to the statutory framework and assurance detailed above, BFRA has a range of key performance indicators and measures reported throughout the year. An integral part of operational assurance includes prevention and protection services and emergency response standards; these are regularly monitored and reviewed by the Service and the FRA by:

- 🔥 Internal audits of service delivery functions;
- 🔥 Quarterly performance reporting against station-based targets;
- 🔥 Formal evaluation of prevention and protection activities; and,
- 🔥 Full summary report of performance for the previous financial year.

Further Operational Assurance is provided externally by HMICFRS who found BFRS in 2018 to be 'Good' at responding to fires and other emergencies and also periodically by National Resilience Assurance Team (NRAT) for our National Resilience assets.

4.1. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

BFRA oversees the performance of the Service throughout the year by the monitoring of robust and challenging Performance Indicators (PIs) and associated targets, aimed to maximise the effort and resources of the Service. The implementation of the Service Corporate Performance Dashboard provides all staff with easy access to these PI's.

The FRA scrutinises the performance data and provides challenge to Officers on the Service performance. The Service continues to develop its KPI Dashboard that enables officers to easily access our performance data and actively manage the service an informed way. The end of year Service performance report is available [here](#).

Full details of the Service's performance for 2020/21 and comparison against performance for 2019/20 is reported within the [Annual Overarching Performance Report 2020/21](#).

4.2. COMMUNITY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

In April 2020/21 BFRS launched a refreshed version of the Community Risk Management Plan 2019 - 2023 (CRMP). This document is the Authority's programme for securing continuous improvement in its services and outlines the Authority's vision, objectives and priorities for the future, sets performance targets and outlines the Authority's accountability to its stakeholders and the communities in line with the requirements of the National Framework for Fire and Rescue Services in England.

The CRMP contains a Service Action Plan (see Appendix A) which is an ambitious programme of 30 actions to drive improvement across the Service. 21 (70%) of the actions have been fully completed. Each action is split into several tasks with 70 individual tasks out of 87 being completed (80%).

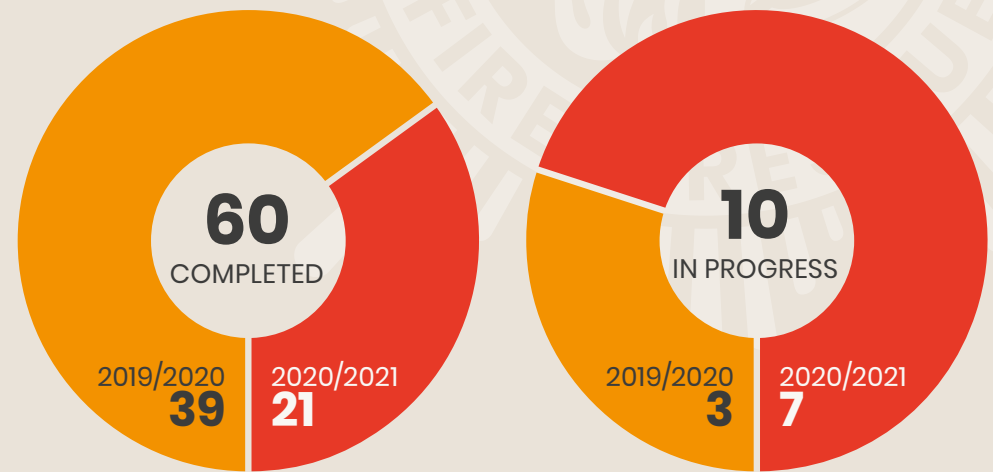


Table 1: Progress on Community Risk Management Plan Actions

Year	Completed	Deferred	In Progress	Not started	Total
2019 - 2020	39	0	3	0	42
2020 - 2021	21	1	7	1	30
Total	60	1	10	1	72

4.3. MUTUAL AID AND REINFORCEMENT SCHEMES

Sections [13](#) and [16](#) of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 place a requirement on all FRAs to enter in to Mutual Aid agreements with neighbouring FRs. The purpose of these agreements is to enable the summoning of assistance to provide and utilise resources such as fire engines when required to attend a range of incidents. In addition to Mutual Aid, FRAs, as far as is practicable, should enter into Reinforcement Schemes, for securing mutual assistance between authorities and for the purpose of discharging their functions. BFRA has in place mutual agreements with neighbouring FRAs. In addition, the Service, through National Resilience, provides specialist appliances and crews for mass decontamination. See 4.6.

4.4. BUSINESS CONTINUITY ARRANGEMENTS

The [Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004](#) and the [Civil Contingencies Act 2004](#) places a legal duty for all FRAs to write and maintain plans for the purpose of ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that if an emergency occurs the Authority is able to continue its functions.

In response to these duties BFRA has robust Business Continuity Management (BCM) plans in place which are integral in managing corporate risk and provides, in the event of a major disruption, a Fire and Rescue Service to the community. The BCM plans cover a broad range of interruptions for specific events such as wide spreading Pandemics through to individual functional disruptions within the Service. These plans provide resilience arrangements across the entire Service.

In summary our BCM plans provide clear and defined strategies to be adapted to aid achievement of the following objectives:

- 🔥 Provide a response to events that threaten the delivery of services to the community of Bedfordshire;
- 🔥 Protect the Service from business interruptions;
- 🔥 In the event of business interruptions to provide a coordinated recovery; and,
- 🔥 Facilitate a risk management culture embedded into the Service to enable risks to be identified and managed effectively.

The Service Pandemic Business Continuity Plan was utilised in March 2020 to formulate the Service response to the COVID pandemic. The plan focused our planning and delivery of services with our response to COVID creating opportunities to swiftly review, develop and deliver new ways of working for our staff, partners and communities. The Service response to COVID was inspected by HMICFRS in October 2020. HMICFRS reported that: *'In line with good governance, the service had a pandemic flu plan and business continuity plans in place which were in date. These plans were activated.'* HMICFRS also stated that: *'The plans were detailed enough to enable the service to make an effective initial response, but, understandably, they didn't anticipate and mitigate all the risks presented by COVID.'*

The Service is a member of the NFCC Business Continuity Group. This gives the Service access to information on best BCM practice for the Fire and Rescue Sector.



4.5. NATIONAL RESILIENCE

The UK Fire and Rescue Service forms an integral part of the Governments National Resilience capability as Category 1 Responders.

Category 1 Responders include Blue-light emergency services as well Local Authorities and NHS hospitals etc. where the capacity and capability of FRs work together with Category 1, and Category 2 Responders (Utilities/Transport infrastructure providers etc.) to deliver a sustained and effective response to major incidents, emergencies and disruptive challenges.

In addition to working with other FRAs, BFRA work closely with and are members of the [Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum](#) (BLRF) which is a statutory body covering a police force area, designed to bring together Category 1 and Category 2 Responders for multi-agency co-operation and information sharing. This is in line with the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) which states every area of the United Kingdom is required to establish a Local Resilience Forum.

BFRA is a major contributor to national and regional resilience with the capability to respond to major disasters and terrorist attacks, where some types of incident that are larger in scale may require a Fire and Rescue Service response.

BFRA are actively involved in National Resilience arrangements and hold a Module for Mass Decontamination. The Service also has Water Rescue national assets which have been mobilised to assist other Fire and Rescue Services on several occasions, this would be following requests from the National Resilience Fire Control based in Merseyside.

BFRS, one of several FRs in the UK have a Special Response Team (SRT) to support Police and Ambulance operations. This team is exercised on a regular basis with other Category 1 Responders ensuring that the team is ready for operational deployment. As part of the assurance process to the Service, the Specialist Response Team were audited in 2016 as part of the National Audit Programme and a number of areas were highlighted as notable practice.

In August 2020 we launched a new Technical Support Unit, based at Dunstable Fire Station. This was the first of its kind in the country, where emergency removal of a Bariatric or complex patient is required to support EEAST.

Specially trained firefighters have responded to more than 300 calls. Instead of the four-step resource-intensive approach, previously involving up to three ambulances and several ambulance staff, a two-step response has proved successful. This new vehicle will respond to Bariatric and complex patient incidents where emergency removal of a patient is required to support the East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST). This dedicated vehicle carries specialist equipment including a bariatric stretcher provided by EEAST which, will enable crews to provide the best possible care to the patient. This was part of our joint Blue Light Collaborations with various response vehicles being co-located at fire stations across the County. With a bariatric stretcher on the unit, the process is quicker, easier and more dignified for the individual and frees up ambulance capacity. It also ensures those vulnerable and at risk of fire are identified. This is an additional part of our collaboration with EEAST who have ambulances based at Dunstable Fire Station.

OUR COVID RESPONSE IN NUMBERS APR '20 - MAR '21

 **600+**

extra ambulances in Bedfordshire crewed by staff since Apr '20

 **20,300+**

frontline patient hours spent supporting EEAST

 **1700+**

BFRS shifts completed with EEAST

 **500+**

food parcels delivered

 **50+**

BFRS staff trained as ambulance drivers

 **77%**

patients safely left at home by our **Falls Team**

 **15,500**

patients reached by our joint (BFRS & EEAST) teams

 **awards**

Gold Award received for our EEAST collaboration and a number of individual recognitions.

5.

