

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	21 September 2016
OFFICER	Lynne Swift, Director of People and Organisational Development
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor Roger Reed
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Water Rescue Training and Capability
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>This report provides members with an update on the notable developments that have come about following the external review conducted by subject matter experts, into the Authority's water rescue training and capability, during early 2015.</p> <p>The overarching objectives of this review were to increase resilience and improve training effectiveness, whilst ensuring best value. Furthermore, the review provided the opportunity to re-examine the training requirements that would enable the Authority's swift water rescue teams to be compliant with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Flood Rescue Concept of Operations, so to enable one of the teams to be accepted onto the National Asset Register. This will enable BFRS deployments to significant national events in the future and further enhance BFRS contribution to UK resilience.</p> <p>The recommendations from the external review, as set out within the 'final report' contained within Appendix 1, will as a consequence see further investment made in the professional competencies of a selected number of BFRS staff, in becoming water rescue instructors.</p> <p>It will be the responsibility of these instructors to deliver in-house maintenance of skills training to both our swift water technicians and first responders.</p> <p>The training will be subjected to external verification, in order to ensure both the competency of instruction and accuracy of the course content.</p>
ACTION	Information.
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p>It is recommended that the following be noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The investment toward enhancing and upskilling the competencies of selected staff, in becoming water rescue instructors, whose responsibility it

	<p>will then be, to deliver in-house an externally verified and accredited Level 2 First Responder course; and</p> <p>2) The successful outcome of the recent submission to DEFRA that has resulted in one of the BFRS water rescue teams being accepted onto the National Flood Rescue Asset Register.</p>
RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>Risk:</p> <p>The ability of our current training provider to fulfil both our current and future training requirements, as well as offer accessibility to the necessary training facilities, to ensure the water rescue competencies of crews can be appropriately maintained.</p> <p>Mitigation:</p> <p>By having our own in-house instructors, we will be able to operate more flexibly and efficiently in our approach toward training delivery. Furthermore, it will remove the current reliance upon an external provider, thereby returning control to BFRS in managing the validity of the water rescue skill sets of operational staff, as well as reduce costs.</p> <p>Risk:</p> <p>The current training provider discrepancies, as highlighted within the training review final report, in terms of trainer input, lesson content and supporting documentation. All have the potential to create differences of interpretation amongst attending delegates.</p> <p>Mitigation:</p> <p>As part of the proposal, water rescue training notes will be made bespoke to BFRS. This will ensure operational staff are aware of our service procedures as well as national best practice. Also by utilising staff within our own water rescue teams as in-house instructors, will better able their knowledge of local water related risks to inform and generate discussion.</p> <p>Furthermore, by having both instructors and Level 2 courses accredited, will ensure training consistency is routinely achieved.</p> <p>Risk:</p> <p>The current maintenance of skills training for our swiftwater rescue technicians and boat operators, whilst compliant with a three yearly certification programme, does not involve training in grade 2 conditions, as set out in DEFRA Concept of Operations.</p> <p>Mitigation:</p> <p>Training requirements and associated costs have been identified that will ensure the competencies of our</p>

	water rescue teams remain in accordance with the DEFRA Concept of Operations document.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>The swift water rescue training budget has been set at £45k for this financial year.</p> <p>As a result of creating instructor capabilities within the Authority, a one-off overspend of £17k will occur in 2016/17 (covered by underspends elsewhere in operational training).</p> <p>Once the initial instructor programme has been delivered and additional training for the swift water rescue teams undertaken, it is anticipated all future training will be met from within existing water rescue budgets.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	The recommendations are in accordance with the powers of the Authority under section 11 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 to act beyond its core functions to equip and respond to life threatening events within as well as outside of the Authority's area.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	<p>The Thames Valley Steering Group oversee the development and implementation of the TV collaboration work programme. Training is one of elements of the operational policy alignment programme, which will facilitate and drive delivery of the TVFRS collaborative vision. Comparisons on approaches to operational training, assurance and costings is currently underway across the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services.</p> <p>This should create future opportunities to adopt a greater collaborative approach toward the delivery of a Level 2 First Responder course.</p> <p>The feasibility as to whether this is achievable, will become much clearer, having first established our own in-house instructors and from the resulting discussions planned with our Thames Valley colleagues.</p>
HEALTH AND SAFETY	<p>All identified purpose built training or natural water venues, will be the subject of established risk assessment processes, to determine suitability in delivering water rescue courses.</p> <p>The risk assessment process will be undertaken by either appropriately qualified BFRS employees, the external training provider or a combination of both.</p> <p>There may be a requirement, in particular with regard to the natural water venues, for the quality of water to be tested prior to use.</p> <p>Training courses will be adequately resourced with suitably qualified instructors, in order to ensure the safety of participants are continuously maintained.</p>

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	There are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this paper.
USE OF RESOURCES	<p>Communication with stakeholders; Water Rescue teams within BFRS have been regularly informed and kept up to date with the progression toward having our own in-house instructors, in order to effectively deliver a Level 2 First Responder course.</p> <p>The system of internal control; Water Rescue stations and instructors will report to their line managers. Level 2 and 3 courses will be monitored by the Water Rescue training lead and evidence of completed courses recorded within the Authority's learning management system.</p> <p>The Water Rescue training lead will liaise with the external provider's Subject Matter Advisor to ensure Quality Assurance audits and reports are carried out within specified timescales, with outcomes reviewed annually.</p> <p>The medium term financial strategy; There is no anticipated impact to the BFRS medium term financial strategy resulting from these changes.</p> <p>The balance between spending and resources; Whilst spending is predicted to exceed the allocated 2016/17 budget by £13,340, future training costs are estimated to fall within upcoming budgets.</p> <p>In terms of resources, for Module 3 training some equipment from the Water Rescue Units may need to be utilised, in order for the training course to be effectively delivered, although this is expected to be minimal.</p> <p>The delivery of a Level 2 First Responder course will require the attendance of (x1) Water Rescue Unit and up to (x2) appliances, all of which will remain operationally available throughout.</p> <p>Environmental; No impacts foreseen, the water quality at identified natural water training venues, will be routinely tested.</p>
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	A Strategic Training Review report was submitted to the Strategic Management Board in November 2014. This proposed a new Training Strategy and Framework.
APPENDICES	Appendix 1: Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire & Rescue Service, Water Rescue Training Review Final Report: May 2015 (Author: Martin Blaker-Rowe: Babcock Group International).
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes.

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