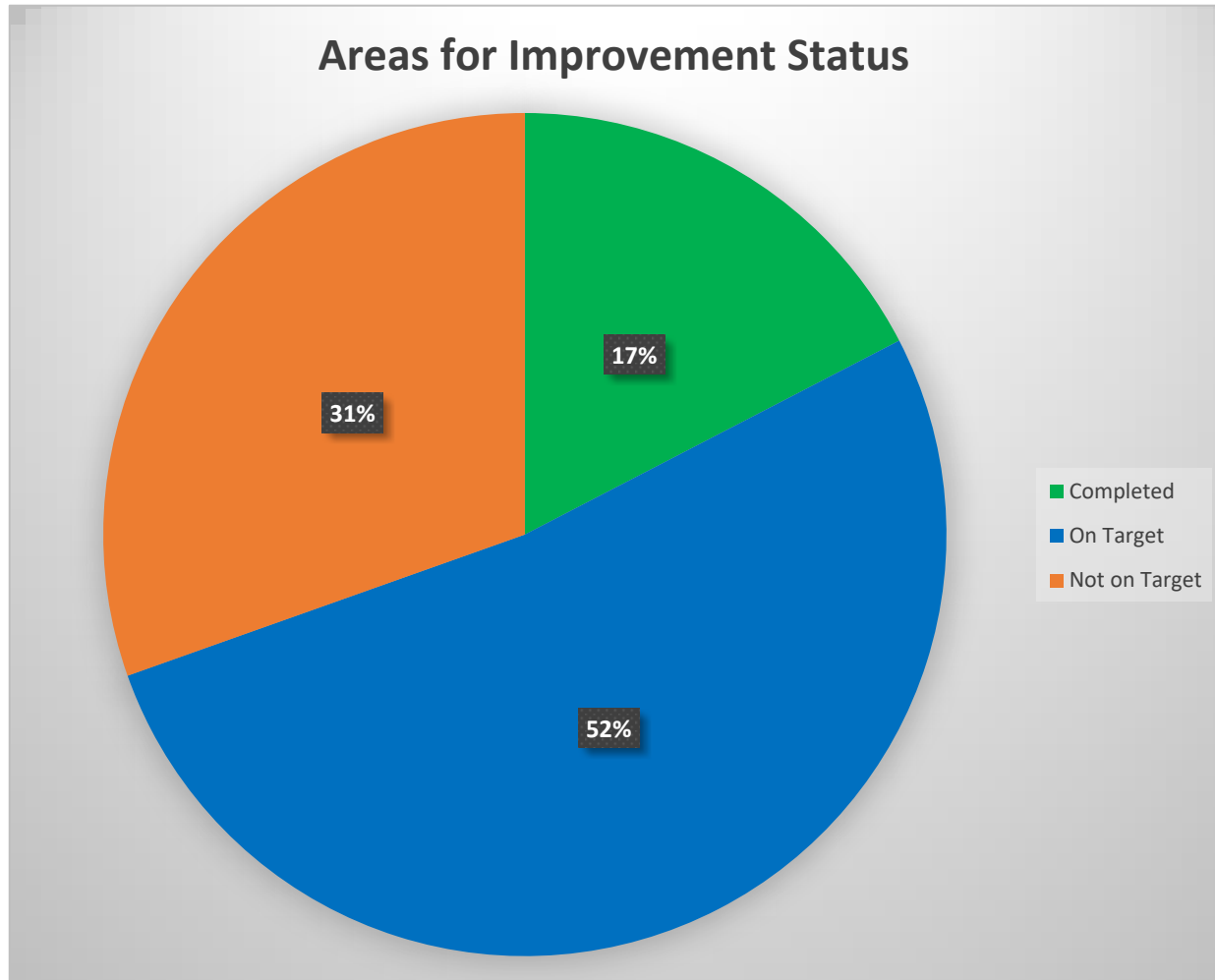




# Bedfordshire

## Fire & Rescue Service

### HMICFRS Areas for Improvement Action Plan Fire Authority Report: March 2024



## Areas For Improvement – Rated Red or Amber

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
4	<p>The service should assure itself that it has effective systems and processes in place to manage its risk-based inspection programme.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Protecting the public through fire regulation)</b></p>	A) Fire Risk Data Warehouse (FRDW)	Amber	Green	<p>The Service continues to work through corrective actions to address the issues encountered following the upgrade to fire safety management system. An update to the Fire Risk Data Warehouse scoring methodology has been implemented by the Business Information Team. This appears to have been effective in delivering risk stratification. Targeted data validation is being undertaken to ensure the output is based on accurate data. Protection Team and Business Information Team capacity and the impact of the system upgrade issues have pushed back the predicted project delivery of 22 May 2024.</p>	<p>Upgrade to Fire Safety Management System took place in Dec 23. Significant software bugs have been encountered following implementation. The Service continues to work through corrective action with the supplier. Good progress being made on development of the FRDW.</p>	31 March 2024	30 June 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
		B) Risk based inspection programme	Green	Green	The FRDW will be used to develop the annual risk based inspection programme in line with the protection strategy.		31 March 2024	N/A
6	The Service should have effective processes to manage the burden of false alarms (Unwanted Fire Signals – (UFS))  <b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Protecting the public through fire regulation)</b>	A) Revised Protection process for UFS'	Yellow	Green	Using FRDW the individual buildings in the county with excessive number of false alarms have been identified and there will be contact with each by the Protection Team.  Work is underway to review the approach to dealing with UFS including through enforcement of the Fire Safety Order and through business engagement. (See AFI 7).		31 March 2024	31 May 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
7	<p>The Service should make sure it works with local businesses and other organisations to share information and expectations on compliance with fire safety regulations.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Protecting the public through fire regulation)</b></p>	A) Produce a Business Engagement Strategy			The Business Engagement Strategy has been finalised within the Protection Strategy and was presented to CMT on 6 March 2024.	Draft strategy has been produced and is awaiting sign off by HPP.	31 March 2024	N/A

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