CONCLUSION

This Statement of Assurance provides an accurate account of Bedfordshire Fire Authority's Financial, Governance and Operational Assurance arrangements secured from the 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

I am satisfied that Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority conducted its business practices within the appropriate legal framework and standards and that public money was properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. This Statement of Assurance was approved by the Audit and Standards Committee on 21st September 2021.



Signed

Chief Fire Officer



Signed

Chair Audit and Standards Committee
on behalf of the Bedfordshire Fire and
Rescue Authority



Signed

Chair of the Bedfordshire Fire and
Rescue Authority



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REPORT AUTHOR: ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER / FRA TREASURER

SUBJECT: 2021/22 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING as at 30th September 2021

For further information on this Report contact: Mr Gavin Chambers
Assistant Chief Officer/Treasurer
Tel No: 01234 845000

Background Papers: 2021/22 FRA Budget Setting Papers February 2021

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL			FINANCIAL	✓
HUMAN RESOURCES			EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL			POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	✓	OTHER (please specify)	
	New	✓		

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To inform the Fire and Rescue Authority of the forecast year-end budget monitoring position as at 30th September 2021.

Recommendations:

1. That the FRA consider and comment on the updates provided within this report.
2. Approve the recommendation that the refund of Rates from 2017 to 2021 payable on the Authority's properties be allocated to the Transformation Reserve. (see para 2.3.4)
3. That FRA consider and comment on the Capital expenditure addition on the smoke house urgent repairs (see para 3.4.2)

Executive Highlights Summary

- The **CSR** review was announced in late November 2020 which led to a one-year settlement for 2021/22. The new CSR will take place in autumn 2021 and it has been confirmed that this will be a 3 CSR however we await confirmation if we will receive a 3 year settlement.
- The cost relating to the 1.5% pay award for Fire Fighters has been built into the forecast in table 2.
- There is a potential pay award for Green Book staff which will be backdated to 1st April 2021, an offer of 1.75% was made by employers however this offer has been rejected and negotiations are continuing. Should the 1.75% increase be agreed this would lead to an overspend of £108k in Non-Operational areas, the cost for this has been built into the forecast in table 2.
- The service has been given a grant of £35.4k to fund additional costs relating to Sergeant/McCloud Fire Fighter Pension Age Discrimination admin costs. It is expected these costs will be incurred over a number of years and so any unused grant this year will be carried forward into future years.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 11th February 2021, the Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) approved a Revenue Budget Requirement for 2021/22 of £31.773m and a Capital Programme of £1.038m.

2. Revenue Budget Monitoring

- 2.1 The Revenue Budget efficiency savings for 2021/22 can be found in Appendix 1. The budgets have been reduced for these areas and will be monitored during the year.

2.2 The funding of the 2021/22 Revenue Budget is by way of Government Funding £8.057, local Business Rates redistribution £2.405m and Council Tax of £22.193m and the use of the collection fund reserve of £254k. These are offset by a Collection Fund deficit of £1.136m which has been reported by our Local Authority partners.

2.3 Forecasting Outturn:

2.3.1 Tables 1 and 2 below are populated during the year in line with the spreadsheet returns that Corporate Management Team (CMT) members submit to the Finance Team and through the meetings that Finance Officers have with CMT members. The forecast outturn positions are as accurate as the information received from each CMT member.

2.3.2 Table 1 below details the current budget excluding salary budgets, for each CMT service area. The forecast year-end outturn is shown in column three.

2.3.3 Table 1: 2021/22 Revenue Budget Forecast Outturn (excluding salary budgets)

Title	Current Budget £	YTD Actuals	F/cast Yr-End Outturn £	Variance £	RAG status (see note below**)
Strategic Management	313,400	53,024	313,400	0	Green
Assistant Chief Officer	2,228,600	(554,312)	2,008,600	(220,000)	Green
Head of Response	1,121,200	359,880	1,045,200	(76,000)	Green
Head of Training and Assurance	502,000	203,319	502,000	0	Green
Head of Governance and Asset Management	682,600	453,225	682,600	0	Green
Head of Prevention and Protection	112,300	(208,168)	112,300	0	Green
Head of Information Communications Technology	2,219,500	453,380	2,234,500	15,000	Green
Head of Human Resources	256,200	106,377	256,200	0	Green
Total	7,435,800	866,725	7,154,800	(281,000)	

***RAG Status: Red would identify where there is a large overspend equal to or greater than £100,000 and/or a key service aspect was not being delivered. Amber would identify where there is a possibility of an overspend and/or a key service aspect may not be delivered. It may be that there are action plans in place to address an issue, where until they are successful it is flagged as Amber. Green identifies where service delivery is being performed and as above, where there are underspends. Underspends are not necessarily always green, if for example, there was a key service aspect not being delivered causing the underspend, it would be shown as Red.*

2.3.4 The variances shown in Table 1 above as at 30th September 2021 are;

The (£220k) underspend within the ACO area is the result of an exercise, which was undertaken by the property department in conjunction with an external company to review the Business Rates paid on stations across the service. The result of this work is that for most fire stations across the service the business rates between 2017 and 2021 were calculated incorrectly which will lead to a refund in the region of £220k. It is recommended that this income be allocated to the Transformation reserve at year-end.

The underspend (£76k) within the HRes area relates to the reduction in rates due to be paid in 2021/22 as a result of the exercise undertaken by property and an external company. (see above)

In 2020/21 the Home Office overpaid the Firelink Grant to all Fire and Rescue Services, the £15k overspend in HICT is the BFRS proportion of this grant which will be removed from the 2021/22 allocation in order to repay this overpayment.

2.3.5 The current year to date (YTD) spend as at 31 August 2021 in table 1 looks low in a number of areas, the reasons for this are highlighted below;

Strategic Management - includes a Strategic Development/Innovation budget of £250k where there is no spend to date, this is to fund strategic projects across the Service which is yet to be apportioned to the different projects.

Assistant Chief Officer - include £1.3m of year-end adjustments for contributions to capital, loan principal and interest, also the income received from our local authority partners which is received over 11 months so not equally apportioned across the financial year. Overall, these variances will be £0 at year-end.

Head of Response – A exercise was undertaken by the property department in conjunction with an external company to review the Business Rates paid on stations across the service, this has led to a reduction in rates for the fire stations across

the service. Further to this lower than expected spend to date in table 1 above also includes a year-end accrual for cross border charges which is yet to be received for £30k, Ballistic kit refresh which is yet to be spent £77k.

Head of Training and Assurance budgets above include training budgets where we are currently showing variance of £70k underspend against budget however this is expected these budgets will show £0 variance at year end with any unspent budgets earmarked into 2022/23.

Within the Head of Prevention and Protection there are currently YTD underspend variances to budgets as a result of Dementia income from our local authority partners, this is offset by spend on salaries (70k). There is also unbudgeted income of £227k for Building Risk review and the Protection uplift, it is expected that that these budgets will be £0 variances at year end with any unspent budgets earmarked into 2022/23.

Head of Information Communications Technology spend to date looks low due to the timing of contracts within this area for Hardware, Software and telecommunications compared to the budget, which is spread equally over the year, these variances will be £0 at year end. Also, within this area is an Earmarked Reserve for the new Mobilisation system (£970k) which is due to be spent over a number of years and any unspent budgets will be earmarked into 2022/23.

2.3.6 With the salary budgets being such a large proportion of the overall budget, the split from the budgets above is justified.

Table 2: 2021/22 Salary (including on-costs) Budget Forecast Outturn

Category	Current Budget £	YTD Actuals £	Forecast year end outturn £	Variance £	Revised Variance £
Whole Time	15,818,800	7,649,138	15,970,800	152,000	0
Control	1,049,200	554,995	1,061,200	12,000	0
Retained	2,013,200	1,139,223	2,043,200	30,000	0
-	6,355,400	3,215,874	6,463,400	108,000	0
Agency	164,300	139,491	164,300	0	0
Grand Total	25,400,900	12,698,721	25,702,900	302,000	0

2.4 Total Forecast Outturn, Salary and Non Salary:

- 2.4.1 The total forecast variance at year end including both the non-salary figure in Table 1 above and for pay and on costs, including agency staff shown in Table 2, is currently expected to be (£281k) underspent.
- 2.4.2 It was agreed at the FRA on 15th July 2021 to draw down funds from the earmarked reserve that has been set up for agreed and potential pay awards in order to offset the unbudgeted in-year pay award for Operational staff £194k. It is proposed to treat the Green Book pay award the same way. If agreed this will “reset” the pay budget and forecasts to nil (£0k) for the next FRA Budget Monitoring report.
- 2.4.3 The full year cost of the pay award for operation staff will be £260k, this will be built into the base budget for 2022/23 as part of the budget setting process. Should there be a pay award for non-operational staff agreed further in the year (£108k) then this will also be included in the base budget for the 2022/23 budget setting process.

3. Capital Programme Monitoring

- 3.1 Table 3 below is the 2021/22 Capital Programme. The Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status indicates how well the schemes are progressing (Green being on target for year-end completion within budget; Amber indicating possible slippage or overspend; and Red indicating actual slippage/overspend or deletion of the scheme).
- 3.2 It should be noted that the Vehicles, ICT and HR System Projects and Property Capital Works Programmes need to be treated with fluidity as the costs and expected completion dates can vary considerably and span across financial years. However, in accordance with the financial regulations, any significant changes of expenditure over 10% of an approved capital scheme need to be reported back to the FRA.

