

For Publication

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group  
7 March 2016  
Item No. 11

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**REPORT AUTHOR:** HEAD OF FINANCE/TREASURER

**SUBJECT:** UTILITIES USAGE

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Background Papers: Report to CSPCG 15 September 2015, Land & Buildings Asset Management Plan

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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.*

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**PURPOSE:**

To present to the Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group the progress made of utilities management and monitoring.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Corporate Services Policy and Challenge Group consider the contents of this report and progress being made.

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Property Team's focus is on ensuring that our land and buildings are legally compliant and in adherence with regulations covering areas such as legionella, gas, electricity, asbestos, tree management and lightening protection. Their role is to also ensure that the Authority's land and buildings are fit for purpose and improved where necessary (capital and revenue works).
- 1.2 Amongst other work areas, the Team also monitors the usage of utilities across the fourteen sites. This is with a view of reducing expenditure and taking environmental considerations into account too.

### 2. Utility Usage

- 2.1 A report was presented to the CSP&CG in September 2015 outlining the use of water, gas and electricity per site and how the use between them compared. Some anomalies were apparent and these have been looked into further. One of the key areas that needed addressing was the use of lighting and heating.
- 2.2 Areas that have progressed/are progressing, where anomalies between like sized stations were identified include:
  - More efficient internal light fittings;
  - More efficient external light fittings (a Health and Safety improvement too);
  - Lighting that is switched on/off by movement detectors (internal and external);
  - More efficient heating and water boilers;
  - Upgrading of radiators where necessary;
  - Timers installed in laundry/drying rooms;

- Advice on temperatures to stations, particularly vehicle bays (when the doors opened, all the heat escapes);
- Insulation installed/to be installed where necessary (loft, wall, ceiling), including a review of flat roofs and single glazed windows;
- Secondary glazing where roof lights (windows) were single glazed;
- Replaced critleglazed single windows with double glazed;
- Replaced old electric showers; and
- The remote management of boilers on stations is currently being looked into.

- 2.3 The above addresses high usage examples such as retained stations having the lights or heating left on. This could be by Service personnel or our partners who pay rent to use our stations. The installation of movement detectors will turn the lights off after a set period if no movement is detected. For example, these have been installed at Shefford Station, which is used in the evenings by the Ambulance Service as well as retained Firefighters if they are called out.
- 2.4 The Property Team are also working proactively with Station Managers and introducing Energy Champions. These are individuals who will encourage officers to reduce our energy consumption by switching off lights when not in use and turning the heating down.
- 2.5 A key factor of ensuring that the correct monitoring of usage is taking place is to have accurate usage figures. All of the premises have water meters but not all have meters for gas and electricity. It was previously reported that the Authority will seek to introduce these meters to assist in the management of gas and electricity. The installation of the smart meters are in high demand and the Property Team have been persistent with liaising with our energy providers and monitoring the roll out of the meters that are provided by them.
- 2.6 It is anticipated that all premises will have meters for gas and electricity fitted by the end of the first quarter of 2016/17.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Post 31 March 2016, the actual usage data for 2015/16 will be available. This will then be compared to the benchmarks set for 2015/16, from the 2014/15 data and used to set the 2016/17 benchmarks. As the report above notes, these will become more accurate and reliable when manual meter readings and estimates are eliminated and electronic smart meters provide this timely and accurate management information.

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