		B) Produce a Business Engagement Plan			<p>A business engagement plan for 24/25 is being developed in line with the strategy. Allocating resource to business engagement will be challenging, because resources are already stretched due to the high volume of demand-led protection work, staff development and proactive audit and inspection programme.</p> <p>The Service has now diverted funds to increase resourcing in this area to expedite the creation of the plan.</p>		31 March 2024	31 May 2024
9	The Service should make sure fire control is sufficiently resourced and has resilience arrangements and appropriate fallback cover.	A) Recruit to full Establishment (all vacancies filled)			<p>24 applications were received for 3 Fire Control vacancies. Successful candidates have now accepted offers and are awaiting their training course. The Service has also recently</p>	The Service has a current live recruitment campaign for Control, and has successfully recruited a competent	31 March 2024	N/A

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
	<b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Responding to fires and other emergencies)</b>				received a Junior Officer Transferee.	transferee from another Service		
		B) Restructure of Control and Response Support functions to create more capacity within Control and a Control Enhancement Team (CET).			We now have a holding list for future vacancies in the Control team. The Service is working through a change programme with all stakeholders to implement the Establishment of the Control Enhancement Team. This will not be completed by 31/03/24 due to incremental changes occurring throughout the next few months.		31 March 2024	31 October 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
		C) Resilience arrangement with Essex Fire and Rescue Service or explore consortium options with Herts and Norfolk.	Yellow	Green	<p>An interim solution for fall back arrangements with Essex is due to be exercised in March to reestablish the 'buddy' arrangements.</p> <p>Letters of intent have been exchanged with Essex and Leicestershire now that they have purchased the same mobilising system to explore greater resilience options.</p>		31 March 2024	31 October 2024
11	The Service should do more to align with National Operational Guidance (NOG) to improve a co-ordinated response to the most high-risk incidents.  <b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Responding to fires and other emergencies)</b>	8 Product Packs will be delivered by 30th April 2024.	Red	Red	<p>A temporary halt of the National Operational Guidance (NOG) project has been actioned.</p> <p>The Service has reviewed recent product packs that have been introduced to BFRS. This has highlighted a need to re-evaluate and align with the Fire Standards to provide the level of</p>	Due to staff moves the project plan has not progressed as well as anticipated. A series of meetings among functional heads has taken place and project resourcing has been reviewed.	31 March 2024	TBC