3.3 Table 3: The 2021/22 Capital Programme

CMT Area	Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority Capital Programme	Budgets 2021/22 £000's	RAG Status
HGAM	Fleet:		
	Vehicles	85	G
	BA Set, Cylinders and Ancillaries	450	Slip into 2022/23
	RP Portable Lighting	50	G
	Methods of Entry Kit	25	G
	Fire Ground Radio	112	G
	ICT Projects:		
ICT	a. Migration from Unified Comms on premise to Microsoft Teams Cloud	80	G
ICT	b. Endpoint Refresh with Desktop & Laptop Deployment	84	G
	Other:		
ACO	Capital Works - Service Wide (lighting replacements, CCTV, fire protection, doors & windows, security gates, etc) - All locations	52	G
ACO	Bay Floor replacements (Bedford, Biggleswade, Pottton, Shefford, Toddington)	65	G
HHR	Fitness Equipment Expenditure	5	G
HGAM	Compressors - Dunstable and Bedford	30	G
	TOTAL	1,038	

3.4 Capital Programme – Withdrawals, Slippage, Additions or Variations:

3.4.1 **Slippage:** On 15th July 2021 the FRA agreed to the proposal by the Head of Governance and Assets Manager (HGAM) request that the BA Set, Cylinders and Ancillaries be slipped into 2022/23. Work has now started to deliver this project however and options are being explored to purchase some equipment under this project prior to the year-end. Regular updates will be provided to the FRA on the progress going forward.

3.4.2 **Additions:** It was agreed at Corporate Management Team to fund urgent works to the value of £82k which need to be undertaken within the smoke house to improve the Health & Safety (H&S) of users and also allow additional burn rooms to

enable the smoke house to rotate the room usage and heat intensity, work has already started on this. The cost of these works will be funded by the H&S and Property earmarked reserves that have been set up for such works when they arise.

3.4.3 **Variations:** None Report

ANDREW HOPKINSON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

GAVIN CHAMBERS
ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER / FRA TREASURER

Savings and Efficiencies 2021/22

CMT Area	Savings/Efficiencies	£'000s 2021/22	RAG Status
ACO	Income from Property Rents & Collaboration	5	Green
ACO	Energy Management Savings (Insulation & works following bid for grant)	5	Green
CFO	Change of 4th Area Commander post to Green Book Head of Service (subject to natural turnover)	15	Green
CFO	Team review/restructure	13	Green
CFO	Efficiencies from Operational Review	64	Green
HGAM	Income from Workshops Non business Activity	25	Green
HRes	Post sharing - work on Fire Investigation ISO17020 project (part time post shared with Cambs & Herts FRS)	10	Green
ICT	Freedom of Information and Customer Complaints software	6	Amber
ICT	Corporate Telephony	20	Green
ICT	Saving from cessation of software, linked with new purchase of GIS and Data modelling solution	18	Amber
		181	

The Freedom of Information and Customer Complaints software saving (£10k) has been rated amber by HICT as working is ongoing with the software provider to develop the new software and it is unclear if this work will be complete by the year-end.

Saving from cessation of software, linked with new purchase of GIS and Data modelling solution saving (£18k) has been rated amber by HICT, this project is at the procurement stage and it is currently unknown when this process will be complete.

*** NB - All Savings have been removed from 2021-22 Base Budget**

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REPORT AUTHORS: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER

SUBJECT: TREASURY MANAGEMENT – MID-YEAR REVIEW REPORT TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

For further information on this Report contact: Mr Gavin Chambers
Assistant Chief Officer/Treasurer
Tel No: 01234 845000

Background Papers:

Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22, as detailed in the Budget Book 2021/22.

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	✓
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
ORGANISATIONAL RISK		CORE BRIEF	
		OTHER (please specify)	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To provide an update on the Authority's Treasury Management to 30 September 2021.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Fire and Rescue Authority consider and comment on the report.

1. Introduction

1.1 Since 1 April 2006, the management of the Fire and Rescue Authority's (FRA) Treasury operations has been undertaken by the Authority's Finance staff. Treasury management activities are undertaken with the objective of maximising return/minimising cost, consistent with minimising risk. When investing, the over-riding principle is the maintenance of the capital sum.

In order to support this function, the Authority also employs Link Asset Services to provide independent, professional treasury advice.

1.2 The FRA's banking facilities are also arranged and monitored by the Finance staff.

1.3 The FRA adopted the Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), revised in 2017. One of the requirements of the CIPFA Code is for there to be regular reports on Treasury Management to be presented to the appropriate 'committee'. This is the mid-year Review Report for 2021/22 to 30 September 2021.

1.4 The FRA is asked to note the report, as there are no changes requested to the Prudential Indicators, approval is not required by the FRA.

2. Treasury Management Reports

2.1 This mid-year review report has been prepared in compliance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and covers the following:

- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Authority's capital expenditure (prudential indicators);
- A review of the Authority's investment portfolio for 2021/22;
- A review of the Authority's borrowing strategy for 2021/22;
- A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken (if applicable) during 2021/22;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2021/22;
- An economic update for the first six months of 2021/22.

3. Treasury Management Training

3.1 The Responsible Officer (the Section 151 Officer) must ensure that Group/FRA Members tasked with treasury management responsibilities, including those responsible for scrutiny, have access to training relevant to their needs and those responsibilities.

3.2 Training has previously been provided to Members by our Treasury Advisor's, Link Asset Services. This can again be arranged at the Members request and is recommended by the Treasurer.

4. Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy Update

For the current year, these were approved by the FRA on 23 March 2021. There are no policy changes to the TMSS, the details in this report update the position in the light of the updated economic position and budgetary changes already approved.

5. Authorities Capital Position (Prudential Indicators)

This part of the report is structured to update:

- Capital expenditure plans

- How these plans are being financed
- The impact of the changes in the capital expenditure plans on the prudential indicators and the underlying need to borrow; and
- Compliance with the limits in place for borrowing activity.

5.1 Prudential Indicator for Capital Expenditure

This table shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme was agreed at the Budget.

Capital Expenditure by Service	2021/22 Original Estimate £'000	Current Position £'000	2021/22 Revised Estimate £'000
As per Budget Book	1,308	64	1,308

5.2 Changes to the Financing of the Capital Programme

The table below draws together the main strategy elements of the capital expenditure plans (above), highlighting the original supported and unsupported elements of the capital programme, and the expected financing arrangements of this capital expenditure. The borrowing element of the table increases the underlying indebtedness of the Authority by way of the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), although this will be reduced in part by revenue charges for the repayment of debt (the Minimum Revenue Provision). This direct borrowing need may also be supplemented by maturing debt and other treasury requirements.

Capital Expenditure	2021/22 Original Estimate £'000	2021/22 Revised Estimate £'000
Total Capital Expenditure	1,038	1,038
Financed by:		
Capital receipts	35	35
Capital grants	0	0
Capital reserves	545	545
Revenue	458	458
Total financing	1,308	1,308
Borrowing Requirement	0	0

5.3 Changes to the Prudential Indicators for the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), External Debt and the Operational Boundary

The table below shows the CFR, which is the underlying external need to incur borrowing for a capital purpose. It also shows the expected debt position over the period, which is termed the operational Boundary.

Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement

We are on target to achieve the original forecast Capital Financing Requirement.

Prudential Indicator – the Operational Boundary for external debt

	2021/22 Original Estimate £'000	Current Position £'000	2021/22 Revised Estimate £'000
Prudential Indicator – Capital Financing Requirement			
TOTAL CFR	7,550	7,550	7,550
Net movement in CFR	(277)	(277)	(277)
Prudential Indicator – the Operational Boundary for external debt			
Borrowing	9,987	9,987	9,987
Other long term liabilities*	0	0	0
Total debt (year end position)	9,987	9,987	9,987

5.4 Limits to Borrowing Activity

The first key control over the treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing, (borrowings less investments) will only be for a capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total of CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2021/22 and next two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years. The Authority has approved a policy for borrowing in advance of need which will be adhered to if this proves prudent.

	2021/22 Original Estimate £'000	Current Position £'000	2021/22 Revised Estimate £'000
Borrowing	9,987	9,987	9,987
Other long-term liabilities	0	0	0
Total debt	9,987	9,987	9,987
CFR* (year end position)	7,273	7,273	7,273

The Treasurer reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current future years in complying with this prudential indicator.

