

Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



MEETING	Executive Committee
DATE OF MEETING	5 February 2020
OFFICER	Mark Hemming, Director of Finance and Assets
LEAD MEMBER	Councillor David Hopkins
SUBJECT OF THE REPORT	Response to The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2020-21: Consultation paper
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Consultation was published on 20 December 2019, with a deadline for responses of 17 January 2020. In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, the response was discussed with the Chairman and Lead Member before submission. This paper details the content of the submission for the attention of the Authority.</p> <p>At its meeting on 13 November 2019, the Committee noted the response to the Technical Consultation, which requested that fire and rescue authorities have the flexibility to increase council tax by up to £5, rather than the proposed limit of less than 2%.</p> <p>In response to the Technical Consultation, there were 31 respondents that requested bespoke council tax principles. Of these, 16 were fire authorities or their representative body. Despite these responses, the provisional settlement retains a referendum limit of less than 2% for all fire authorities.</p> <p>The response to the Consultation refers to evidence not available at the time of the Technical Consultation, namely our HMICFRS inspection report that notes serious concerns as to whether the Service has the resources it needs to meet its foreseeable risk, despite being highly efficient and having an innovative deployment model which, if better funded, would be a cost-effective way of keeping people safe</p> <p>The Consultation also sought views on a number of other areas not directly relevant to the Authority, so a response of 'no comment' was submitted in relation to those questions.</p>
ACTION	Noting.
RECOMMENDATIONS	That the response to the consultation be noted.

RISK MANAGEMENT	No direct impact.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	<p>In 2019/20 BMKFA had the lowest precept of any non-metropolitan combined fire and rescue authority. The band D equivalent charge is £64.57. The total council tax receivable for 2019/20 (excluding prior years' surpluses) is £19.7m.</p> <p>The current draft medium-term financial plan assumes that council tax will be increased by 1.99% every year. For 2020/21 this would result in total council tax receipts of £20.1m (ignoring the effects of any growth in the council tax base).</p> <p>If the band D equivalent was increased by £5 for 2020/21 the total council tax receipts (ignoring any increases in the council tax base) would be £21.2m.</p>
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	The Chief Fire Officer may make a formal response on behalf of the Authority to a Government Consultation Paper provided that such a response is subsequently referred to the appropriate committee for their attention.
CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE	No direct impact.
HEALTH AND SAFETY	No direct impact.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	No direct impact.
USE OF RESOURCES	See Financial Implications.
PROVENANCE SECTION & BACKGROUND PAPERS	<p>Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Scheme of Delegation to Officers, June 2013</p> <p>Response to the Local Government Finance Settlement 2020-21: Technical Consultation, Executive Committee, 13 November 2019:</p> <p>https://bucksfire.gov.uk/files/1915/7253/5552/ITEM_6_Response_to_Local_Government_Finance_Settlement_2020-21_Technical_Consultation_Appendices-min.pdf</p>
APPENDICES	<p>Appendix A – The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2020-21: Consultation paper</p> <p>Appendix B – Response to the Consultation</p>
TIME REQUIRED	10 minutes
REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT	<p>Mark Hemming</p> <p>mhemming@bucksfire.gov.uk</p>