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
					<p>assurance we require for safety critical activities.</p> <p>So far there are Four NOG packs currently adopted into BFRS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incident command</li> <li>• Operations</li> <li>• Breathing apparatus</li> <li>• Water incidents</li> </ul> <p>Following a review of the business processes the project is now reset, with the aspiration to complete the following packs over the next twelve months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fires and firefighting</li> <li>• Fires in buildings</li> <li>• Control guidance (7 packs)</li> <li>• Major incident</li> </ul>			



AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
					<p>A new team with a new business process map and timelines has taken over the project and is working closely with our regional partners to get back on track.</p> <p>A deep dive has been requested by the Principal Officers and an update will be brought to the FRA at the next review.</p>			
12	<p>The Service should make sure it has an effective system for learning from operational incidents and assure itself that all areas of the Service can contribute to debriefs.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Responding to fires)</b></p>	A) Implementation of new Operational Assurance software			<p>A) Phase 1 (Station Audits) has gone live through the Operational Assurance module on pdrPro.</p> <p>Phase 2 (Debrief Modules) has been delayed due to issues with the software. The Operational Debrief policy was published in February 2024.</p> <p>Phase 3 (Active Monitoring) is targeted to go live at the end of July</p>	<p>A)Phase 2 of the software go live date still on track for February 24.</p> <p>The go live day for Phase 3 of the</p>	31 March 2024	31 July 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
	<b>and other emergencies)</b>				2024 – extension requested to allow for this work to be completed.	project is on target for Jul 24.		
		B) Revision of terms of reference for the Assurance Working Group			B) Terms of reference for the Assurance Group have been revised and will be live from March 2024.	B) The Terms of reference (TOR) for the Assurance Working Group have been revised and are on the agenda of the Dec 23 meeting. New TOR to be adopted from March 24	31 March 2024	N/A
		C) Establishment of a multi-agency Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Joint Operational Learning (JOL) assurance group			C) The BLRF Exec approved the establishment of the JOL assurance board. The membership and meeting dates are being promulgated by the BLRF by the agreed deadline.	C)BFRS still working with the Bedfordshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to establish a multi-agency Joint Operational Learning (JOL) assurance. The establishment of a JOL assurance group affected by LRF staffing changes, likely to	31 March 2024	N/A

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
						be up and running by July 2024.		
20	The Service should assure itself that on-call firefighters are appropriately supported in their initial development. <b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Getting the right people with the right skills)</b>	A) Review of on-call development process.			A) Training and Development Centre have undertaken a full review of the On-call initial training course and the subsequent development programme.	A) The Service has committed to undertaking a review of the on-call development process administered via the online pdrPro system. Review on track for Feb 2024 completion.	30 April 2024	N/A
		B) National Operational Guidance alignment of operational development programmes			B) The Service will continue to review all operational development programmes as we progressively adopt the regional NOG product packs to ensure the learning and development of all operational staff is aligned to national standards.	B) Process established to review development plans in line with current NOG adoption. Action linked to complete NOG integration via the ongoing service level project.	TBC	N/A

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
					This work will run in parallel with the NOG project (which has been called for a deep dive by the Principal Officers).			
		C) Recruit Development Support Coordinator			C) The Service has successfully recruited a substantive Watch Commander as the new Development Support Coordinator.	Action complete	30 April 2024	N/A
		D) Review process for development completion			D) All operational staff in development are subject to quarterly progress reviews with their line managers. Training and Development Centre have put additional safeguards in place to ensure any On-Call Firefighters who are behind with their development plan are	Action Complete	30 April 2024	N/A