A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

Authorised limit for external Debt	2021/22 Original Indicator £'000	Current Position £'000	2021/22 Revised Indicator £'000
Borrowing	9,987	9,987	9,987
Other long-term liabilities	1,900	1,900	1,900
Total	11,893	11,893	11,893

5. Borrowing/Investment Strategy for 2021/22

- 5.1 It was anticipated at the beginning of 2021/22 that the Authority would have surplus funds available for short-term investment, either within its Special Interest Bearing Account (SIBA) at its bankers or through the money market. As at the 30 September 2021 the SIBA account is paying a rate of 0.01%.
- 5.2 The Authority's call-account with Barclays Bank has been used during 2021/22. As at the 30 September 2021 the Barclays account is paying a rate of 0.01%.
- 5.3 This Authority's 120-Day Interest account with Santander has been used during 2021/22. As at the 30 September 2021 this account is paying a rate of 0.50%.
- 5.4 This Authority's 180-Day Interest account with Santander has been used during 2021/22. As at the 30 September 2021 this account is paying a rate of 0.58%.
- 5.5 The Authority has re-invested two maturing deposits with Qatar National Bank during the first half of 2021/22, via our Treasury Agents, Link Asset Services. The Qatar National Bank fixed term investments are for six months both at a rate of 0.39% and will mature January 2022 (£2.25M) and February 2022 (£2.75M).
- 5.6 This Authority's 95-Day Interest account with Lloyds Bank has been used during 2021/22. As at the 30 September 2021 this account is paying a rate of 0.05%.
- 5.7 During the second half of 2021/22 this Authority will be considering using Money Market Funds for short-term investments. Operators use the credit ratings agencies which lay down investment restrictions to enable the funds to maintain its AAA status. Money Market Funds may also be governed by the Institutional Money Market Fund Association (IMMFA) which is a voluntary code of practice issued in 1992 by a trade body for Money Market Funds. This ensures all members offer a consistently high-quality product by promoting best practice, transparency of fund values and a standardised format for published data.

5.8 Borrowing has not been undertaken in 2021/22 to finance the Capital Programme. The funding for the 2021/22 Capital Programme was through Reserves and Revenue contributions.

6. Interest Rate Movements During 2021/22

6.1 Bank base rate has remained at 0.10% from the beginning of the year.

6.2 Interest rates applicable to temporary investments were short-term money market rates. These investments were fixed for a set period (between one month and one year), at a greater interest rate than bank base rate. During the first six months of 2021/22, two investments reached maturity, and were rolled over for another six months. When placing these, a number of factors were considered, including cashflow, security, return etc in order to meet our Policies and at the same time get the best return.

7. Investment/Borrowing Operations

7.1 Investments:

Surplus cash is invested on a temporary basis through the money market. Levels of investment have remained at £5M at the start of 2021/22 to £5M as at 30 September 2021. In the year 2021/22 to 30 September 2021, £16,907 interest will have been generated through these investments and through the local SIBA account, Barclays Account, Santander Accounts and Lloyds Account. Interest on PWLB borrowings totals of £210,817 was paid on 30 September 2021. This will give a net interest paid position of £193,910 as at 1 October 2021.

7.2 The FRA's budgeted investment return (interest receivable) for 2021/22 was set at £65,400. However, due to Covid-19 and the unexpected drop in Bank of England base rate this has been revised to an expected return of approximately £50,000.

7.3 Long-Term Borrowing:

Debt rescheduling opportunities have been very limited in the current economic climate given the consequent structure of interest rates and following the increase in the margin added to gilt yields which has impacted PWLB new borrowing rates since October 2010. No debt rescheduling has therefore been undertaken to date in the current financial year.

7.4 Borrowing and Investments Outstanding:

	Temporary Investments £000s	Long-Term Borrowing £000s
Outstanding at 1 April 2021	5,000	9,987
Raised	5,000	0
Repaid	5,000	0
Outstanding at 30 September 2021	5,000	9,987

NB – The Temporary Investments above do not include the balances from the Authority’s bank Accounts

8. Performance Measurement

- 8.1 The success of cash flow management, and hence the Fire Authority’s temporary investment and borrowing activity, is measured by comparing the actual rates of interest achieved and borne against a benchmark of the average Local Authority 7 Day Rate.
- 8.2 For the period ending 30 September 2021, the average interest rate achieved from temporary investments, the SIBA Account, Barclays, Lloyds and Santander Accounts was 0.23%, higher than the average Local Authority 7 Day Rate over the same period of 0.08%.

9. General Economic Conditions

9.1 In brief, the first five months of this financial year has seen:

- Inflation – Target Inflation (CPI) was at 0.70% on 1 April 2021 and at 3.20% by 31 August 2021 (+2.50% change).
Headline Inflation (RPI) was at 1.50% on 1 April 2021 and at 4.80% by 31 August 2021 (+3.30% change).

9.2 Economic Update - An economic update is provided at Appendix 1.

10. Economic Forecast – (29.9.21 Link Asset Services update)

The Authority's Treasury Advisers, Link Asset Services, have provided the following forecast:

	End Q3 2021	End Q4 2021	End Q1 2022	End Q2 2022	End Q3 2022	End Q4 2022
Bank Rate	0.10%	0.10%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%	0.25%
5yr PWLB rate	1.40%	1.40%	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.60%
10yr PWLB rate	1.80%	1.80%	1.90%	1.90%	2.00%	2.00%
25yr PWLB rate	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%	2.30%	2.40%	2.40%
50yr PWLB rate	2.00%	2.00%	2.10%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%

ANDREW HOPKINSON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

GAVIN CHAMBERS
TREASURER

MPC meeting 5.8.21

- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously to leave Bank Rate unchanged at 0.10% and made no changes to its programme of quantitative easing purchases due to finish by the end of this year at a total of £895bn; only one MPC member voted to stop these purchases now to leave total purchases £45bn short of the total target.
- While that was all very much unchanged from previous MPC decisions over the last year, there was a major shift from indicating no expected tightening any time soon to now flagging up that **interest rate increases were now on the horizon**. There was disagreement among MPC members, some of whom felt that the forward guidance that the MPC won't tighten policy until inflation "is achieving the 2% inflation target sustainably", had already been met. Although other MPC members did not agree with them, they did all agree that **"some modest tightening of monetary policy over the forecast period was likely to be necessary to be consistent with meeting the inflation target sustainably in the medium term"**.
- The MPC was more upbeat in its new 2-3 year forecasts so whereas they had expected unemployment to peak at 5.4% in Q3, the MPC now thought that the peak had already passed. (It is to be noted though, that the recent spread of the Delta variant has damaged growth over the last couple of months and has set back recovery to the pre-pandemic level of economic activity till probably late 2021.)
- We have been waiting for the MPC to conclude a **review of its monetary policy** as to whether it should raise Bank Rate first before reducing its balance sheet (quantitative easing) holdings of bonds. This review has now been completed so we learnt that it will start to tighten monetary policy by: -
 1. Placing the focus on raising Bank Rate as "the active instrument in most circumstances".
 2. Raising Bank Rate to 0.50% (1.50% previously), before starting on reducing its holdings.
 3. Once Bank Rate is at 0.50% it would stop reinvesting maturing gilts.
 4. Once Bank Rate had risen to at least 1%, it would start selling its holdings.

- What the MPC did not give us was any indication on when it would start raising Bank Rate. Inflation is currently expected to peak at over 4% during 2021. **The key issue** then is whether this is just going to be transitory inflation or whether it will morph into inflation which will exceed the MPC's 2% target on an ongoing basis. In his press conference, Governor Andrew Bailey said, "the challenge of avoiding a steep rise in unemployment has been replaced by that of ensuring a flow of labour into jobs" and that "the Committee will be monitoring closely the incoming evidence regarding developments in the labour market, and particularly unemployment, wider measures of slack, and underlying wage pressures." In other words, it's worried that labour shortages will push up wage growth by more than it expects and that, as a result, CPI inflation will stay above the 2% target for longer. Which then raises an interesting question as to whether the million or so workers who left the UK during the pandemic, will come back to the UK and help to relieve wage inflation pressures. We also have an unknown as to how trade with the EU will evolve once the pandemic distortions have dissipated now that the UK no longer has tariff free access to EU markets.
- At the current time, the MPC's forecasts are showing inflation close to, but just below, its 2% target in 2 to 3 years' time. The initial surge in inflation in 2021 and 2022 is due to a combination of base effects, one off energy price increases and a release of pent-up demand, particularly from consumers who have accumulated massive savings during the pandemic, hitting supply constraints. However, these effects will gradually subside or fall out of the calculation of inflation. The issue for the MPC will, therefore, turn into a question of **when the elimination of spare capacity in the economy** takes over as being the main driver to push inflation upwards and this could then mean that the MPC will not start tightening policy until 2023. Remember, the MPC has sets its policy as being wanting to see inflation coming in sustainably over 2% to counteract periods when inflation was below 2%. While financial markets have been pricing in a hike in Bank Rate to 0.25% by mid-2022, and to 0.50% by the end of 2022, they appear to be getting ahead of themselves. The first increase to 0.25% is more likely to come later; our forecast shows the first increase in Q1 of 23/24 and the second to 0.50% in Q4 of 23/24. The second increase would then open the way for the Bank to cease reinvesting maturing bonds sometime during 2024.

Gilt and treasury yields

Since the start of 2021, we have seen a lot of volatility in gilt yields, and hence PWLB rates. During the first part of the year, US President Biden's, and the Democratic party's determination to push through a \$1.9trn (equivalent to 8.8% of GDP) fiscal boost for the US economy as a recovery package from the Covid pandemic was what unsettled financial markets. However, this was in addition to the \$900bn support package already passed in December 2020 under President Trump. This was then followed by additional Democratic ambition to spend further huge sums on infrastructure and an American families plan over the next decade

which are caught up in Democrat / Republican haggling. Financial markets were alarmed that all this stimulus, which is much bigger than in other western economies, was happening at a time in the US when: -

1. A fast vaccination programme has enabled a rapid opening up of the economy.
2. The economy had already been growing strongly during 2021.
3. It started from a position of little spare capacity due to less severe lockdown measures than in many other countries. A combination of shortage of labour and supply bottle necks is likely to stoke inflationary pressures more in the US than in other countries.
4. And the Fed was still providing monetary stimulus through monthly QE purchases.

