

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
Human Resources Policy and Challenge  
Group  
20 September 2017  
Item No. 8

---

**REPORT AUTHOR:** HEAD OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT:** ANNUAL REPORT ON PROVISION OF EXTERNAL TRAINING

---

For further information on this Report contact: Strategic Operational Commander Chris Ball  
Head of Service Delivery Support  
Tel No: 01234 845089

---

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 provide Members with an overview on the external training provision within the Service.

## RECOMMENDATION

That Members' consider the report and raise any specific questions that may arise.

---

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This Service is committed to the development and appropriate training of its entire staff. In order to support this, a range of externally provided courses and seminars are requested, identified and procured each year. The requirement for training is supported by a Training and Development Forum and access to training is monitored. External training has seen a managed budget reduction of 50% in five years; however this report demonstrates how

effective collaboration and robust procurement practices have ensured that this Service continues to have highly skilled, professionally competent staff.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 Each year Head of Training and Development (HTD) produces a report to the HR Policy and Challenge Group detailing the provision of externally sourced training and the breakdown of associated costs; this report details the training costs for 2016/17. The report provides an overview of the training arrangements in terms of cost, the range of courses and suppliers as well as a comparison with the previous training years.

## 3 Use of External Training Providers

- 3.1 The Training and Development Manager (TDM) is responsible for sourcing appropriate external training to meet the organisational requirements. To ensure that this is achieved effectively, the Service has a Training and Development Forum that meets periodically to review training needs. It includes standing members from all functional areas of the Service.
- 3.2 The Service utilises external training providers for a wide range of training and development requirements. The extent of training and proportionate spend upon particular areas varies significantly from year to year and is dependent upon training needs within that year (e.g. number of staff recruited/promoted into new roles, new operational requirements, changes to legislation and guidance etc.).
- 3.3 Scrutiny is continually applied by TDM and reported through functional meetings and budget monitoring processes. The following information relates to training during the year 2016/17 and is provided for illustrative purposes. The cost shown includes both fees to the training provider and accommodation costs associated with the training. Where possible such training is undertaken at Service venues in order to minimise costs.

## 4. Budget

- 4.1 Significant reductions to external training budgets have been applied over a number of years. The budget for 2016/17 was £219,300 (before earmark reserves of £30,000 were applied). This compares with 2010/11 of £414,500, demonstrating a managed five year reduction of almost 50%.
- 4.2 Despite these challenging reductions to budget, this Service continues to fully support the training and development of all staff, and recognises the value of having highly skilled, professionally competent personnel within all areas of the Service. A review of training provision was undertaken in 2015 that recognised this and provided support to managers in identifying training and development requirements.

## 5. Spend by Training Category

- 5.1 Fluctuations in costs do occur due to the reasons mentioned in para 3.2. Also to be considered is the fluctuation in retirements, leavers for various reasons and the subsequent spike in promotions due to these issues. This then creates an increase in newly promoted personnel on development programmes which in turn requires an increase in various development training.
- 5.2 2016/17 included additional budget to support the development of non-operational staff. An example is shown within 'Post specific learning' in the table below, which includes two courses supporting the delivery of training, two e-tendering and contract management courses and one level 3 education and training course. This also includes support toward developing our operational Rescue From Height capability at Dunstable Fire Station which is now available.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Training Type	£	£	£
Leadership & Management	34,522	27,588	32,999
Post specific development	28,528	49,520	35,984
Incident Command	14,505	29,392	54,054
Driver Training	4,234	3,263	4,090
Specialist Operational Trainer	55,221	64,715	30,556
Trauma Care/First Aid	23,330	30,005	23,330
Specialist Operational	2,925	14,855	40,323
Legislative Fire Safety	21,990	13,265	11,620
CPD Seminars/Conferences	7,877	4,826	3,024
RTC vehicle provision	22,025	10,818	9,820
Community Safety	6,519	5,311	2,760
Diversity	6,342	6,253	6,000
User Groups/Meetings/Memberships	2,410	6,324	1,320
Miscellaneous	2,606	2,877	2,555
<b>Total</b>	<b>233,034</b>	<b>269,012</b>	<b>218,114</b>

## 6. Spend by Training Provider

- 6.1 Over fifty different external training providers are regularly used. A number of providers were used extensively (such as Fire Service College) and details are provided below of the highest individual spends. The costs include associated accommodation charges (which can be significant) where these have had to be included in order to support candidate attendance.

6.2 Savings have been made by reviewing how and where courses are delivered. Whilst some of the training requirements are complex and require specific specialist providers, others may be achievable through the development of local delivery methods, alternative suppliers and collaborative opportunities.

		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Training Provider	Training Type	£	£	£
Fire Service College	Various - See Table below	63,097	83,077	97,864
LIVES	Trauma Care/First Aid	23,330	29,845	23,330
London Luton Airport	Specialist Operational	20,400	27,600	16,881
Bedford College	IT, Pre retirement & various other specific courses	26,352	26,442	15,901
The Outreach Organisation	Specialist Operational Trainer	19,805	15,320	19,247
Experience the Country	4x4 driver training	5,250	9,375	7,125
J & K Recovery	RTC vehicle provision	240	0	0
Cotton End Car Salvage	RTC vehicle provision	9,600	10,800	9,820
MK Driver training	Driver Training	2,970	1,958	11,725
CFOA	Conferences	1,613	3,605	2,500
CFOA	Executive Leadership	0	10,000	10,000
Millbrook Proving Facility	Driver Training	1,666	3,904	3,565
Essex FRS	Fire Investigation	0	2,966	0
Lee Valley	Water Rescue	2,500	920	6,325
Tactical Hazmat Ltd	Specialist Operational	4,245	0	1,250
Talent Ridge	Leadership & Management	9,993	3,787	3,000
Govnet	CPD Seminars/Conferences	3,522	985	1,168
Heightec Group	Specialist Operational Trainer	6,028	4,863	1,925
St. John Ambulance	Trauma Care/First Aid	3,233	160	0
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>203,844</b>	<b>235,607</b>	<b>231,626</b>

6.3 The table above shows all significant providers of training for clarity and comparison. Some of these providers support the delivery of operational training which is managed outside of the external training budget. These include LIVES trauma care training, London Luton Airport, Experience the Country, MK Driver training, J&K, Cotton End cars and Millbrook Proving Facility.