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Previous Update	Due Date	Revised Date
					highlighted to the relevant coordinator.			
		E) Introduction of On-Call FireFighter development sessions, 2 per month delivered by On-Call Watch Commanders (1 BA and 1 session linked to development programme)			E)The development sessions have been established and have been well attended (on average by 16 Firefighters per session) This has resulted in BA team leader pass rates increasing by 50% which in turn increases appliance availability.	N/A	30 April 2024	N/A

**Areas For Improvement – Rated Green (On Target but not yet completed)**

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
1	<p>The Service should develop a clear prevention plan that implements the prevention strategy in its Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The prevention plan should target people most at risk and make sure the level of activity is proportionate to reduce that risk.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Preventing fires and other risks)</b></p>	A) Prevention Strategy			As agreed on 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 at CMT	31 March 2024
		B) Annual Delivery Plan				
3	<p>The Service should make sure it quality assures its prevention activity so staff carry out safe and well visits and home fire safety visits to an appropriate standard.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Preventing fires and other risks)</b></p>	A) Revised Home Fire Safety Visits Policy to include QA process			Revised HFSV Policy was published 7 February 2024. The sampling plan is still being finalised. Sampling will be implemented starting Q1 24/25.	31 March 2024
		B) Quality Assurance Plan				
5	<p>The Service should make sure it has an effective quality assurance process so staff carry out fire safety audits to an appropriate standard.</p>	A) Additional Quality Assurance governance designed and established.			MoU between Essex FRS/BFRS for QA of fire engineering design work is ongoing to	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
	<p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Protecting the public through fire regulation)</b></p>				<p>refine and build on our existing QA.</p>	
8	<p>The Service should make sure its response strategy provides the most appropriate response for the public in line with its community risk management plan.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Responding to fires and other emergencies)</b></p>	<p>A) Response Strategy aligns to meeting the commitments stated within the CRMP.</p>			<p>Objectives are being reviewed and prioritised for delivery over the next fiscal year. Strategy is in place but we are refreshing objectives for April 2024. The Service has reviewed various meeting structures, project pipelines and Station plans are on track for delivery by 1st April 2024.</p>	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
		B) Ensure meeting structures translate the CRMP and response strategy into something recognisable on the front line.			The Governance Boards and department meeting structures have been reviewed to ensure that the Corporate Golden Thread is obvious in the objectives of all levels of meetings.	31 March 2024
		C) Project prioritisation is clear and supportive of operational service improvements.			This is governed and managed via Corporate Programme Board and Service Delivery Board.	31 March 2024
		D) Station plans are refreshed to reflect community needs to manage risk.			As part of our annual refresh cycle, this action was completed in January 2024.	31 March 2024
10	The Service should make sure it uses its On-Call crews effectively to respond to incidents based on risk in line with its CRMP.  <b>(Lead Officer: DCFO</b>	A) Improved On-Call availability, through better recruitment training and retention.			On-Call Project in place to deliver against this Area For Improvement.  Signs of improved availability	31 March 2024



AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
	<b>Diagnostic: Responding to fires and other emergencies)</b>				continue to be seen, however this is primarily a result of having the Watch Commander On-Call Liaison posts in place. The On-Call Support Watch Commanders have taken on responsibility for managing the strategic reserve and are using On-Call standbys to maximise availability each day.	
13	The Service should make sure it has an effective method to simultaneously share fire survival guidance information with multiple callers and that it has a dedicated communication link in place.  <b>(Lead Officer: DCFO</b>	A) Electronic system for Fire Survival guidance			Electronic system is in-test ready for general deployment.	31 March 2024
		B) Manual fall back system and,			Manual system is in place and has been tested under real life conditions successfully.	31 March 2024

Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service: HMICFRS Areas for Improvement Action Plan Fire Authority Report: March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
	<b>Diagnostic: Responding to major and multi-agency incidents)</b>	C) Supporting operational guidance and policy.	■	■	Guidance and policy is being released via NOG board before year end.	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
15	<p>The Service needs to show a clear rationale for the allocation of resources between prevention, protection and response activities. This should reflect, and be consistent with, the risks and priorities set out in its CRMP.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACO Diagnostic: Making best use of resources)</b></p>	<p>A) To have a summary with audit trail, of how the budget splits/breaks down into service areas. There must be logic to showing spend vs CRMP/Service priorities.</p>			<p>The revenue budget, capital programme and council tax was set at the FRA meeting on 13th February. Within the report and Appendix 4, there is the Golden Thread of how the budget aligns with the CRMP and Service priorities. A summary directorate table highlights the funding going into Response and Prevention &amp; Protection, with revenue bids and the capital programme aligning towards the Service's strategic direction.</p>	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
16	<p>The Service should have effective measures in place to assure itself that its workforce is productive and that its time is used as efficiently and effectively as possible to meet the priorities in the community risk management plan.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACO Diagnostic: Making best use of resources)</b></p>	A) Establishment of a Productivity and Efficiency Group. Following this, the allocations of workstreams and the delivery of these feeding back into the Board.			Productivity and Efficiency Group and the depository have both been established.	31 March 2024
		B) To establish an internal depository for Productivity & Efficiency examples (already implemented or suggested).				
17	<p>The Service should assure itself that all processes in place to support performance management are effective.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Making best use of resources)</b></p>	A) To review and develop more effective Key Performance Indicators with clear links to performance.			Full public consultation on new response standards now complete. Final recommendation paper being presented to the Fire Authority on 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024.	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
19	<p>The service should review its succession planning to make sure that it has effective arrangements in place to manage staff turnover while continuing to provide its core service to the public.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Getting the right people with the right skills)</b></p>	A) Create a Workforce Planning Group.			A) Operational workforce planning is already well established and has been further enhanced by the creation of the Service Workforce Planning Group which assess operational requirements, forecast trends etc on a quarterly basis.	31 March 2024
		B) Complete review to identify where career grades can be used for those in professional support staff roles to assist with development and progression of existing staff.			B) A review of succession planning and career development has been undertaken and a proposed strategy presented to CMT. Development gateways and personal development plans for Green Book	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
					colleagues have been implemented. The appraisal system now fully aligns with this approach and utilises banding for development as part of a talent grid aligned to the NFCC leadership framework and the service professional behaviours.	
		C) Implemented 0 hour/casual contracts in order to recruit specialists/critical skills.			C) The implementation of 0 hour/casual contracts is also completed.	31 March 2024
		<b>D) New Deliverable Added</b> - Implement functional area succession planning.			E) To maximise the Service's opportunities and to align all processes. The Service plans to identify critical roles within the	31 March 2025

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
					<p>organisation and to provide succession strategies for each specific post. This will include identifying development pathways for internal colleagues who are identified as suitable for succession planning roles.</p> <p>This is a new deliverable that has been identified and agreed by CMT. This new piece of work commenced in March 2024.</p>	
22	The Service should have a consistent plan to promote positive action with under-represented groups and make sure staff understand the purpose and benefits of a diverse workforce.	A) Produce a Positive Action Plan.			A) A positive action plan will be completed by the deadline.	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
	<p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity)</b></p>	<p>B) Produce an E-Learning module on positive action.</p>			<p>B) A suite of E-Learning modules relating to EDI and culture have been developed and will be continually reviewed. Positive action is included within the EDI E-learning module.</p>	<p>31 March 2024</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>The Service should ensure it has arrangements in place to identify, develop and support all high-potential staff across the organisation.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Managing performance and developing leaders)</b></p>	<p>A) Banded promotional gateways.</p>			<p><b>A) Operational Personnel:</b> BFRS offer the opportunity for operational staff to apply to attend a Promotion Gateway at each different rank throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Support Personnel:</b> Support Staff who are interested in developing their knowledge, skills, and behaviours to</p>	<p>30 April 2024</p>



AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
					enhance their career development and support personal growth within BFRS have the opportunity to apply for recently introduced Development Centres.	
		B) Workforce Planning Group			B) The Workforce Planning Group has been established and meets on a quarterly basis.	30 April 2024
		C) Review of new appraisal process.			C)New appraisal software and process went live in 2023. As a result, a return of 99% of appraisals was achieved. A review of the process has been completed. This will help to identify	30 April 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
					high-potential colleagues, manage training needs through detailed analysis and further development pathways by establishing a talent grid for all colleagues.	
		D) Core learning pathways for all staff.			D)Development gateways and core learning pathways for Green Book colleagues have been established and aligned to Grey Book equivalent roles.	30 April 2024

## Completed Areas For Improvement

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
2	<p>The Service should make sure it targets its prevention work at people most at risk.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: DCFO Diagnostic: Preventing fires and other risks)</b></p>	A) Creation of new Prevention Strategy			Presented to CMT 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	31 March 2024
		B) Annual Delivery Plan			Presented to the Service Delivery Board in advance of the CMT on 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	31 March 2024
		C) New Key Performance Indicator (KPI)			Were presented to CMT and will go to FRA for approval on 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	31 March 2024
14	<p>The Service should make sure it has an overarching cross-border exercise strategy. The strategy should assure the Service that exercise objectives are in line with CRMP risks and that learning is recorded, shared and actioned.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Responding to major and multi-agency incidents)</b></p>	A) Exercise Strategy			<p>An exercise strategy has been produced and this will be delivered through the new Station Plans.</p> <p>Learning outcomes from exercises and operational incidents will be recorded and delivered through the new operational debrief software on pdrPro. The Operational Debrief Policy was published in February 2024.</p>	31 March 2024
18	Cause for Concern: Bedfordshire FRS cannot assure itself that its operational members of staff meet	A) A separate Action Plan was submitted to			Following a re-inspection HMICFRS have written to the Chief Fire Officer to confirm that	31 March 2024

AFI #	Area for Improvement	Deliverables	Delivery RAG	Cost RAG	Commentary	Due Date
	<p>the minimum fitness requirements to perform their role. Within 28 days of the Cause of Concern being published, the Service should provide an action plan that ensures all staff meet the minimum fitness standards.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Promoting the right values and culture)</b></p>	HMICFRS within the required 28 Days.			<p>The Cause of Concern has been addressed and discharged.</p> <p>Work continues through HHR to ensure that fitness testing processes are reviewed. A new fitness policy has been created and review group established.</p>	
21	<p>The Service should make sure it has effective grievance procedures. It should identify and put in place ways to improve staff confidence in those procedures.</p> <p><b>(Lead Officer: ACFO Diagnostic: Ensuring fairness and promoting diversity)</b></p>	A) Professional Standards Investigator Implemented			A) The Professional Standards Investigator commenced employment August 2023. Investigation timelines have been cut significantly as a result.	31 March 2024
		B) Grievance Training delivered			B) Grievance /Professional behaviours at work training has been delivered to all relevant managers. Training will continue to be mainstreamed as part of Business As Usual (BAU) for new starters. Refresher training will be delivered as necessary.	31 March 2024

## RAG Key

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Green</b>	<b>Area for Improvement is on target or completed</b>	<b>Completed or forecast to be completed within budget</b>
<b>Yellow</b>	<b>The due date is not likely to be met but has not passed</b>	<b>Spending is forecast to exceed the agreed budget</b>
<b>Red</b>	<b>The due date has or will not be met</b>	<b>Spending has exceeded the agreed budget</b>