These factors could cause an excess of demand in the economy which could then unleash stronger and more sustained inflationary pressures in the US than in other western countries. This could then force the Fed to take much earlier action to start tapering monthly QE purchases and/or increasing the Fed rate from near zero, despite their stated policy being to target average inflation. It is notable that some Fed members have moved forward their expectation of when the first increases in the Fed rate will occur in recent Fed meetings. In addition, more recently, shortages of workers appear to be stoking underlying wage inflationary pressures which are likely to feed through into CPI inflation. A run of strong monthly jobs growth figures could be enough to meet the threshold set by the Fed of “substantial further progress towards the goal of reaching full employment”. However, the weak growth in August, (announced 3.9.21), has spiked anticipation that tapering of monthly QE purchases could start by the end of 2021. These purchases are currently acting as downward pressure on treasury yields. As the US financial markets are, by far, the biggest financial markets in the world, any trend upwards in the US will invariably impact and influence financial markets in other countries. However, during June and July, longer term yields fell sharply; even the large non-farm payroll increase in the first week of August seemed to cause the markets little concern, which is somewhat puzzling, particularly in the context of the concerns of many commentators that inflation may not be as transitory as the Fed is expecting it to be. Indeed, inflation pressures and erosion of surplus economic capacity look much stronger in the US than in the UK. **As an average since 2011, there has been a 75% correlation between movements in 10 year treasury yields and 10 year gilt yields. This is a significant UPWARD RISK exposure to our forecasts for longer term PWLB rates. However, gilt yields and treasury yields do not always move in unison.**

There are also possible **DOWNSIDE RISKS** from the huge sums of cash that the UK populace have saved during the pandemic; when savings accounts earn little interest, it is likely that some of this cash mountain could end up being invested in bonds and so push up demand for bonds and support their prices i.e., this would help to keep their yields down. How this will interplay with the Bank of England eventually getting around to not reinvesting maturing gilts and then later selling gilts, will be interesting to keep an eye on.

A new era – a fundamental shift in central bank monetary policy

One of the key results of the pandemic has been a fundamental rethinking and shift in monetary policy by major central banks like the Fed, the Bank of England and the ECB, to tolerate a higher level of inflation than in the previous two decades when inflation was the prime target to bear down on so as to stop it going above a target rate. There is now also a greater emphasis on other targets for monetary policy than just inflation, especially on ‘achieving broad and inclusive “maximum” employment in its entirety’ in the US before consideration would be given to increasing rates. Although there are nuances between the monetary policy of all three banks, the overall common ground is allowing the inflation target to be symmetrical so that inflation averages out the dips down and surges above the target rate, over an unspecified period of time. **For local authorities, this means that interest rates will not be rising as quickly or as high as in previous decades when the economy recovers from a downturn and the recovery eventually runs out of spare capacity to fuel continuing expansion.** Labour market liberalisation since the 1970s has helped to break the wage-price spirals that fuelled high levels of inflation and has now set inflation on a lower path which makes this shift in monetary policy practicable. In addition, recent changes in flexible employment practices, the rise of the gig economy and technological changes, will all help to lower inflationary pressures. Governments will also be concerned to see interest rates stay lower as every rise in central rates will add to the cost of vastly expanded levels of national debt; (in the UK this is £21bn for each 1% rise in rates). On the other hand, higher levels of inflation will help to erode the real value of total public debt.

Globally, our views on economies are as follows: -

- **EU.** The slow roll out of vaccines initially delayed economic recovery in early 2021 but the vaccination rate has picked up sharply since then. After a contraction of -0.3% in Q1, Q2 came in with strong growth of 2.2% which is likely to continue into Q3, though some countries more dependent on tourism may struggle. There is little sign that underlying inflationary pressures are building to cause the ECB any concern.
- **China.** After a concerted effort to get on top of the virus outbreak in Q1 2020, economic recovery was strong in the rest of the year; this enabled China to recover all the initial contraction. Policy makers both quashed the virus and implemented a programme of monetary and fiscal support that was particularly effective at stimulating short-term growth. At the same time, China’s economy benefited from the shift towards online spending by consumers in developed markets. These factors helped to explain its comparative outperformance compared to western economies during 2021. However, the pace of economic growth will fall back after this initial surge of recovery from the pandemic. China is also now struggling to contain the spread of the Delta variant through sharp local lockdowns which will damage economic growth. There are also questions as to how effective Chinese vaccines are proving.

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REPORT AUTHOR: ASSISTANT CHIEF OFFICER

SUBJECT: PROGRAMME AND PROJECTS REPORT – Q2 2021/22

For further information on this Report contact: Paul Hughes
Head of ICT & Programmes
Tel No: 01234 845015

Background Papers: Previous Programme and Project reports to the FRA

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	CORE BRIEF	
	New	OTHER (please specify)	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To provide the Fire and Rescue Authority with a report covering Q2 2021/22 financial year, detailing progress and status of the Service Strategic Programme and Projects to date.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members consider the progress made on Strategic Programmes and Projects over Q2 2021/22 and raise any matters arising.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 This Projects and Programmes update report covers the progress made on the Strategic Programmes and Projects over the Q2 of the 2021/22 financial year. It should be noted that projects and programmes can span many months and sometimes years, so completion will not always align with the financial year end period.
- 1.2 The Projects and Programmes are monitored via the Corporate Programme Board (CPB). The CPB is chaired by ACO Chambers and consists of three Corporate Management Team (CMT) Members (the Heads of ICT, HR and Prevention & Protection) and the Programme and Projects Management Office (PMO) Manager. Additional stakeholders are invited as appropriate. The Chair provides an update to CMT following each meeting.
- 1.3 The PMO is now fully embedded and the Service/Authority is benefiting from the improved effective governance and management of programmes and projects.

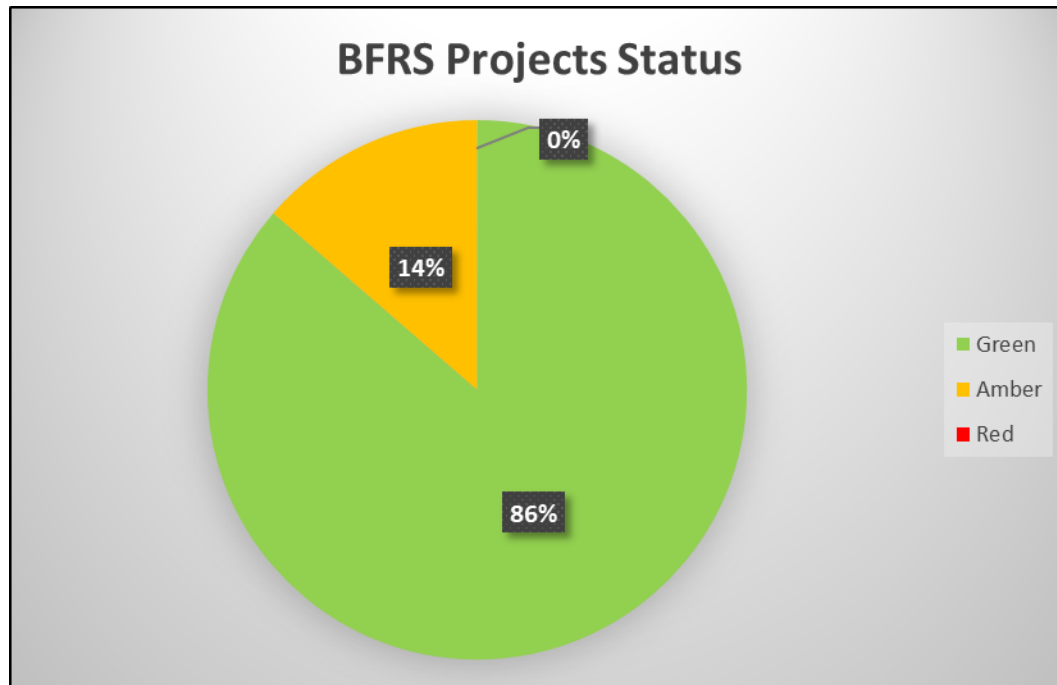
2. **Introduction**

- 2.1 A high-level update covering the Projects and Programmes undertaken during Q2 2021/22 is provided below in Para 3, with a pie chart below providing a pictorial summary of the positive position as at end of Q2 2021/22. As of October 2021, there are 19 projects with a green status, 3 amber (one closing down) and none red.

The exception reports for projects with Amber status are included in Appendix A. These are the Retained Duty System Improvement Project, Fleet and Assets Tracking System Project and Safe and Well Project. In summary, the amber status for all of these is due to revised schedules to complete the residual activities needed to complete the projects.

- 2.2 The majority of the active projects (86%) are on track to deliver the set objectives on time against latest plans, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1.