## 7. The Fire Service College

- 7.1 In 2016/17 this Service undertook a wholetime firefighter selection and recruitment process. Nineteen trainees undertook a foundation course at the Fire Service College. This was the first new intake for six years; since running a foundation course in partnership with Hertfordshire FRS in 2010.
- 7.2 Recruit foundation training is not managed within the external training budget – it has its own cost code to report against - and is shown here for clarity.
- 7.3 Increased costs can be seen against Incident Command due to increased requirement for new commanders to undertake residential Incident Command Courses (as detailed in point 3.2). Whilst requirement for Operational Trainer courses were less within 2016/17, it is anticipated this will increase again in 2017/18 due to staff changes within Training and Development Centre.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Training Type	£	£	£
Specialist Operational	0	10,065	13,325
Legislative Fire Safety	19,863	11,340	10,420
Incident Command	14,505	32,796	54,054
Specialist Operational Trainer	28,729	28,755	19,600
Community Safety	0	0	0
CPD Seminar/Conference/ Misc	0	121	465
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,097</b>	<b>83,077</b>	<b>97,864</b>
Recruit Foundation Training	0	0	141,750
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63,097</b>	<b>83,077</b>	<b>239,614</b>

## 8. Selection of Training Providers

- 8.1 The Service looks to achieve best value in the procurement of external training provision and will always seek to ensure that the most cost effective and efficient solution is achieved and that a range of providers are considered when buying in training whilst ensuring that the level of training meets the individual and organisational need. This includes consideration of all additional costs associated with training such as accommodation, travel and expenses payments.
- 8.2 Where available, the Service will use framework agreements to ensure compliance with procurement regulatory requirements. Some training and development opportunities are only available from singular or limited suppliers and where this occurs appropriate action is taken to mitigate any risk.
- 8.3 Whilst consideration is always given to ensuring the most suitable training provider is identified for our range of prevention, protection and operational

response requirements, and in particular Incident Command, the specialist nature of some of these activities relies on our use of the Fire Service College as a significant sector-specific provider.

- 8.4 In other more practical specialist operational roles, opportunities for achieving economies of scale and efficiencies through collaboration with other Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in the region are routinely explored and over past years a greater emphasis has been made in utilising their skills and training resources. Examples include:

Animal Rescue Levels 1 & 2	Oxfordshire/Northamptonshire
Animal Rescue Level 3	Hampshire
LGV Driver Training	Hertfordshire
BTEC Management Training	East Sussex/Oxfordshire
Lee Valley White Water Centre	Suffolk/Oxford/Cambridge/Essex
Bariatric Rescue Training	Lincolnshire
Wildfire Training	Norfolk

- 8.5 The Service has revised the development programmes for all operational managers, and enhanced support to non-operational managers, by introducing courses which provide recognised qualifications including:

- Leadership and Management BTEC Level 3-7
- Executive Leadership Programmes

- 8.6 Work is ongoing to identify collaborative opportunities with other FRSs and organisations, such as Police, Ambulance and London Luton Airport.

- 8.7 We continue to work closely with Hertfordshire FRS, where this Service provides driver training for their middle and senior operational commanders whilst they in return provide LGV courses for our firefighters. This is detailed within a Memorandum of Understanding. We also ran an 'Aspire' leadership programme in partnership with Cambridgeshire FRS, where collaboration provided effective and cost-effective development for a cross-section of managers.

- 8.8 In 2017/18 we will be exploring opportunities to support our staff using the new national apprenticeship levy, and we are working with other FRSs nationally to develop new standards to support this, such as operational firefighter apprenticeships.

## 9. Comparison of Training Costs

- 9.1 The provision of external training courses by training category shows differences in Incident Command and Specialist Operational Courses. This is a result of retirements, leavers and promotions.

- 9.2 The development programme for operational personnel spans several years and creates fluctuations in respect of course availability between

management and operational training which is reflected in some of the variations in expenditure.

9.3 Where a particular need has been identified then specific funding has been requested; the provision of appraisal training across the Service being an example. Fluctuations on Whole-time firefighter training costs are based around annual need. For example since 2010/11 this Service has not required a Whole-time firefighters foundation course, however a course of nineteen took place in 2016/17 which had significant costs attached. The Service continues to benefit from transfer of experienced firefighters from across the country which provides a blended and cost-effective recruitment.

## 10. Access to Training and Development

10.1 Personnel can request access to training through a variety of processes, which include annual appraisal, Continual Professional Development (CPD), promotion and progression. Requests are usually submitted via an FSRT35 written request, which identifies the training/development, provides detail of attendees and organisational benefit, and requires line management evidenced support before the Training and Development Manager considers approval.

10.2 In 2016/17 a total of 127 applications for external training, learning and development were submitted with all but 3 being supported. These have been reviewed by the Training and Development Management team and reported to the Diversity team for analysis to demonstrate support towards the Public Sector Equality Duty.

## **STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL COMMANDER CHRIS BALL HEAD OF SERVICE DELIVERY SUPPORT**

### **Implications**

#### **Policy**

All training is sourced and allocated in line with current Service policy.

#### **Equality**

All training is subject to a yearly equality analysis to ensure fair allocation of training.