Projects	Count of RAG Status
Amber	3
Green	19
Grand Total	22

Colour Code	Project Status Key
GREEN	No issues. On course to meet targets.
AMBER	Some issues. May not meet targets.
RED	Significant issues. Will fall outside agreed targets. Requires CPB intervention

3. **High-Level Summary of Key Milestones achieved Q2 2021/22**

The paragraphs below provide key highlights looking back at Q2 2021/22:

- 3.1 The Replacement Mobilising System Project (RMP) is on track for implementing the new mobilising solution on 1st November 2021. The combined ESN and Airwave COCO agreement was approved by the Home Office. Significant amount of work has been done on the new environment built and system capability testing, both from the live site at HQ in Kempston, and at our contingency site in Bedford. Press release was issued to acknowledge that BFRS are the first FRS pioneering on ESN and implementing a brand new, cloud-based solution, reliant entirely on ESN and DNSP connection into the Motorola Data Centre. As of 1st November, our critical data, call handling information, and all the associated business logic / data traffic used in conjunction with the mobilising facility will be traversing only the ESN DNSP, i.e., the BFRS core operational communications and mobilising will be reliant on ESN for the significant part of the day-to-day mission critical incident response activity. In essence, as recognised by the HO and the National Programme, BFRS is the first FRS to truly put all our eggs into the ESN basket. BFRS represents just one of 6 FRSs who already consider themselves consumers of an ESN live service or will be doing so very shortly. The legacy system will be retained for a few months to ensure we have extra contingency post go-live of the new system.
- 3.2 BFRS successfully tested the usage of ESN SIMs in the front Mobile Data Terminals and will be implementing ESN Connect alongside the mobilising system implementation on 1 November. All ESN coverage testing for Assure 1 was also completed.
- 3.3 The E-signatures module of the HR and Payroll iTrent system was implemented successfully at the end of August 2021.
- 3.4 The new 3TC IRS System project was implemented successfully. A post implementation review was conducted, and a closure report was produced and approved by the Mercury Programme Project Board. This project is now closed.
- 3.5 The planned multi-block work on the Infographics FloSuite project was delivered successfully thus improving the quality of the data held within the Protection system and removing a few unnecessary data records. The residual project work is nearing completion with FloOffice now working correctly and the ability to generate reports now in place.
- 3.6 Collaborative procurement is underway as part of the Station End Equipment Project, led by Devon and Somerset FRS. Invitation to tender issued, bids received from suppliers and being evaluated.

- 3.7 The Command Support Project has made significant progress on the environment configuration and testing of the new Incident Command software. The team is working with the supplier to configure the system in an optimal way. The project delivery is on track for live implementation after the new mobilising system has been promoted to live in November 2021.
- 3.8 The MDT Phase 3 Project aims to significantly reduce the use of paper forms by utilising new technology capabilities and the BFRS Digital Transformation Programme to deliver electronic equivalents which could be accessed by the Operational crews via the rear MDTs on all appliances. The project has delivered the Incident Command Hours Recording app into trial. Other 28 Active monitoring forms have been developed and are being tested.
- 3.9 The Fire Investigation Accreditation project business case was produced in response to the requirements of The Forensic Science Regulators (FSR) that for fire scene examination that progress through the Criminal Justice System, must be accredited to ISO17020 by October 2023. The paper explored several collaboration options and fire investigation team organisation approaches to achieve best value for money and to deliver the accredited service effectively and efficiently for the public. The document was produced to support a decision on Fire & Rescue Service commitment to seeking ISO 17020 Accreditation for the future delivery of fire investigation work by end of Summer 2021 and was approved by the BFRS Senior Management Team. The FIA Project Business Case and options paper was agreed with Cambridgeshire FRS and Hertfordshire FRS and conversations have started with the Police to enter a collaborative agreement between the 3 Police and FRSs.
- 3.10 Clothing Project – survey content agreed for publication with the Head of Governance, Assets, Procurement and Collaboration and the Principle Officers. The project team arranged a “Show and Tell” for the clothing offered by Ballyclare under LOT1 of the Kent FRS framework; Separate “show and tell” of the undress uniform provided by Hunter Apparel was organized with the Principal Officers. The project team is exploring collaborative procurement option with South, Mid & West and North Wales FRSs, as well as other procurement routes. Procurement options paper will be produced and presented to CMT for a decision in Q3 2021/22.
- 3.11 The Business Management Information System was procured from InPhase. Project Manager has been assigned and the project planning stage is in progress. Planning and Performance, Risk and PMO modules are being designed and configured.
- 3.12 Gartan Phase 2 project successfully delivered the new overtime payroll functionality on 1 Sep 2021.

4. Implications

4.1 There are no Legal, Risk, Financial or Equality implications to note within this report.

**ANDREW HOPKINSON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**GAVIN CHAMBERS
ACO/TREASURER**

Appendix A - Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Projects and Programme Q2 2021/22

Date: 12th October 2021

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Bedfordshire
Fire and Rescue Service

Active Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Protection	Infographics FloSuite Fire Safety Protection Replacement MIS	Deliver and utilise a Fire Safety replacement management information system.	Enable and record the creation and outcomes of Fire Safety jobs against premises. Produce government reports and KPIs. Improve communications and appointment generation.	Y	Green
Responding	Station End Equipment	This project delivers the procurement, installation and maintenance of new Station End Equipment	Procurement and implementation of fully supported, GD 92 and ESN compliant Station End Equipment	N	Green
Empowering	Cloud-based processes (Training Centre Administration) CMS & PDR Pro v3 to v5 Upgrade	The project will deliver new CMS training system on PDR Pro and will upgrade PDR Pro from v3 to v5.	Implementation of a new Course Management System (CMS) to replace Training Planner in MIS (now complete), and PDR Pro upgrade from v3 to v5.	Y	Green
Utilising	Fleet Asset Management System Project	The aim of the project is to introduce a replacement vehicle servicing and defect system to replace an out of support legacy MIS application. The Asset Tracking work stream will introduce an electronic system using scanners and tablets to create accurate asset base and to replace the paper based system presently used.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce a replacement vehicle servicing and defect system to replace an out of support legacy MIS application. Implement electronic Asset Tracking system using scanners and tablets to create accurate asset base Replace current paper based systems. 	Y	Amber
Responding	CCTV Cameras Upgrade	Improve the existing CCTV system to reduce or eliminate manual footage download and ensure 360 degrees coverage.	The project will deliver improved CCTV data recording systems in appliances for the following purposes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminate the need to manually download footage by physically taking the storage 	Y	Green
Modernising	Command Support Review	The project will deliver the ICT technical work to become ESN compliant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade the ICU PCs and Servers to Windows 10. Installation of modern visual connections (HDMI) to allow external devices to connect and display in the ICU. Deliver a solution capable of live streaming for the incident from the Drone Deliver a solution capable of live streaming for the incident from the devices associated with the ICU (Rapid deploy camera, ICU mounted Cameras and body worn cameras). Installation of 5G/4G compatible new router and network equipment to enable collaboration Ability to plug in other service devices to the ICU to display via HDMI, and enable the ICU as a congregation point for JESIP and collaborative working on a broader scale. New software platform for modern Command management at incidents to the fire ground and any command point. Training for all operational staff to use the new technology. Updated ICU training environment Completion of the Information data asset log for any software procured, which will store personal data, and progressing privacy impact assessment of the data repository. 	Y	Green



Active Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Maximising	ESN Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) Project	The aim of the project is to replace and upgrade the current Airwave System, which is reaching the end of its contracted lifespan. This is a national project led by CFOA and the Home Office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace and upgrade the current Airwave System • Support the national programme led by NFCC and the Home Office • Complete ESN coverage test • Procure ESN-compliant devices and associated applications • Switch all new systems and devices connectivity from Airwave to ESN 	Y	Green
Responding	Replacement MDT Project - Phase 3 (MDT2 additional usage)	Extend the use of MDT 2 to enable workforce to capture additional information	Access to corporate applications such as O 365, e-Forms for IRS, S&W and Protection via the rear MDTs on all appliances. This will reduce the reliance on paper based processes within BFRS and will result in improved efficiency of business processes.	Y	Green
Maximising	Replacement Mobilising Project (RMP) ICCS & Mobilising System	This project will deliver a new mobilising system that is ESMCP compliant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace existing Computer Aided Dispatch system - Replace existing Integrated Command and Communications System - Implement solution that will be ESMCP compliant 	Y	Green
Responding	Retained Duty System Improvement Project (RDSIP)	The project will review the BFRS Retained Duty System in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the operation and will recommend and deliver improvements.	Improvements within the RDS system through the introduction of <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementation of a new RDS Management System - complete 2. Identification and replacement of RDS alerters software and infrastructure - complete 3. Evaluation of current recruitment process - complete 4. Utilisation of day duty watch commanders on RDS appliances - complete 	Y	Amber
Responding	Whole-Time Duty Management System (Rota Replacement) Gartan Phase 2	Introduce a replacement roster system for operational personnel	Deliver a fully automated roster system that is suited to the multitude of operational rosters including the 24 hr shift. The system will provide interoperability between software systems and automate processes i.e. overtime pay claims. The system will monitor operational crewing levels and alert control staff of any issues.	N	Green
Protection	Risk and Workload Modeller Tools and Data Segmentation Procurement and Implementation	This project will deliver the following outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SIS Desktop implementation • Workload Modeller implementation • Risk Modeller implementation • Web Mapping implementation • CadCorp Local Knowledge implementation • Segmentation Data integration with the above tools 	The new SIS Desktop, Workload Modeller, Risk Modeller, Web Mapping and CadCorp Local Knowledge Tools and segmentation data are expected to enable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to model data and create bespoke mapping or data tables for the needs of various internal functional leads. • Allow us to remain agile and incorporate any datasets made available to us, both locally and nationally, as part of a wider NFCC discussions on risk modelling which is part of a 3 year programme at the Central Programme Office. • Make a significant contribution to resource planning, budgeting and performance 	Y	Green
Maximising	Business Management Information System (BMIS) Project	Implementation of a new BMIS system to assist BFRS in all aspects of Strategic, Risk Reduction, Projects and Fire Safety planning thus reducing effort and increasing efficiency. BMIS will provide common platform for managing strategic goals and objectives, corporate risk, projects, service performance at all levels – from the top strategic objectives down to individual actions.	It will enable the service to get quick and easy access to management information for corporate planning across CRMP, various individual Action Plans e.g. HMICFRS, Risk Registers, and Projects, linking tasks with owners to keep track of and manage delivery. The Portal will help everyone from the CFO to front line staff know what must be done, how it is going, and where corrective changes need to occur. This ensures that better, faster, and more aligned decisions are continuously made.	Y	Green



Active Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Utilising	Clothing and Garments	The current contract for Station Wear, Corporate Wear and Associated Services is due to expire. BFRS needs to employ a tendering process in order to select future supplier(s) and to sign a contract for the subsequent years.	This project will deliver a new contract for the procurement of station, corporate and special event wear only. The PPE has been procured separately.	N	Green
Maximising	Corporate KPI Data Hub - Phase 2	The Objectives for KPI Data Hub Phase II are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the current dashboard to further agreed areas of the organisation Deliver a new interactive front end within Power BI allowing click-through reporting. Continue to enhance and improve existing business areas on the dashboard. Align the dashboard to the 6 CRMP pillars (Preventing, Protecting, Responding, Maximising, Utilizing, Empowering) 	The project goal is to deliver up to date Corporate KPI Information across the whole of BFRS to enable viewing up to date performance data. This will turn complex data into information, giving insight to service's performance, which will enable reactive and strategic planning The Objectives for KPI Data Hub – Phase II are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the current dashboard to further agreed areas of the organisation Deliver a new interactive front end within Power BI allowing click-through reporting. Continue to enhance and improve existing business areas on the dashboard. Align the dashboard to the 6 CRMP pillars (Preventing, Protecting, Responding, Maximising, Utilizing, Empowering) 	Y	Green
Responding	National Operational Guidance Implementation Project	The NOG Implementation Project has been commissioned to ensure the latest NOG has been adopted and embedded within the organisation, and a process for on-going maintenance has been defined for progression post project handover to BAU.	The NOG Implementation Project has been commissioned to ensure the latest NOG has been adopted and embedded within the organisation, and a process for on-going maintenance has been defined for progression post project handover to BAU.	Y	Green
Maximising	MS SharePoint Upgrade	This project delivers the implementation of an upgraded version of SharePoint, from on premise to online version.	This project delivers the implementation of an upgraded version of SharePoint, from on premise to online version.	Y	Green
Preventing	Fire Investigation Accreditation Project	CPFA, HCC and BFRA have agreed to jointly fund a shared Fire Investigation Accreditation Project Manager ("FIAPM") post for the purposes of determining an optimal solution for collaborative provision of fire investigation services accredited to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 and managing the successful delivery of the accreditation project within agreed tolerances for Bbudget, timescales and quality.	The Forensic Science Regulator has determined that all fire scene investigations that may enter the criminal justice system must, by 1st Oct 2023, be undertaken by organisations that are accredited to ISO/IEC 17020:2012. In collaboration with the relevant members of the fire investigation teams in stakeholder FRSs and Police this project will deliver a sustainable and cost effective approach to fire investigation conducted by FRSs, which enables accreditation to ISO/IEC 17020:2012 be	Y	Green



Active Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Responding	Stations Productivity Assessment Project	<p>The project goal is to understand and then increase station productivity, and in doing so ensure the best utilisation of our assets and resources in line with our Community Risk Management Plan.</p> <p>The specific project objectives in order of priority are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain a realistic understanding of what stations are doing, and what they spend their time on. • Understand any new risks in station ground areas. • Involve staff in identifying opportunities to work smarter. • Understand the barriers to increasing productivity. • Asses which shift pattern, or a blended shift system may best suit which area. • Understand if current shift patterns are an incentive or barrier to recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce. • Inform the new Emergency Cover Review. • Give Fire Authority Members and the public the assurance we are doing the right thing in line with our refreshed CRMP and existing service values. 	<p>This project was initiated in response to our CRMP 2019-23 and HMICFRS Improvement Action Plan. The reasons for doing the project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project aligns with the BFRS's strategic aims and top priorities for 2021-22. For example, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure we provide an effective and timely response to fires and other emergencies at all times. 2. Improve our on-call availability 3. Embed effective Equality, Diversity and inclusion processes across the organisation 4. Ensure our response resources and crewing arrangements are aligned to current and future risks • Therefore this project is aligned to our top 4 priorities; • We have not set a cost number on the expected high level benefits and Return on Investment, but we expect to be able to: • Identify where and how we can reduce bureaucracy and administration time; • Understand if we can do more to boost recruitment and retention of a more diverse workforce; • Do more prevention work; and • Do less needless bureaucracy and administration. 	Y	Green
Preventing	Safe & Well Prevention Replacement	In house development of a bespoke application for Safe and Well community activities, including partner referrals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a Web based referral form to request a Safe and Well visit - self, for another person and Agency. • Web enabled Safe and Well visits form, thus allowing to reduce the reliance of paper based processes • Safe and Well database and front end redesign and redevelopment • Delivery of a redesigned Safe and Well web enabled form • Delivery of a mobile Safe and Well form app 	Y	Amber
Responding	Fire Ground Radios Project	Procurement and implementation of new fire ground radio equipment	This project will replace the current analogue with a digital radios solution. The project will target high rise risks and mixture of On-call (RDS) and Wholtime personnel. Electronic evaluation questionnaire will filter results back into technical department for future decision making. Technical Team is also trialling point to point PTOC (push to talk over cellular) technology as pathway to identifying solutions from Grenfell inquiry recommendations.	N	Green



Active Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Empowering	iTrent - Residual Workstreams	Electronic Signatures (PRJ0049) Electronic Signature allows for the creation of electronic signature capable correspondence within iTrent, which can then be published to self service, to be acknowledged or electronically signed. This will provide better security	Electronic Signature allows to create, acknowledge and publish electronic signature within iTrent. This enables better security as the data will be held only within iTrent and not pushed externally. It also allows a template to be used, and a workflow created, so that a person can be notified that they have a document to sign.	N	Green
		iTrent - Web Recruitments - Control, Retained and Wholetime (PRJ0012) This workstream implements an online Web Recruitment for potential Control, Retained and Wholetime staff.	Online Web Recruitment for potential Control, Retained and Wholetime staff. The remaining deliverables include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise RDS Recruitment • Wholetime Recruitment Kick Off, scoping and delivery 	Y	
		iTrent Onboarding (PRJ0046) iTrent Onboarding is used so new employees can acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours in order to become effective organisational staff members.	iTrent Onboarding will ensure new employees can acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours in order to become effective organisational staff members.	N	
		iTrent Performance Management (PRJ0013) This project delivers digital transformation of the Appraisal	This project delivers digital transformation of the Appraisal process.	Y	
		iTrent Manager Dashboard (PRJ0051) The iTrent Manager Dashboard is a configurable Manager Dashboards solution which can assist with workforce planning processes. As a manager, this software enables you to pick up on workforce trends, approve requests and take action quickly	This software will enable the managers to understand the workforce trends, approve requests and take action quickly and easily, wherever they are.	N	
		iTrent - Mop Up Workstream This workstreams aims to resolve residual issues from previous modules implementations.	This workstreams aims to resolve residual issues from previousl modules implementations.	N	



Completed Projects

Strategic Aim	Project Name / Workstream Name	Project Description	FRA Reporting - Business Outcomes (The So What?)	In CRMP Plan?	RAG Status
Responding	New IRS System	Introduce a cloud based middleware solution to improve how BFRS captures and reports on IRS data.	Integrate with Remsdaq and HO IRS, Existing data will be cleansed and migrated to 3TC, the solution will offer Improved agility :Access on the move (Tablet, Phone), Data Quality Improvements, easier and quicker to use than existing HO IRS system, upload photo's and associate with incidents	N	Complete



Exceptions Reporting

Reporting Period	Q2 2021/22	Project Title	Safe and Well Project	CMT Owner	Ian Evans	Overall Project Status	Amber
Project Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to identify those most at risk of injury or death in fire at the point of referral (on-line), utilising customer insight, geographical location and known risk factors to prioritise our visits. Ability to report on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to both internal and external stakeholders as required Implement online referral process and risk scoring to provide for self-referral or referral by other (personal / professional) Information uploaded into the system at the point of visit by way of a more in depth e-form to ensure the data is timely and accurate (mobile working) Ability to use mobile device app to complete e-forms Improved S&W database and form which records all details of visits delivered by BFRS or its partners. 			Strategic Aim & CRMP Alignment	Preventing		
Status Update	<p>The Safe and Well Project status change from Green to Amber is due to issues encountered with the Power Apps development during testing, which are being worked through, live issues related to generic user ID (now resolved) and a new MS licensing requirement (now also resolved). The project plan has not been re-baselined pending initial Mobile App testing completion.</p> <p>This is the first time BFRS BIT team have ever written a full application in PowerApps, connecting to a database, and the new Safe and Well process is far more complex than BIT would have wanted for a first application. The project team is looking at ways to support the developer by investigating available consultancy options and utilising existing support arrangements with 365Tribe as part of the Digital Champions programme.</p>			Key Milestones		Milestone Status & Due Date	
Page 94				On-line referral form implemented		Complete	
				Interim e-Form for Safe and Well Visits implemented		Complete	
				Improved S&W database, form and Mobile App implemented		Dec 2021	



Exceptions Reporting

Reporting Period	Q2 2021/22	Project Title	Retained Duty System Improvement Project (RDSIP)	CMT Owner	Stuart Auger	Overall Project Status	Amber
Project Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will review the BFRS Retained Duty System in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the operation and will recommend and deliver improvements 			Strategic Aim & CRMP Alignment	Responding Improve the availability of fire appliances crewed by on-call firefighters by introducing new and innovative ways of working		
Status Update				Key Milestones		Milestone Status & Due Date	
<p>The non-structural fires change was implemented successfully in February 2021.</p> <p>Post implementation review has started for the completed phases to capture lessons learned and positive experiences. Project closure report will be issued once this is completed.</p> <p>The residual work on this project is to be re-scoped and a new project defined and kicked off.</p>				Implementation of a new RDS Management System		Complete	
				Identification and replacement of RDS alerters software and infrastructure		Complete	
				Evaluation of current recruitment process		Complete	
				Utilisation of day duty watch commanders on RDS appliances		Complete	
				Non-structural fires crewing		Complete	
				Residual scope review		t.b.c.	



Exceptions Reporting

Reporting Period	Q2 2021/22	Project Title	Fleet and Assets Management System Project	CMT Owner	Darren Cook	Overall Project Status	Amber
Project Objectives	<p>The project objective is to fulfil legislative and safety requirements by provision of an Asset Tracking system that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide audit trails of all activity associated with an asset from cradle to grave, including the full process to identify the need for a particular asset • Determine the suitability of an asset for its intended use • Associate testing and maintenance regimes with an asset • Define financial requirements for procurement, accounting and disposal of an asset • Implement asset tracking of fleet assets • Track due dates for replacement and/or servicing of vehicles and other equipment • Maintain a full service / test history that can be tracked through the system • Automatically assign all items failing test to the workshop, and back for retest • Eliminate the reliance on paperwork and reduce the overall effort. 			Strategic Aim & CRMP Alignment	<p>Utilising Implement an electronic Asset Management System (AMS) for our operational equipment and vehicle fleet.</p>		
Status Update				Key Milestones		Milestone Status & Due Date	
<p>Fleet Workstream Defect process and servicing now could be run end-to-end, but with several defects and workarounds which are not acceptable for live use. There are several key issues that need resolution prior to us considering implementation. These include one approved CR that requires confirmation of funding before progress, and two issues under consideration by the supplier product owner.</p> <p>Asset Tracking Workstream Key team member seconded to Service Control for two months. This has had a direct impact on our schedule for face To face staff training. Alternative training approaches will be investigated once secondment completes.</p> <p>All pump assets have now been labelled with the exception of Luton station pumps. The team have started labelling the specials with the TRU in Dunstable.</p>	All pumps live on the Assets System			March 2022			
	All Specials live on the Assets Tracking System			August 2022			
	Fleet Workstream live			November 2021			



REPORT AUTHOR: ALISON KIBBLEWHITE, ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT POLICY AND CONTRACT PROCEDURES

For further information on this report contact:	Ravina Radia	Darren Cook
	Procurement Manager	Head of Governance, Assets, Procurement and Collaboration
	Tel No: 07842 634277	07889 486169

Background Papers: Minutes and associated papers from meeting on Fire and Rescue Authority - Wednesday 6 November 2019

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL		FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	✓
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (procurement / purchasing)	✓
	New		

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To provide an update on the progress of implementation and utilisation of the Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures which were presented to Members in November 2019.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members acknowledge the contents of the paper and the progress made on implementing the policy and procedure.

1. Background

- 1.1. The 2019/23 CRMP highlighted the requirement for BFRS to update our internal Procurement Strategy documents with a focus on:
 - Leadership & Collaboration;
 - Commercial Practice; and
 - Social Value.
- 1.2. In November 2019, a revised Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures document was presented to Members and approved for implementation. The Policy was intended to be used as a reference document to guide service areas through the procurement process.
- 1.3. The policy was implemented following additional development of forms and templates to support the policy.

2. Review of implementation and usage

- 2.1. Service areas were provided with some initial training, February 2021 by the Procurement Manager, including training on procurement principles, legislation, tender/specification writing and contract management, and the range of new templates and forms were introduced. Soon after, the Procurement Manager who had written the policy and was responsible for publicising and promoting its use left the organisation, leaving the post vacant for a significant period of time and the team having to pick up the implementation of the policy.

2.2. A new Procurement Manager joined the Service in August 2021. During this time, feedback has been sought from service areas on the use of the new policy and process. Initial feedback on this has been that Policy document is that the documentation could be simplified for spend under £25,000 to be more agile and responsive, taking into consideration many suppliers are small enterprises. The procurement team would be involved to provide advice and guidance for the higher spend levels and therefore would be able to tailor advise and guide service areas appropriately in these instances.

3. Next Steps

3.1. In order to encourage utilisation and ensure compliance, it is felt a simplified version of the process should be issued to service areas. Information on the documentation must be easy to follow, concise and relevant to the procurement activity being carried out by the service areas (i.e. spend below £25,000), with the procurement team continuing to use the policy for higher spends.

3.2. The forms and templates issued shall also be reviewed to ensure that they are proportionate to the levels of spend.

3.3. Additional training and support shall be available to the service areas to allow teams to feel confident in understanding the processes and how to purchase requirements in a compliant way.

3.4. Feedback will regularly be sought from key users in service areas to ensure documentation remains user friendly.

**ALISON KIBBLEWHITE
ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

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REPORT AUTHOR: CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

SUBJECT: WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

For further information on this report contact: Nicky Upton
Service Assurance Manager

Background Papers: None

Implications (tick ✓):

LEGAL			FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES			EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL			POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	✓	OTHER (please specify)	
	New			

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To review and report on the work programme for 2021/22 and to provide Members with an opportunity to request additional reports for the Fire Authority meetings.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members consider the work programme for 2021/22 and note the 'cyclical' Agenda Items for each meeting in 2021/22.

**ANDREW HOPKINSON
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY - PROGRAMME OF WORK 2021/22

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
2 November 2021	Communications			
	Executive Committee Minutes from 07.10.21			
	ASC Minutes from 21.09.21			
	2021/22 Budget Monitoring			
	Mid-Year Treasury Update			
	Q2 2021/22 Performance Report	Moved to next meeting		
	Programme Board Update			
	Collaboration Update	Deferred from last meeting		
	Procurement Policy and Contract Procedures (Reviewed every 2 years, due 2021)			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
EXECUTIVE	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
30 November 2021	Portfolio Lead Updates			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
14 December 2021	Communications		Fire Response Statistics – National Benchmarking Comparison	
	Executive Committee Minutes from 30.11.21			
	Public Sector Equality Duty Report			
	2021/22 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring			
	Draft 2022/23 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax			
	2019-23 Community Risk Management Plan – draft 2022/23 Annual Action Plan			
	Members' Allowances Scheme			
	Q2 2021/22 Performance Report	Deferred from last meeting		
	Calendar of Meetings for 2022/23			
	Collaboration Update			
	Information Bulletin (Q2 July – Sept)			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
EXECUTIVE	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
20 January 2022	Portfolio Lead Updates			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
10 February 2022	Communications			
	Executive Committee Minutes from 20.01.22 (provisional mtg)			
	ASC Minutes from 02.12.22			
	Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring (current year)			
	The 2022/23 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax setting			
	2019-23 Community Risk Management Plan - Consultation Update			
	Treasury Management Strategy and Practices			
	Localism Act 2011 – Pay Policy Statement 2022			
	Business Continuity Annual Review	Restricted Report.		
	Information Bulletin (Q3 Oct – Dec)			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
EXECUTIVE	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
15 March 2022	Portfolio Lead Updates			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
24 March 2022	Communications			
	Executive Committee Minutes from 15.03.22			
	Proposed Indicators and Targets for 2022/23			
	Collaboration Update			
	Q3 2021/22 Performance Report Update			
	CRMP pre-publication report			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
EXECUTIVE	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
20 April 2022	Portfolio Lead Updates			
	Work Programme			

Meeting Date	'Cyclical' Agenda Items		Additional/Commissioned Agenda Items	
	Item	Notes	Item	Notes
28 April 2022	Communications			
	Executive Committee Minutes from 19.04.22 (provisional mtg)			
	ASC Minutes from 03.03.22			
	Q4 2021/22 Performance Report update			
	Programme Board Update			
	Fire Prevention Statistics - National Benchmarking Analysis (Annual)	Recurring item requested by Chair, Cllr Chatterley		
	Asset Management Strategy (reviewed every 3 years, next review 2021/22)			
	Disposal of Assets under the Scheme of Delegated Authority			
	Information Bulletin (Q4 Jan – March)			
	Work Programme			

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